



California Community Colleges

SYSTEM WEBINAR SUMMARY:

ADVANCING CA's ECONOMY (April 2024)

This [webinar](#) focused on ways that the California Community Colleges (CCC) contribute to the advancement of the state's economy, and the critical importance of advocating for budget investments to support our work. Guest presenters included Assemblymember Dawn Addis, Cheryl Aschenbach of the CCC Academic Senate, Manuel Pérez of the Chief Student Services Officers Association, and Chanelle Win of the CCC Student Senate.

How Do CCCs Contribute to California's Economy?

- The CCC system is the backbone of California's economy, responsible for an annual [economic impact](#) of \$128 billion.
- Our colleges provide access to all Californians to education and training that can help them secure jobs with family-sustaining wages.
- The 116 colleges in the system are critical to the state's ability to reach the [goal](#) of the Legislature and Governor that 70% of Californians have a college credential.
- The CCC is the lowest funded higher education system on a per student basis, making any potential budget cut for 2024-25 devastating for students, local communities, and the state's economy.
- While California is facing huge budget deficits over the next several years, we must advocate for the importance of maintaining the state's commitments to students and making targeted investments that can expand the system's economic impact.

What are 10 Ways to Advance Our Economy Through CCCs?

- Maintain the system's funding and protect the state's commitments to students by:
 1. Supporting the [proposed](#) \$60 million investment in nursing career pathways to ensure the CCC can develop a trained a culturally competent nursing workforce for a state where half of nurses start at a community college.
 2. Strengthening workforce investments to support the Governor's [Master Plan for Career Education](#) through programs such as the California Apprenticeship Initiative and High-Road Training Partnerships.
 3. Providing the proposed cost-of-living increase to help address inflationary pressures on wages and other operating costs and allow our colleges to maintain existing programs and services.
 4. Fully funding the [Cal Grant Equity Framework](#) to ensure that CCC students have equitable access to the financial aid that is essential to their success.

5. Investing in much-needed affordable student housing projects by following through on the state's [commitment](#) to a statewide lease revenue bond that would support 19 approved CCC projects and 70 approved planning grants, which together would result in nearly 5,000 beds for low-income students.
- Double the impact of the CCC through several targeted investments in:
 6. Ensuring equitable access to financial aid through [AB 1885](#), which would allow students with disabilities who have a full-time accommodation through DSPS to qualify for the Student Success and Completion Grant.
 7. Providing a secure and responsive data infrastructure through technology upgrades and investment in the e-Transcript system.
 8. Supporting credit for prior learning initiatives that can lower time to degree through infrastructure and professional development.
 9. Allocating funds from the [potential climate bond](#) on the November ballot to support CCC climate workforce programs and microgrids at our colleges that would allow us to serve as hubs during natural disasters.
 10. Allocating an equitable share of funds from November's potential educational facilities bond to the CCC to ensure that our classrooms, labs, and other facilities receive much-needed repairs and maintenance.

How are Constituency Groups Prioritizing CCC Advocacy?

- The Academic Senate is focused on continued investment in career education and workforce development to facilitate critical partnerships across colleges and between colleges and industries across the state. Expensive equipment and smaller class sizes are often critical to career education programs. The proposed nursing investment and SB 8905 are essential to the partnerships needed to address workforce shortages and ensure care for the state's aging population.

- Student services professionals are focused on continued funding for critical supports essential to serving marginalized student communities. Of note, identity verification efforts are key to smoothing enrollment processes, as is addressing the current challenges with financial aid related to FAFSA simplification.
- Student leaders are focused on ensuring student access to the classes they need to make progress and complete, and on funding that supports students' basic needs. Protecting investments in affordable student housing is of particular concern.

What Can Colleges Do to Support Advocacy Efforts?

- Sign the system's budget coalition [letter](#) by Friday, April 12th by emailing your logo to dobrien@cccco.edu!
- Provide legislative testimony or letters of support for [AB 1885](#) and [AB 1891](#).
- Reach out to your local Assembly and Senate [members](#) to share your stories and help them understand the work we do to support student and the state economy.