



# California Community Colleges

## SYSTEM WEBINAR SUMMARY:

### ADVOCATING FOR STUDENT SUCCESS (Jan. 2024)

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The agenda focused on the Governor's budget proposal for 2024-25 and the need for advocacy around our priorities to support student success. Guest presenters included Amy Costa, President of the Board of Governors, and student leaders from the Student Senate for California Community Colleges (SSCCC) Cassandra Flandre-Nguyen, Chanelle Win, and Jay Doherty.

#### **What Does the Governor Propose for 2024-25 CCC Funding?**

- Despite a substantial projected multi-year budget deficit, the Governor's [budget proposal](#) continues to fund essential CCC programs and services by withdrawing \$722.5 million from the Proposition 98 Rainy Day Fund to backfill revenue shortfalls.
- The proposal includes \$78.4 million to support a 0.76% COLA for apportionments and selected categorical programs, and \$29.6 million for 0.5% enrollment growth. It moves ahead with full implementation of the [Student Centered Funding Formula](#) (SCFF), keeping 2024-25 as the new funding floor for all colleges.
- The proposal includes \$60 million to expand nursing program capacity, with the expectation of doing so for each of the next five budget years. Provisions governing how the funds would be spent will be negotiated via the legislative process over the spring.
- The Administration will pursue a trailer bill for a statewide lease revenue bond program for CCC student housing as part of the revised budget proposal to be issued in May. This was based on system- and district-level advocacy for the need for a statewide rather than local lease revenue bonds. The Administration will also pursue a statewide education facilities bond, subject to negotiation with the Legislature.

#### **What are the System's Advocacy Priorities?**

- Despite the Governor's initial [proposal](#), there is no guarantee that the community colleges will be spared from cuts as state leaders continue negotiating over the next few months, so we must stay active in advocating to secure investments for our colleges and our students.
- We must ensure continuity of education via support for the CCC to prepare California's future workforce, given our critical role in helping the state achieve its [goal of 70%](#) postsecondary attainment among working-age adults by 2030.

- We must continue to advocate for an equitable and robust funding stream for affordable [student housing](#) projects to ensure that a statewide lease revenue bond is issued, which would support up to 19 approved projects and 5 new proposals.
- CCC students need equitable access to financial aid, so we must continue our advocacy for full implementation of the [Cal Grant Equity Framework](#). It would make an additional 100,000 students eligible for a Cal Grant and would index the grant to inflation so that it does not lose value over time.
- Across our advocacy efforts, we will seek policymakers' understanding of:
  - The role of CCCs in ensuring equity for every student.
  - The importance of CCCs to our state's future workforce and economy.
  - The need to provide sustainable, ongoing funding to ensure we can provide students with equitable access, support, and success under [Vision 2030](#).

## **What are Students' Priorities for Advocacy?**

- Students at all three segments came together in a coalition called [Fix Financial Aid](#) to lead the effort to get the Cal Grant Equity Framework into state law. However, its implementation is subject to being funded, making the need for continued student advocacy critical this year to help legislators understand the need for the reform.
- Students must emphasize to legislators the range of students served by CCCs so that policies, projects and initiatives keep the variety of students in mind and ensure there is equity across populations of students.
- Students want comprehensive needs assessments to ensure intentionality in tailoring basic needs supports for specific student groups, to facilitate student access to public assistance programs and other services that are critical to their ability to continue attending college and to succeed in achieving their goals.
- Securing and maintaining housing is a particular challenge for many students, making emergency housing support and affordable student housing a top priority.

## **How Can Colleges Help with Budget Advocacy?**

- Schedule meetings with your legislators and invite students to join you, as they are our best ambassadors when sharing their personal stories.
- Write an Op-Ed on critical local issues that require broad awareness, as legislators and their staff often read these opinions to inform their work.
- Use social media platforms to engage with the Legislature.
- Testify at budget committee hearings and provide public comments.
- Develop videos, photos, and digital collateral to highlight campus efforts and initiatives, which can help legislators and their staff who may have limited opportunities to visit the campus.