



CEO Connection

Chancellor's Monthly Update | January 2017

Governor's Budget: Governor Brown released his budget proposal for 2017-18. Overall, the proposal assumes that state revenue growth has slowed and, as a result, most sectors of the budget are flat or even declining. In contrast, funding for K-12 schools and community colleges is proposed to grow modestly due to the Proposition 98 funding guarantee. Vice Chancellor Mario Rodriguez has circulated the attached overview of the Governor's proposal, which you should consult for all the details. Accordingly, I will just note the highlights and provide a few observations. The budget plan for California Community Colleges is largely a workload budget, funding 1.34% growth (\$79 million), a 1.48% COLA (\$94 million), and a base increase of \$23.6 million. Other major increases are primarily one-time in nature, including \$150 million allocated for guided pathways. These resources, which can be spent over a multi-year period, will support community college districts in developing cohesive, integrated pathways to help more students achieve their educational objectives. Overall, I think that the Governor's Budget is a strong proposal for the California Community Colleges and we should offer the Administration our thanks and support to help move this package through the Legislature. Of course, along the way, we will also look for opportunities to improve the package. For instance, if estimates of state revenues are increased, it will open the door for us to advocate for additional funding. If this occurs, a top priority should be greater base funding increases to address the rising employer pension costs. If these costs are not addressed, community college districts will face very difficult budget choices in coming years that would be harmful and disruptive to students as well as college employees. Of course, the Governor's proposal is just the starting point with the Legislative Analyst's Office response coming in a few weeks, followed by legislative budget hearings throughout the spring. I look forward to working with you in the coming months to optimize the outcomes of this year's budget process.

Field Survey Results: Thank you for your assistance in disseminating the system-wide survey I sent out in early December seeking opinions on a variety of subjects as I began in my new role. I am happy to report that more than 4,400 people responded to the survey and provided thoughtful and honest feedback that will help me and the Chancellor's Office staff as we move forward. Survey respondents represented a good cross section of professional roles throughout our colleges, from faculty, to classified staff, administrators and others. More than 70% of respondents agreed that system-wide policy initiatives undertaken in the past five years are leading to improved student outcomes, and a similar majority believe that community colleges are powerful forces for improving social mobility among Californians. This is heartening as we look to build on the progress we have made and strive to help more students earn credentials and secure good-paying and fulfilling jobs. Respondents also spoke about the appropriate level of oversight provided by the Chancellor's Office, and provided suggestions for easing the

regulatory burden on colleges so more focus can be placed on teaching and learning. It is clear that a majority in the field believes the Chancellor's Office is carrying out its mission and that with more resources, more can be done to support colleges. The results suggest there is still much work to do in aligning our system with our K-12 and other public higher education segment partners. I am enclosing a brief report that summarizes the survey results. I intend to send out the report in a system-wide communication and a note of thanks to all those who responded.

CA Guided Pathways Project: I am pleased to report that on December 6, the College Futures Foundation approved funding for the CA Guided Pathways Project. The CA Guided Pathways Project will create a framework for colleges to integrate their planning and resources in order to focus on improving student outcomes and reimagining the student experience. This is an important initiative for the system, as it will create a foundation for comprehensive professional learning and tools for colleges to better use data to improve student outcomes. The model helps colleges clarify paths to student end goals, helps students select a program and stay on path, and ensure quality learning. By creating structured educational experiences that support each student from point of entry to attainment of high-quality postsecondary credentials and employment in a chosen field, the project is intended to increase the number of students earning community college credentials, while closing equity gaps. In early 2017, 15 to 20 community colleges will be selected to implement the California Guided Pathways Model from a competitive application and interview process. Colleges will participate in six two-day institutes, which will focus on key elements required to implement a fully-scaled pathway model which serves all students at a community college, plus receive support on the change process from expert coaches. Each college will commit to have implemented guided pathways for all incoming students by 2019. You can find the [press release](#) on the website of the Foundation for California Community Colleges.

College Promise Newsletter: Please find attached, a newsletter issued by the California College Promise Campaign, documenting recent developments in our state. The resource is loaded with useful information including a listing of current college promise programs and an overview of the California College Promise Innovation Grant program. The newsletter was produced by Contra Costa CCD Chancellor Helen Benjamin, who has provided great leadership on this initiative from the start. While Helen has recently retired as CEO, there is a large group of other CCC system leaders who will carry the torch, many of whom are identified on the first page of the newsletter. To date, more than 25 California community colleges are implementing Promise Programs as a strategy to address not only college affordability, but as a framework for establishing clear pathways that help students get to and through college. If you are not currently pursuing a Promise Program, I encourage you to consider the potential benefits to your students and communities.