

## **Mt. San Antonio College**

### **2023 State and Federal Legislative Priorities**

Mt. San Antonio College (Mt. SAC), located in Los Angeles County, offers our students more than 260 degree and certificate programs, 25 support programs, and more than 50 student clubs and athletic programs. Our professors and instructors are some of the best in their fields. Our students come from all walks of life and go on to do great things. Our facilities rival university buildings, giving our students the opportunity to work with the best technology in the best space.

Mt. SAC is active on policy issues at the state and federal levels in both Sacramento, California and Washington D.C. Working with our state and federal advocates, Mt. SAC has identified several important legislative priorities to focus our advocacy efforts on for 2023. The priorities identified support Mt. SAC's mission, student population, staff, faculty, and financial sustainability. These priorities allow staff and Mt. SAC's advocates in Sacramento and Washington D.C. to act expeditiously on key budget and policy issues that impact Mt. SAC and the students we serve; however, this is not an all-inclusive list of the issues Mt. SAC will engage in and advocate on.

1. ***Student Equity and Achievement Program (SEAP):*** SEAP was created in 2018 and merged funding for three formally separate initiatives: the Student Success and Support Program; the Basic Skills Initiative; and Student Equity. Integrating these efforts into a single program advances our goal of demolishing once and for all the achievement gaps for students from traditionally underrepresented populations. SEAP has never received a Cost of Living Adjustment (COLA) in the State Budget since its establishment; yet the need for these funds for our students continues to grow. SEAP funds are flexible dollars that help support students achieve their education goals. These funds are critical to restoring enrollment, which the Legislature has raised concerns about. Mt. SAC supports the inclusion of a permanent annual COLA for SEAP in the State Budget.
2. ***Workforce Development:*** California Community Colleges (CCCs) are the State's job training providers, as we partner with K-12 districts, universities, and industry to provide career ladder opportunities. Through the State's continued investments in the Strong Workforce Program, Guided Pathways, and Career Education, we stand ready to partner with the State and ensure our students are trained and prepared for the labor industries that are growing in our region. We strongly believe CCCs need adequate support to provide retraining for displaced workers and the changed economy. Mt. SAC strongly supports ongoing investments and policies that support the CCCs in preparing our students for the workforce, including expanded work-based learning and short-term training, and retraining in high demand jobs under the new economic dynamics.
3. ***Basic Needs:*** Mt. SAC believes that student success is directly impacted by their access to basic needs, such as food, housing, technology, transportation, and mental health services. The COVID-19 pandemic increased the demand for these services to be provided to our students. Mt. SAC strongly believes resources for the CCC system should be provide to institutionalize basic needs supports for students, including mental health and social services. Providing basic needs services, specifically focused on the mental health and social services needs of our students, has proven to lead to greater student success. Mt. SAC supports any policy and/or budget related efforts aimed at increasing CCC students' ability to access basic needs, mental health, and social services. Efforts on these issues are underway through proposed policy changes by the California Community Colleges Chief Executive Officer's (CEOCCC) Affordability Housing and Food Insecurity Taskforce created in 2018. Mt. SAC

strongly supports the recommendations of the Taskforce, and additional resources at the federal level to support free community college.

4. **Noncredit:** Mt. SAC has one of the largest noncredit programs in California. There have been several statewide CCC initiatives and regulations proposed and implemented that have not adequately considered the special challenges inherent to noncredit education, even when that inclusion would have been a valuable addition to the initiative. Mt. SAC will continue to advocate for equitable state budget, legislative and regulatory considerations for noncredit students and programs. This includes how the California Adult Education Program (CAEP) funding is disbursed, and for it to remain funded with adequate COLA, ensuring that adults in the community will have equitable access to noncredit programs.
5. **Reauthorization of the Higher Education Act:** The Reauthorization of the Higher Education Act (HEA) is important to our College for many reasons, including that it governs federal financial aid programs for our students. Federal financial aid consists of student loans and need-based financial aid, such as the Pell Grant, Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grants (SEOG), and Federal Work-Study. The HEA has been expired since 2008 and extended by Congress while debates over the reauthorization take place. We anticipate significant changes to be proposed in the reauthorization process, including increased student aid support through efforts to make community college free for students, as well as policy changes related to accreditation, regulation reform, student loans, and additional transparency. It is important during reauthorization of the HEA that any changes to law reflect the diverse student population and interests of our students. Mt. SAC supports additional resources to lessen and/or eliminate the cost for students to attend community college in California.
6. **Student Veterans:** Mt. SAC is thankful for the service of our Veteran students and their families. We offer many resources and opportunities to help student Veterans, including disabled student Veterans, and their family members achieve their educational and vocational goals at Mt. SAC. Mt. SAC has a thriving and expansive Veterans Resource Center (VRC) that is a collaborative effort to ease the transition for our student Veterans as they navigate our community college system. Today, Mt. SAC continues to demonstrate both its motivation to meet the needs of student Veterans, and disabled student Veterans, and an ability to marshal resources to meet those needs through the VRC. Mt. SAC strongly supports our student veterans, and our disabled student Veterans, and will advocate in support of any state and/or federal policies or funding proposals to ensure they can attain their educational goals.
7. **POTENTIAL NEW PRIORITY: New Immigrant Populations:**
8. **POTENTIAL NEW PRIORITY: Health Centers:**

