



## *Office of Government Relations*

COMMUNITY COLLEGE LEAGUE OF CALIFORNIA

### **November 2014 Newsletter**

#### **Looking Towards 2015: Proposals on the Horizon**

With the conclusion of the 2013-14 legislative session, the League is now focusing efforts on upcoming legislative issues affecting community colleges in 2015. Over the last month, League staff met with various stakeholders and legislators to determine that the following list of issues are likely proposals for the 2015 legislative session:

**Adult Ed** – In the 2013-14 budget, Governor Brown proposed that community colleges should be responsible for all adult/noncredit education programs in California. Currently, adult education is delivered to areas by either school districts or the local community college. In an effort to minimize disruption of the programs, Governor Brown provided grant funding for community colleges and school districts to jointly plan how to link their two systems together and serve all regions within the state. The Governor will respond with an implementation proposal in his January budget proposal.

**Audit Fee Equalization** – Currently, colleges charge \$46 per unit for credit classes, while they are only allowed to charge \$15 per unit for student-auditors. Equalizing these fees (as well as the credit and auditing fees for nonresident students) will provide colleges with some new (although still limited) funding. In addition, the Academic Senate has supported this change in light of recent Education Code provisions regarding repeatable courses, the need to maintain access and the importance of providing alternative curricular solutions.

**Cal Grant Reform** – It is widely agreed upon that the Cal Grant system fails to serve community college students. Only six percent of the money awarded by the Cal Grant program goes towards students at a community college despite having two-thirds of the higher education students in California. Reform is a possibility and the specifics of a proposal are still under consideration.

#### **Career Development and College Preparation (CDCP) Rate Equalization**

**Implementation** – The 2014-15 budget changes the CDCP to be equal to the credit rate. This change will likely eliminate one of the many existing disincentives for community colleges to create and maintain noncredit programs and will enable them to help students reach their educational goals more efficiently. Governor Brown's January

budget proposal is expected to reveal the details regarding which classes can be offered under this new rate.

**Concurrent Enrollment** – This year the California Community College Chancellor's Office sponsored AB 1451 (Holden), which would have reformed the way colleges offer concurrent enrollment courses to high school students. While it failed to pass this year, research shows that concurrent enrollment is one of the most crucial means of helping community colleges students complete their education more efficiently. A proposal, with details still undecided, is likely to surface in 2015.

**Funding of State Facilities** – California community colleges, along with other segments of education, are in need of new facilities. While Governor Brown has expressed concerns regarding a state bond measure raising funds for community college buildings; we anticipate a proposal is likely to surface in 2015.

**Increased CTE Funding** – Career technical education (CTE) programs are vital for preparing an educated workforce, but can be more costly than “academic” programs. Due to severe cuts of the program in recent years, stakeholders will attempt to restore funding and find new sources of revenues.

**Parcel Tax Reform** – A proposal reducing the threshold to pass a parcel tax from two-thirds to 55% (similar to local general obligation bonds) is likely in 2015. No guarantee can be made on the proposal because a super-majority vote in the Legislature is required.

**Restoring Three-Year Stability** – Last year, California community colleges joined together to support three-year stability for City College of San Francisco due to its accreditation issues. After a review, it became clear other community college districts also were experiencing unforeseen events affecting their ability to reach enrollment caps. Legislation will be proposed in 2015 to provide similar three-year stability to other districts giving them greater predictability in planning the ability to “smooth out” any year-to-year sharp enrollment changes created by external sources. If approved, this would supersede the current one-year stability in the Education Code.

If you have questions about these issues or would like to suggest other proposals, please contact Ryan McElhinney at [ryan@ccleague.org](mailto:ryan@ccleague.org) or Lizette Navarette at [lizette@ccleague.org](mailto:lizette@ccleague.org).