FIRST MONDAY

CALIFORNIA COMMUNITY COLLEGES CHANCELLOR BRICE W. HARRIS

Memorandum

DATE: November 3, 2014

TO: California Community College CEOs

FROM: Brice W. Harris, State Chancellor

SUBJECT: First Monday – October 2014

Colleagues,

The following are items of interest and importance for our system, and are provided for your information. If you have comments or concerns on any of these items, feel free to email me at bharris@cccco.edu, or telephone me at (916) 322-4005.

1. **California Community College Baccalaureate Pilots:** As I mentioned here last month, I plan to take forward to the Board of Governors (BOG) at their meeting in November an outline of the process for identification of the fifteen pilot Baccalaureate Degree programs in accordance with SB 850 (Block). I have enclosed a draft timeline for this process and a list of components of the Request for Proposals (RFP) we intend to share with the BOG. As you will see, we are moving quickly to take the first recommendations to the Board for consideration in January. Assuming the Board agrees with our approach, the submission deadline for the initial RFP for proposals to be considered for recommendation to the Board in January would be December 19, 2014. Although this is a tight deadline, if your institution is interested in proposing a pilot degree and does not make the deadline, additional RFPs will be issued in the future if the Board selects fewer than fifteen in the first round, or if some proposals they do approve ultimately do not become reality. As you will see with the draft RFP components, we are attempting to keep the specific requirements for application as simple as possible and to allow districts and colleges to make the strongest case for their proposal possible based on local demands and institutional strengths. Between now and the release of the RFP, we will also develop and make available the scoring rubric we intend to use to evaluate the proposals so that everyone will know the basis on which our recommendations will be made. I expect far more of our colleges to submit proposals than there will be pilot slots available, so the more transparency there is to the process the better. You will receive additional information on this process once we have received direction from the BOG.

2. **Recommended Board of Governors Regulation Change on Accreditation:** By now you may have heard that I presented a proposed change in Board regulation relating to accreditation to the Consultation Council in October, and intend to take it forward to the Board of Governors for first reading in November. A copy of the proposed change is enclosed. I am not making this recommendation lightly, or without a great deal of thought. As I have written to you on several occasions in this communication, I have increasing concerns over the changes we have seen in accreditation. As you also know, the State Auditor recently released a report on accreditation and directed that the Chancellor's Office respond to a number of recommendations. Those recommendations were made to my office because the Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges of the Western Region (ACCJC) is a private body not under the oversight of the State. As a result of the report, I am recommending the regulation change and I have reactivated the Accreditation Task Force to review and advise me on the rest of the recommendations. As you will see in the proposed regulation change, we are not at this point recommending a

change in our accreditor. We are however, taking the specificity of the accreditor out of the regulation, which could allow for another body that meets the requirements of the regulation, to be considered by the Board of Governors in the future. Although you are all represented at Consultation by CEO Board members, if you have any input on this issue, please feel free to give me a call at (916) 322-4005.

3. **Funding Formula Modifications:** As you know, a last minute insertion into the budget trailer language this year required that we revise our enrollment growth funding formula to take effect on July 1, 2015. Our Advisory Workgroup on Fiscal Affairs, which includes several of your Chief Business Officers, and is under the direction of Vice Chancellor Dan Troy, has developed a draft of the revised formula according to the requirements contained in the legislation. As we expressed when the changes were put into the trailer bill, there could be unintended consequences from the new funding formula. We have begun discussions with the Department of Finance about when and how these changes get implemented. I know several of you will have concerns with these revisions and want to assure you that we are working to help the Legislature and the Department of Finance understand our concerns. I have enclosed a copy of the material that the Chancellor's Office distributed at the ACBO meeting last week.

4. **STRS and PERS Increases:** I am sure that all of you are preparing for what we believe is the inevitable increase in both STRS and the already known increases in PERS. This is another area where we are working with the Department of Finance to seek financial support to address what is in essence a negative COLA for our system. Although it is far too early to judge the success of our efforts, we will continue to press this issue with the Department of Finance and the Administration as they prepare the Governor's January budget proposal. Our likelihood of obtaining relief for these increasing costs is far greater if the Governor includes that relief in the first salvo of the budget process. I will keep you posted on this important issue.

5. **City College of San Francisco:** I continue to feel it is important to keep you informed on our work with City College of San Francisco (CCSF) because it is a prominent issue across the state. As you know, the Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges (ACCJC) has provided the college an opportunity to apply for a new "Restoration" status that would give them two additional years to complete their renewal. The requirements for entering restoration are that the college must be currently meeting all eligibility requirements and they must demonstrate the ability to meet all standards within 24 months of entering restoration. CCSF did apply for restoration and submitted the required Self Evaluation report earlier this month. We understand that the ACCJC now intends to send a team to CCSF later this month to review the progress of the college and that the ACCJC Commissioners will make a determination on restoration at their January meeting. Running parallel to that process is a lawsuit filed by San Francisco City Attorney, Dennis Herrera against the Commission. That trial took place last week. I was called to testify at the trial as to the performance of the college, as measured by our Student Success Scorecard, on my opinion as to the state of the college at the time the decision was made to terminate accreditation, and the progress made since. I hated to see this case actually come to trial, especially considering the CEO Board leadership made a last-minute appeal to both the City Attorney and the ACCJC to settle the suit and avoid both the cost and the possible precedent of the courts becoming involved in this issue. We expect the Judge to issue a ruling in the next few weeks. Meanwhile education continues to be offered to nearly 70,000 students at CCSF.

6. **Final Gainful Employment Regulations:** I received an email late last week from David Baime, Senior Vice President for Government Relations and Policy Analysis with the American Association of Community Colleges (AACC) in Washington D.C. on the subject of the final regulations from the US Department of Education (USDOE) related to Gainful Employment. Although David and his team have been working hard on the issue, it appears as if our concerns over the regulations were not addressed. The USDOE has left in place the entire proposed reporting and disclosure system that will require a great deal of very specific reporting on each and every title IV student enrolled in a GE program, year by year. I have enclosed the AACC press release on the matter and, as you will read, this could greatly increase the cost of compliance with these expanded reporting requirements. Although AACC and all of us in community colleges strongly support disclosure of relevant information to our students, this reporting will likely not result in information that is either understandable, or helpful to our students. The new regulations, which were published in the Federal Register on Friday, can be found at http://www2.ed.gov/policy/highered/reg/hearulemaking/2012/informal-final-regulatory-text-10302014.doc.