



January 26, 2018

Hon. Phil Ting, Chair
Assembly Budget Committee
State Capitol Room 6026
Sacramento, CA 95814

**Re: Community College Budget Proposal
6870-101-0001**

Dear Assemblymember Ting:

On behalf of the Faculty Association of California Community Colleges (FACCC), I want to express our appreciation to you for your leadership in crafting the community college budget. We are also grateful to Governor Brown for his vision and commitment to stabilizing the state's finances and for his demonstrated support of our institutions. FACCC would particularly like to commend the Governor for supporting the 10.93 percent community college share of the Proposition 98 split in the 2018-19 proposal. Adherence to the statutory split allows both community colleges and K-12 to appropriately plan for the coming year while also removing competition for resources between the two segments.

FACCC has taken the following positions on the specifics of the Governor's January Budget proposal:

2.51% COLA; \$60 million for growth

Response: FACCC supports and appreciates both.

\$46 million to fund the California College Promise as contained in AB 19 [(Santiago) of 2017]

Response: While FACCC supports a state buy-down of student fees, it does not agree with the provision in AB 19 that restricts these funds to colleges that participate in Guided Pathways. This is inconsistent with the Guided Pathways legislation which provides discretion to local academic senates on whether to adopt this program.

Similarly, FACCC notes that elements of student financial aid were historically funded outside of Proposition 98. We request the Legislature consider other programmatic improvements for community colleges with the \$46 million, like increasing full-time faculty or part-time faculty equity, office hours, or health benefits, and fund AB 19 from non-98 sources.

\$120 million (\$20 million ongoing; \$100 million one-time) to establish a fully online community college

Response: While FACCC fully endorses the goal of expanding educational access to working adults who are traditionally older than our full-time students, it respectfully opposes this proposal and would redirect all or part of these funds to the Online Education Initiative.

Despite the agreed upon goal of serving working adults age 25-34 (with the possibility of expanding the target to age 65) who have attained a high school diploma and possibly some college, but no college degree, there is no evidence from the Governor's proposal that the intended population in California has been contacted through such mechanisms as surveys or focus groups to warrant the development of a new, fully online college. For the substantial sums proposed, it is inappropriate to draw a conclusion exclusively from a limited number of out-of-state studies.

This concern extends not just to the need for a new college, but also to whether the target population has sufficient access to technology. While smart phones offer evidence of connectivity, they do not necessarily serve as the best mechanism for distance education.

Moreover, FACCC believes this separate online college will compete with existing institutions. Even under the Governor's proposed funding formula, a diversion of student enrollment to the online college could drain resources from our 114 colleges.

Paradoxically, in the effort to foster educational inclusion to a new group of students—many of whom are undoubtedly struggling to keep pace with ever-changing technology—we would, in fact, be segregating them from the larger body of campus offerings. FACCC believes that distance education through online courses is an appropriate strategy that stands together with hybrid and in-class instruction. A fully online college that exists outside of our established institutions limits the student understanding and potential of what higher education has to offer.

If the state's emphasis is on student success as defined by completion, this online proposal is not the way to go. San Jose State University's experiment with Massive Open Online Courses found the success rates lower than traditional courses with those most able to benefit outside the target underrepresented audience. In moving forward with this discussion, we should not only consider the experience of San Jose State University, but also how critical support services, like DSPS and EOPS could participate. Without serious attention to whether student success is a priority for this college, we are liable to develop a model that falls far short of its goal.

Public support for California Community Colleges has been overwhelmingly positive, largely because they are instruments of local government which contribute to community identity. By definition, a state-run program outside the realm of local control detracts from that local identity and could confuse the public on the purpose of the institutions.

FACCC also opposes any diminution of minimum qualifications for the faculty, and would oppose a “meet and confer” process for working conditions.

The Legislature should redirect all or part of this money to the successful Online Education Initiative and use these additional resources to prioritize lifelong learning for those age 25-65. In this era of maximizing spending efficiencies, FACCC believes this would be far more effective than developing a new college whose start-up expenses, including accreditation, would be extremely high, and whose ongoing costs would likely detract from our existing colleges.

\$175 million for transition costs to a new funding formula

While FACCC recognizes the limitations of the current formula, it is mindful that any change not solely based on student enrollment is liable to result in per-student differences between districts. The inevitable result of this disparity would be a call for the lower revenue districts to equalize with their higher revenue counterparts, leading back to the current dynamic.

Nonetheless, FACCC believes that a blended formula based on incentives is worth evaluating provided the correct incentives are chosen. Without strict adherence to the percentage division of 50/25/25, FACCC would recommend a division based on the following:

- A) At least 50% based on enrollment as this is the best and most equitable barometer upon which to build a funding model;
- B) Half the remaining percentage devoted to education of lower income and underrepresented students based on a blended formula of: 1) Promise Grant and Pell Grants; 2) Enrollment of foster youth, welfare-to-work, active military and military veterans, and regional unemployment rate; 3) Participation in DSPS, EOPS/CARE/NextUp, CalWORKs and other statewide support programs.
- C) Final percentage devoted to recognized practices that contribute to student success. This would be a blended formula of a district’s progress toward: 1) 75/25 full- to part-time faculty ratio; 2) Part-time faculty equity (including office hours and health benefits); 3) Academic counselor to student ratios.

From this formula, the Chancellor’s Office could measure such outcomes as attainment of degrees and certificates on a regular interval and propose research-based adjustments as needed.

Categorical Programs

FACCC opposes a wholesale decategorization of programs, but understands the need to examine the track record of categoricals through the policy process. Many of the categorical programs in student services and part-time faculty were created to fill a need that was not sufficiently addressed at the local level. Support services like EOPS have stood the test of time because they have demonstrated accountability and deserve state resources for their record of success.

The part-time faculty categoricals continue to serve a need, but have been so underfunded as to hamper their effectiveness. Decategorization of those programs does not cure the problems of insufficient compensation, office hours, or health benefits. Newer categoricals, like the Student Success and Support Program, deserve higher levels of scrutiny specifically because they have not withstood the test of time and may be subject to corrective adjustments where appropriate.

Capital Outlay

FACCC strongly supported Proposition 51 on the November 2016 ballot which promised voters \$2 billion infrastructure investment in our community colleges. While the proposed budget funds five new and 15 ongoing capital projects, there are still more shovel-ready projects which can benefit from this money. A delay in construction will likely result in increased costs and diminished voter confidence in future bond financing.

FACCC would also like to draw your attention to the compelling priorities that are missing from the 2018-19 budget proposal:

Funds to increase the ratio of full-time faculty. FACCC is grateful for the 2015-16 augmentation of \$62.3 million for this purpose and urges a second installment to make further progress toward the 75% goal of credit classroom instruction taught by full-time faculty [Education Code Section 87482.6(a)]. Although our students are asked to give a full-time effort toward their studies, they are denied access to full-time faculty. The latest published figures show only 56.4% of credit instruction is currently taught by full-timers.

This is also noted in an accreditation standard for community colleges which reads:

III.A.7. The institution maintains a sufficient number of qualified faculty, which includes full time faculty and may include part time and adjunct faculty, to assure the fulfillment of faculty responsibilities essential to the quality of educational programs and services to achieve institutional mission and purposes.

Support for part-time faculty through pay equity, and health benefits, and office hours. Although the community college system is dependent upon part-time faculty labor, it is unwilling to recognize or compensate them for their contribution. While FACCC appreciates the increase to the Part-Time Faculty Office Hours program in the current year budget, the fund is still woefully deficient. It is time for the state to recognize the value that the over 40,000 part-time faculty professionals bring to the California Community Colleges by fully funding all three of these programs.

Like assessment, placement, and orientation, access to full-time faculty and professionalization of part-time faculty compensated office hours, health benefits, and pay equity should be considered functions of student success. Students at all colleges should expect to interact with full-time faculty and fully supported part-time faculty. This requires both attention and resources from the state.

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Professional development. With increasing advancements in the disciplines offered at our institutions, and with the new wave of faculty hiring, it is time to reconsider the limitation of professional development for specific purposes and allow it to be locally determined for individual faculty needs. Building a world-class institution of higher education means allowing faculty to connect with their peers in professional conferences to advance their subject matter expertise and ability to perform their jobs. This should be a standardized part of the budget upon which our faculty can depend.

Student services (EOPS, DSPS, CalWORKs) and mental health. FACCC is grateful for the restoration of all these programs and urges consideration of programmatic expansion where appropriate. Mental health services are also a priority for the faculty, and consideration should be given to supplementing the \$4.5 million one-time funds in the current budget.

Student Services (NextUp). The expansion of the NextUp program for foster youth has caused a statewide deficiency of \$5 million, which should be addressed in the 2018-19 budget.

Veterans Centers. As a cosponsor and founding member of the coalition sponsoring the annual Veterans Summit, FACCC encourages additional resources for active military and military veteran students.

FACCC is once again grateful to you for your consideration of our positions and to the Governor for his support of community colleges. Please do not hesitate to contact me with any questions.

Sincerely,



Jonathan Lightman, CAE
Executive Director

cc: Hon. Kevin McCarty, Assembly Budget Subcommittee No. 2 Chair
Hon. Jay Obernolte, Assembly Budget Committee Vice Chair
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