



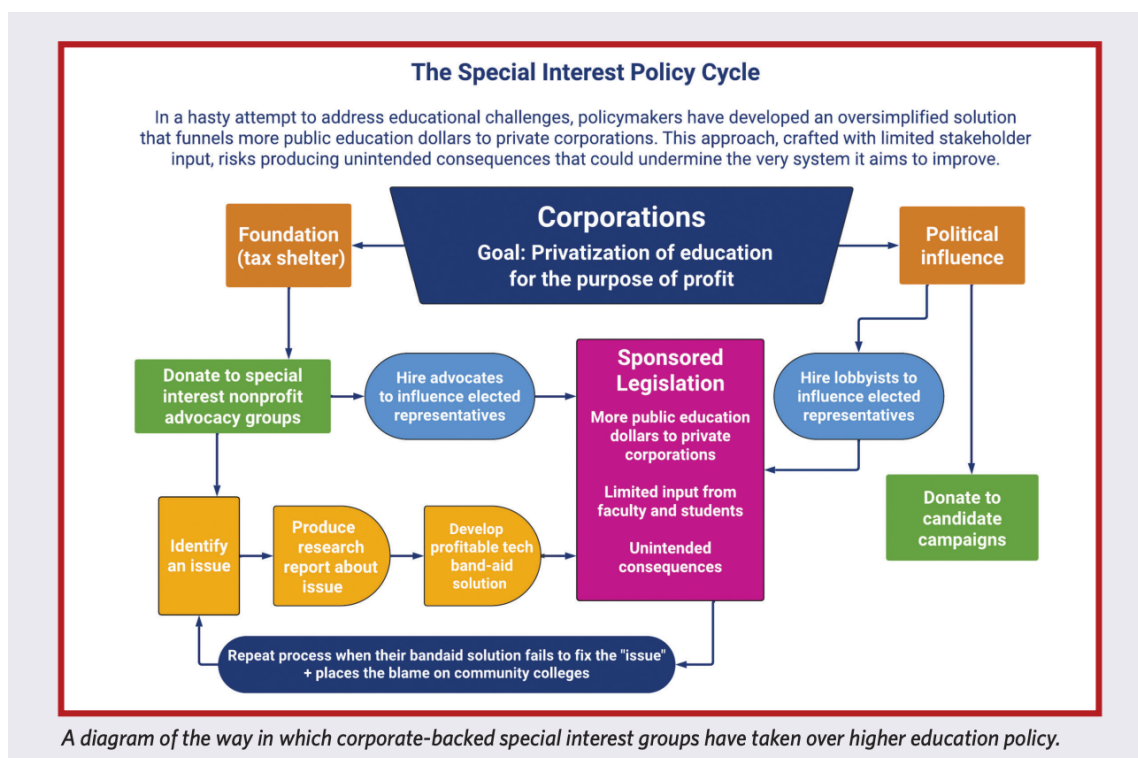
The Role of the CCCCCO in Upholding Education as a Public Good

A Call to Resist Inappropriate Corporate Influence

California's community colleges are open-access institutions that prepare students for further education and employment in numerous fields. The California Community College Chancellor's Office's mission is to support, advocate for, and lead the Community Colleges; therefore, it must take stewardship of the Community College model seriously. Currently, the growing influence of corporate interests within the California Community College system threatens the integrity of education as a public good.

The Foundation for California Community Colleges has unduly relied on partnerships with for-profit entities. This pattern has developed over the past decade, correlating with the Foundation's budget growing by more than 1,200%. The Foundation receives donations from corporations that simultaneously fund nonprofit advocacy groups, which then support legislation and pressure the Board of Governors to change community college policy. While the Chancellor's Office is a public governance body accountable to the public, the Foundation operates as a fundraising entity with no governing authority or public accountability. Although they are legally distinct, it appears that the Chancellor's Office engages politically with organizations that have an established financial relationship with the Foundation for California Community Colleges. In recent years, the Chancellor's Office has elevated the perspectives of private interest groups and foundations in shaping guidance and policy over those of system partners, eroding the very nature of our institutions. Through these partnerships with the Foundation, the Chancellor's Office has championed numerous technology companies and AI-related firms, allowing them to unilaterally place their products into our system without vetting or evaluation. FACCC has concerns about the lack of transparency and input from system

partners, the security of student, faculty, and other employee data, and whether these products are in the best interest of our students.



While it may be appropriate for the Foundation to engage with suitable corporate partners and while the Chancellor's Office is required to publicly consult with System stakeholders, the influence and policy relationship between the Foundation and the Chancellor's Office remains murky at best.

The Chancellor's Office is legally required to consult with stakeholders as outlined in the Board of Governors' standing orders. This consultation process should prioritize substantial input from Consultation Council on whether the Chancellor's Office should form these relationships with private entities and what those relationships should consist of. Instead, these corporate-initiated relationships have been presented post facto, without allowing the required consulting body to reconsider the incursion of private entities into public education.

As a faculty organization, we are responsible for ensuring that education remains a public good. Therefore, it is the stance of FACCC that any use of public funds for private interest negotiated by the CCCCO be thoroughly vetted before and evaluated after by the legally appointed consulting body, and that the faculty voice take its proper place in the decision-making process when it comes to corporate influence on the education and future of our students.

If the Chancellor's Office continues to form and maintain these relationships without oversight and input, there is a risk that our community college system will succumb to privatization, corporate efficiency measures, and undue influence from companies with a profit motive. All of these factors put the education of our communities at risk, thereby endangering democracy, civic engagement, academic freedom, and equity.

FACCC calls upon the Chancellor's Office to immediately implement transparent consultation processes that prioritize the voices of faculty, students, and system stakeholders over corporate interests. The future of California's community colleges as truly public institutions depends on our collective commitment to resist privatization and uphold education as a fundamental public good. We urge all system stakeholders to join us in demanding accountability and protecting the open-access mission that defines our system.