

CoFO

COUNCIL OF FACULTY ORGANIZATIONS

February 1, 2021



ASCCC

Academic Senate for
California Community
Colleges
Dolores Davison, President

Honorable Nancy Skinner, Chair
Senate Budget Committee
State Capitol, Room 5094
Sacramento, CA 95814



CCCI

California Community College
Independents
Jeffrey Michels, President

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



CCA/CTA

Community College
Association/California
Teachers Association
Eric Kaljumagi, President

Re: Community College Budget Proposal

The Council of Faculty Organizations (CoFO), representing more than 58,000 faculty in the California Community College (CCC) system, recognizes the challenges of drafting a responsible state budget during these unusual times and appreciates your ongoing support for our colleges. We are writing with a unified voice to highlight what faculty believe are the system's greatest needs and to recommend adjustments to the Governor's 2021-22 budget proposal.



CCC/CFT

Community College
Council/California Federation
of Teachers
Jim Mahler, President

We thank the Governor for his focus on one-time funding for student financial assistance and basic needs. Our colleges proudly educate the most historically underserved student populations. Providing equitable resources to combat housing and food insecurity, mental health challenges, and the digital divide is a prerequisite for an effective learning environment. However, historically, student financial aid has been a non-Proposition 98 expense. We urge the Legislature and Governor to utilize federal funding for this purpose, freeing up additional one-time Proposition 98 funding for other purposes, such as paying down additional deferrals.

Furthermore, we appreciate the one-time funding for professional development. Investments in professional development will support our members in online and in person instruction as we transition out of the public health crisis.

While these investments are very much appreciated, we are still the lowest funded education segment in California and our students need to be supported with additional one-time and ongoing augmentations. We encourage the Legislature to leverage the increased revenue and likelihood of additional federal stimulus to implement the following:

Deferrals

We appreciate the Governor's proposal to pay down roughly 70% of the existing deferrals. Due to the expected structural deficit in the future, we support eliminating additional deferrals, if additional one-time funding becomes available. Lingering deferrals create unnecessary, additional pressure on our already underfunded districts.



FACCC

Faculty Association of
California Community
Colleges
Debbie Klein, President

Expand the COLA and reject contingencies

Cost-of-living-adjustments (COLA) are critical to ensure districts can keep up with expenses. Inadequate COLA increases are essentially budget cuts to our colleges. Similar to K-12, community colleges did not receive a COLA last year. We request that our system receive the same 3.84% adjustment in the 2021-22 budget that is proposed for K-12. Additionally, we believe that making COLA contingent on the creation or implementation of a policy proposal is problematic. Cost of Living Adjustments exist to maintain the status quo purchasing power of districts and their employees. The addition or modification of district requirements such as action plans should not be commingled with basic funding.

Shift enrollment growth funding to COLA

We expect enrollment to increase once the public health crisis subsides, but for this budget year it would be more prudent to shift growth funding to the COLA. Currently, our colleges are not growing and additional investments this year in an appropriate COLA will put our colleges in a better position when enrollment returns.

Add an additional year of the hold harmless provision in the funding formula

The Governor and Legislature's support to extend the hold harmless provision of the student-centered funding formula has ensured none of our colleges face an immediate fiscal crisis; however, the impact of COVID-19 on our colleges' finances will be long lasting, necessitating a longer period of hold harmless be enacted.

Increase support for full-time and part-time faculty to serve students

Research shows conclusively that student access to faculty, whether full-time or part-time, is the single most critical factor that ensures student success. Also critical to student success is increasing the diversity of faculty to reflect the students we serve. Funding for more full-time positions and part-time faculty support should be an ongoing annual budget priority to accomplish both goals and promote academic quality and student achievement.

Respectfully,



Dolores Davison, President
Academic Senate for California Community Colleges



Jeffrey Michels, President
California Community College Independents



Eric Kaljumägi, President
Community College Association/California Teachers Association



Jim Mahler, President
Community College Council/California Federation of Teachers



Debbie Klein, President
Faculty Association of California Community Colleges

CC: Hon. Kevin McCarty, Chair, Assembly Budget Subcommittee No. 2
Members, Assembly Budget Subcommittee No. 2 on Education Finance
Hon. John Laird, Chair, Senate Budget Subcommittee No. 1 on Education Finance
Members, Senate Budget Subcommittee No. 1 on Education Finance
Mark Martin, Assembly Budget Committee Consultant
Anita Lee, Senate Budget Committee Consultant
Lyndsay Mitchell, Republican Consultant
Mónica Henestroza, Office of Speaker Rendon
Megan Baier, Office of Senate Pro Tem Atkins
Lande Ajose, Higher Education Policy Advisor to Governor Gavin Newsom
Michelle Nguyen, Department of Finance
Paul Steenhausen, Legislative Analyst's Office