



2019

STATE LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES



RANCHO SANTIAGO
Community College District

The Rancho Santiago Community College District is encouraged by the support from the Legislature for California's Community College system and the 2.2 million students it serves. Over the course of the 2019-2020 legislative session, the District hopes the Legislature will prioritize action on these critical issues and continue to build on investments made in recent years.

Provide Additional Resources to Help Students Meet Basic Needs

Student success is largely driven by students' access to such basic needs as food, housing, and transportation. Moreover, availability of childcare, affordable healthcare, and basic school supplies play a critical role for many of our students. The Legislature has made significant investments over the last two budget years, but more must be done to support districts and their efforts to address student homelessness and hunger.

Legislative Actions:

- Support legislative efforts to address the needs identified by the statewide Affordability, Hunger, and Housing Access Task Force.
- Encourage cities and counties to work with their local community colleges to combat student homelessness.
- Support legislation that increases access to mental health services for students.
- Support legislation that increases access to childcare services for students.

Increase College Access and Affordability

The cost of attending college continues to rise for students across the state. Studies demonstrate that CSU and UC students have more financial aid opportunities than community college students and therefore our students can bear a larger financial burden.

Legislative Actions:

- Support legislative efforts to increase financial aid funding and eligibility criteria.
- Expand upon current and future budget year support for the California College Promise.
- Support legislation to expand the CalGrant program for community college students.
- Consider how free community college programs can be expanded to include non-traditional students who do not currently meet all criteria, including full-time enrollment.

Implement the Student Centered Funding Formula in a Way That Elevates the Mission of the California Community College System

The District will actively support and participate in any advocacy efforts that are necessary to ensure the new Student Centered Funding Formula is implemented in a way that advances and reflects the inclusive and supportive mission of the California Community College System.

Legislative Actions:

- The District strongly encourages the Legislature to continue its oversight role with regard to the new funding formula.
- Any proposed changes must provide districts with the flexibility to adequately serve their unique student needs.

Promote Quality Learning Environments Throughout the State

Proposition 51 provided much needed support for facility construction and improvements in districts across California. As existing structures continue to age and colleges adapt to growing enrollment demands and ever-changing workforce training requirements, it is important to continue funding these projects and ensure students have access to safe, modern learning environments.

Legislative Actions:

- Support legislative efforts to address existing facility maintenance backlogs and aid in new construction.
- Exercise legislative oversight on proposed changes to the system's Capital Outlay process.
- Support legislation focused on addressing long-term facility needs.

Ensure Clear Categorical Consolidation Metrics and Offer Accountability Measures

The new Student Equity and Achievement Program is the result of the 2018-2019 State Budget consolidation of the Student Success and Support Program (SSSP), Basic Skills Initiative (BSI), and Student Equity (SE). Successful categorical consolidation can be achieved through clear metrics that hold colleges accountable. The District supports all efforts that ensure students continue to have the same level of and access to funding via a new, highly efficient, and streamlined approach.

Legislative Actions:

- Support a Cost of Living Adjustment for the Student Success and Support Program.
- Support consolidation that allows local flexibility while ensuring accountability and improved outcomes for students.
- Work collaboratively with system stakeholders to more clearly define noncredit eligibility within the consolidation efforts.

Advancement of the Guided Pathways Framework

As a pilot district in the implementation of the Guided Pathways Framework, the District believes that Guided Pathways is essential to the mission of the California Community College System and to the success of students. It is crucial to continue to advocate for funding of vital components of Guided Pathways, including noncredit partnerships, Promise Programs, and dual enrollment.

Legislative Actions:

- Support for legislation that removes the sunset of the dual enrollment program, ensuring continued student access to this key component of Guided Pathways.
- Support efforts for inclusion of noncredit Guided Pathways Framework.
- Support legislation that encourages continuation and growth of the community college baccalaureate degree programs.

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