



June 4, 2018

The Honorable Holly Mitchell, Co-Chair
The Honorable Philip Ting, Co-Chair
Members, Conference Committee on the Budget
State Capitol
Sacramento, CA 95814

Re: **2018-19 State Budget: Student Focused Funding Formula for California Community Colleges**

Dear Honorable Conferees:

As organizations committed to equity and working on behalf of students, parents, civil rights, college access, businesses, faith-based communities, state employees, and colleges, the **33 undersigned organizations are writing to request your positive consideration of the Governor Brown's revised proposal to shift to a student-centered funding formula for the California Community Colleges**; which takes into account feedback from multiple stakeholder groups including, student, social justice and business partners. We believe revising the funding formula for the California Community Colleges to prioritize student success and equity is vital to ensuring current and future students not only gain access to our community colleges but ultimately succeed in reaching their college goals.

The current funding formula - which relies largely upon a census taken during the third week of enrollment - encourages community colleges to grant access to more students to stabilize campus budgets but is limited in that it **does not encourage these same institutions to prioritize student success, improve outcomes, or close**

equity gaps. As a result, too few students cross the finish line and a majority (52%) of degree-seeking students are unable to complete a certificate, degree or transfer to a university after six years of entering these two-year institutions. **Completion rates are even more alarming for students of color with six out of ten African Americans and Latinx failing to complete** such milestones and most low-income students not reaching their college goals.

The revised and strengthened funding formula is much improved reflecting recommendations from our organizations that the proposal must ensure that low-income and other underrepresented students are prioritized in a funding formula and in student success metrics. We are encouraged by the following new provisions that strengthen the proposal to better support equity:

- **Supplemental Metrics.** The Governor proposes equity-driven metrics that recognizes key student groups that colleges struggle to serve well by providing additional resources based on the enrollment of low-income and undocumented students. Importantly, the allocation encourages improved Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) completion so more community college students draw down the federal aid they're eligible for.
- **Student Success Incentive Metrics.** The revised student success grant now aligns with the *Vision for Success* and Guided Pathways and captures progression milestones that are key to ensuring students are on track early to meet their educational goals in addition to ensuring more students leave college transfer-ready to a four-year university.

Additionally, the allocation provides incentives for colleges to promote the success of low-income students.

As revised and strengthened, this funding formula has the opportunity to transform community colleges to better serve students. It prioritizes low-income and underrepresented students' success, encourages districts to make progress and improve student achievement, enables districts and colleges to be more aware and aligned with state goals and initiatives, and facilitates the cultural and programmatic changes necessary for the betterment of students and their educational goals. **We urge your support of the student-centered funding formula for California Community Colleges. Now is the time for the state to align community college funding in order to urgently realize and sustain the promise of equity.**

Thank you for your consideration and leadership.

Sincerely,

After-School All-Stars, LA
Alliance for a Better Community
Asian Americans Advancing Justice
Black Parallel School Board
CAFE de California, Chicano Latino State Employees Association
California Competes
The Campaign for College Opportunity
Camino Nuevo Charter Academy
Cerritos College
Congregations Organized for Prophetic Engagement (C.O.P.E.)
The Education Trust–West
Families In Schools
GradGuru

Greater Sacramento Urban League
Heart of Los Angeles
Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities
Inland Empire Economic Partnership
Los Angeles Area Chamber of Commerce
Mexican American Legal Defense and Educational Fund
NAACP Pomona Valley Branch
NextGen California
The Opportunity Institute
Our Family Coalition
Parent Organization Network
SBCUSD African American Advisory Council
Southeast Asia Resource Action Center
Southern California College Access Network
Students Making a Change
UnidosUS
United Way of Greater Los Angeles
The Village Method
The Women's Foundation of California
Young Invincibles