

January 28, 2015

**STATEMENT BY MICHELE SIQUEIROS, PRESIDENT OF THE CAMPAIGN FOR COLLEGE OPPORTUNITY
Chancellor Timothy White's State of the California State University & Graduation Initiative 2025 Goals**

State should follow CSU lead in articulating goals

Chancellor White and the California State University (CSU) system should be commended for articulating clear goals to improve college graduation rates, time to degree, and closing the gaps between students of color and their peers. Our Governor and state policymakers should follow the CSU's lead and set overarching goals and expectations for all three segments of public higher education that ensure we increase college going rates, improve college graduation and finally close the gaps between different ethnic groups on both of these measures.

Current graduation rates are unacceptable and the persistent racial gaps in higher education are particularly disturbing in a state as diverse as California. The new goals set forward by Chancellor White – to improve graduation rates, improve transfer success, and close equity gaps- should inspire the leaders of every single CSU campus to put forward meaningful plans that meet these goals because at the end of the day, the change has to happen on the ground.

We urge the CSU system to be just as aggressive about improving the four year graduation rate as they are about improving the six year rate. CSU students who can enroll in 15 credits per term, should be encouraged to do so. Those who can't should be well informed that anything less will extend their time to graduation. Improving time to degree for students and families is a college affordability issue. The more time students spend in college, the more families and taxpayers pay while fewer spots are available for new students.

While we laud the CSU for setting new goals, the state has a role to play as well. There is no doubt that the state must provide sufficient funding for the CSU so it can serve every eligible freshman college applicant and community college transfer student in the state of California. The turning away of thousands of eligible CSU applicants is inconsistent with our state's economic needs and with California's historic promise of a spot in college for all qualified students. However, additional money from taxpayers should come with clear accountability for meeting and exceeding the goals set forth in the CSU Graduation Initiative 2025.

Producing more college graduates in California is not just good for college graduates, it's critical for our economy. While we look forward to seeing more details about the CSU Graduation Initiative 2025, given California's looming workforce shortage, these goals are a very good step in the right direction.

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About Campaign for College Opportunity:

The Campaign for College Opportunity is a California non-profit organization focused on a single mission: to ensure that the next generation of California students has the chance to attend college and succeed in order to keep our workforce and economy strong. For more information, visit www.collegecampaign.org / [Facebook.com/CollegeCampaign](https://www.facebook.com/CollegeCampaign) or follow [@CollegeOpp](https://twitter.com/CollegeOpp).