



CALIFORNIA COMMUNITY COLLEGES

STUDENT SUCCESS

TASK FORCE





To place additional focus on these critical progression metrics, the Task Force recommends that system-wide accountability efforts be updated to include the collecting and reporting of both the outcomes and the progression measures for the system, and for each college. These measures will be disaggregated by race/ethnicity to aid the system in understanding how well it is performing in educating those historically disadvantaged populations whose educational success is vital to the future of the state.

A Commitment to Equity

As the Task Force deliberated over strategies to improve student success rates in the community colleges, they were unanimous and resolute in their belief that improvements in college success rates should not come at the expense of access. The California Community Colleges take great pride in being the gateway to opportunity for Californians of all backgrounds, including traditionally underrepresented economic, social, and racial/ethnic subgroups. Our system “looks like California” and we are committed to maintaining that quality. The goal of equitable access—and the commitment to help all students achieve success—is a driving force behind the recommendations contained in this report.

The Task Force's recommendations are aimed at increasing the number of students from all demographic and socioeconomic subgroups who attain a certificate, complete a degree, or transfer to a four-year college or university. As such, improving overall completion rates and closing achievement gaps among historically underrepresented students are co-equal goals. The Task Force's commitment to educational equity is reflected throughout the recommendations, but perhaps most explicitly in its proposal to establish statewide and college-level performance goals that are disaggregated by racial/eth-

nic group. Doing so will allow the system and state leaders to monitor impacts of the policy changes on these subgroups while also focusing state and local efforts on closing gaps in educational attainment. Given California's changing demographic profile, the success of these historically underrepresented groups will determine the fortunes of our state.

Task Force Origins and Process Chronology of This Effort

In January 2011, the Community Colleges Board of Governors embarked on a 12-month strategic planning process to improve student success. Pursuant to Senate Bill 1143 (Chapter 409, Statutes of 2010), the Board of Governors created the Student Success Task Force. The resulting 20-member Task Force was composed of a diverse group of community college leaders, faculty, students, researchers, staff, and external stakeholders. The Task Force delved deeply into complex college and system-level policies and practices. It worked for seven months to identify best practices for promoting student success and to develop statewide strategies to take these approaches to scale while ensuring that educational opportunity for historically underrepresented students would not just be maintained, but bolstered.

Each month, from January through June 2011, the Task Force met to examine topics critical to the success of students transferring from college (and assessment) to four-year colleges and universities.

Implementation Process

The recommendations in this report represent policies practices that the Task Force believes will help the California Community Colleges to improve student success. Some of the recommendations reflect changes that are already underway, while others would chart entirely new territory. In each case, the recommendations will require that in-depth, discrete, and specific implementation strategies be developed in consultation with the appropriate practitioners and stakeholders. The strategies employed will vary depending on whether the proposed change is statutory, regulatory, or involves disseminating best practices. The community college system has a rich history of shared governance and local collective bargaining; nothing in this report is designed to upend those processes. Further, the Task Force recognizes that to be successful, these recommendations will need to be implemented over time, in a logical and sequential manner.

The recommendations contained herein will not be achieved overnight.

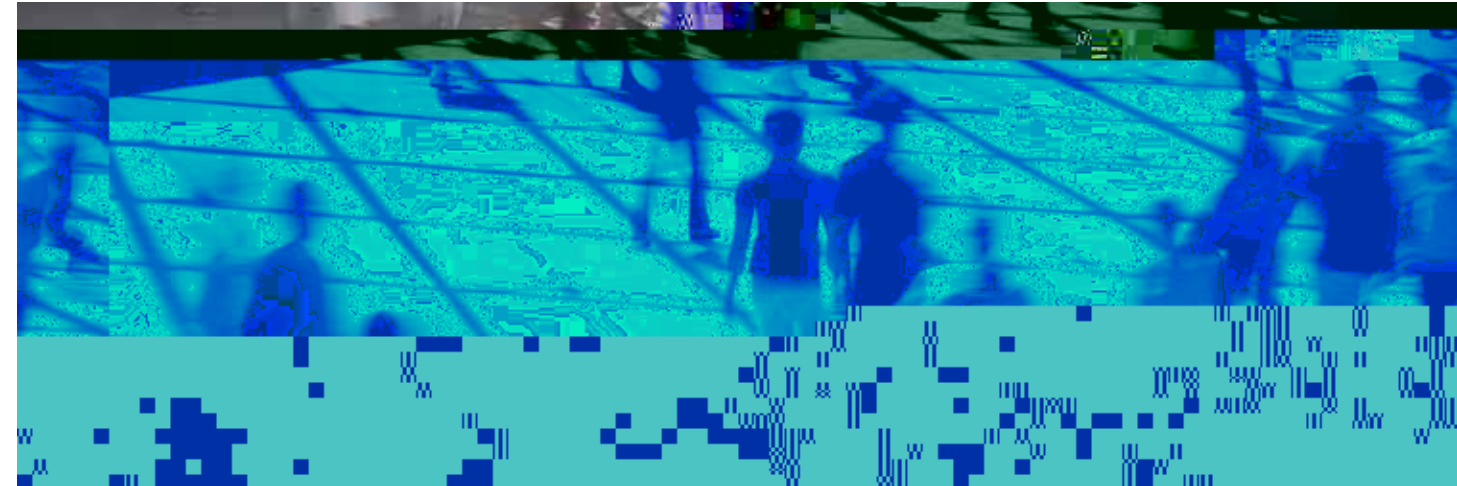
PART II

RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE STUDENT SUCCESS TASK FORCE

INCREASE STUDENT READINESS FOR COLLEGE

A vast majority of first-time students entering the California Community Colleges (CCC) are underprepared for college-level work. In the CCCs, 70 to 90 percent of first-time students who take an assessment test require remediation in English, math, or both. In 2010, 79 percent of California's 11th grade students who took the Early Assessment Program (EAP) college readiness test did not test "college ready." Currently, K-12 and postsecondary education policies related to standards, curriculum, and assessment are not well aligned to communicate either clear expectations for college and career readiness or to support a smooth transition for high





P lic S a emen :

Community colleges will provide stronger support for students entering college to

- A job placement module;
- A textbook purchasing module; and
- A transfer advisement module.

Requirements for Implementation

- Secure additional state funding for the development of the proposed technology tools that would then be provided to colleges free of charge.
- A centralized development and procurement process would leverage the system's size to drive down the estimated annual cost of the project to approximately \$12 million.
- Initiate discussion with existing advisory groups, such as the Matriculation Advisory Committee, Telecommunications and Technology Advisory Committee, Chancellor's Office Advisory Group on Counseling, CCCApply Steering Committee, and others, to refine the scope and approach to growing services.
- Convene appropriate advisory groups that include program and technology experts to plan and execute technology projects as funding is secured.

Recommendation 2.4

Recommendation 2.4: The state should fund a program to support students' readiness for college, including academic readiness, college readiness, and financial readiness. The program should be designed to support students' readiness for college, including academic readiness, college readiness, and financial readiness.

A student's readiness for college is based on several factors in addition to their academic proficiency in English and mathematics. College readiness includes other variables that can influence a student's ability to successfully complete credit-bearing, college-level coursework. The extensive work done by Dr. David Conley's Education Policy Improvement Center at the University of Oregon defines four dimensions of "college knowledge" critical to student success: (1) Key cognitive strategies, including analysis, interpretation, precision, problem solving, and reasoning; (2) Specific types of content knowledge, most importantly the ability to read and write critically; (3) Attitudes and behavioral attributes, including study skills, time management, awareness of one's performance, persistence, and the ability to utilize study groups; and (4) Contextual knowledge about college resources and expectations and how to successfully adjust to navigating the college environment.

Community colleges have tested numerous models of supporting under-prepared students, both inside and

INCENTIVIZE SUCCESSFUL STUDENT BEHAVIORS

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Policies that enable students to wander around the curriculum, withdraw and repeat classes multiple times, avoid services that could help them find a productive pathway, and accumulate an unlimited number of units are a disservice to enrolled students and to those who can't get into the system for lack of available classes.

Adopt Consistent Policies for Enrolling Students

As a system, we have both initiated and continue to rely on these ineffective policies. However, now is the time for the community college system to abandon these ineffective policies and adopt enrollment



Recommendation 3.3

Community college students' achievement of their educational objectives is directly related to the time they spend in college. The faster a student completes his or her education the less time there is for life or family issues to get in the way. Students benefit from full-time attendance by increasing their earning potential sooner while colleges benefit from the greater efficiency of serving one full-time student versus two or more part-time students for the same funding.

Research indicates a high correlation between full-time enrollment and students' achievement of their educational objectives. The faster a student completes his or her education the less time there is for life or family issues to get in the way. Students benefit from full-time attendance by increasing their earning potential sooner while colleges benefit from the greater efficiency of serving one full-time student versus two or more part-time students for the same funding.

Many community college students are not in a position to enroll full-time, particularly those who work full-time and are enrolled to upgrade their job skills as well as those who depend on full-time employment to support families. Nonetheless, there are simple steps that can be taken to ensure that students are made aware of the benefits of full-time enrollment and can consider whether such a route is possible for them.

Requirements for Implementation

- No statutory or regulatory changes are needed. This can be accomplished by dissemination of best practices for financial aid packaging and deployment of existing resources, including the *I Can Afford College* financial aid awareness program.

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Chapter 5 of this document addresses improving the quantity and efficacy of basic skills instruction. Colleges need to be able to

ALIGN COURSE OFFERINGS TO MEET STUDENT NEEDS

Public Statement :

Community colleges will focus course offerings on meeting student needs.

Offer Courses that Align with Student Education Plans

Significant reductions in public funding have forced community colleges across the state to reduce the number of course sections they offer. As a result, the availability of courses is insufficient to meet the student demand in almost every area of the curriculum. At the beginning of each term, course sections close quickly and waiting lists are longer than ever before seen in the system.

Given this context, California Community Colleges

IMPROVE THE EDUCATION OF BASIC SKILLS STUDENTS

P l i c S a e m e n :

The community college system will develop a cohesive statewide framework for the delivery of basic skills educational services.

Need for Basic Skills Reform

In California, basic skills students often are “traditional” students who have matriculated through the K-12 system and arrived at the community colleges under-

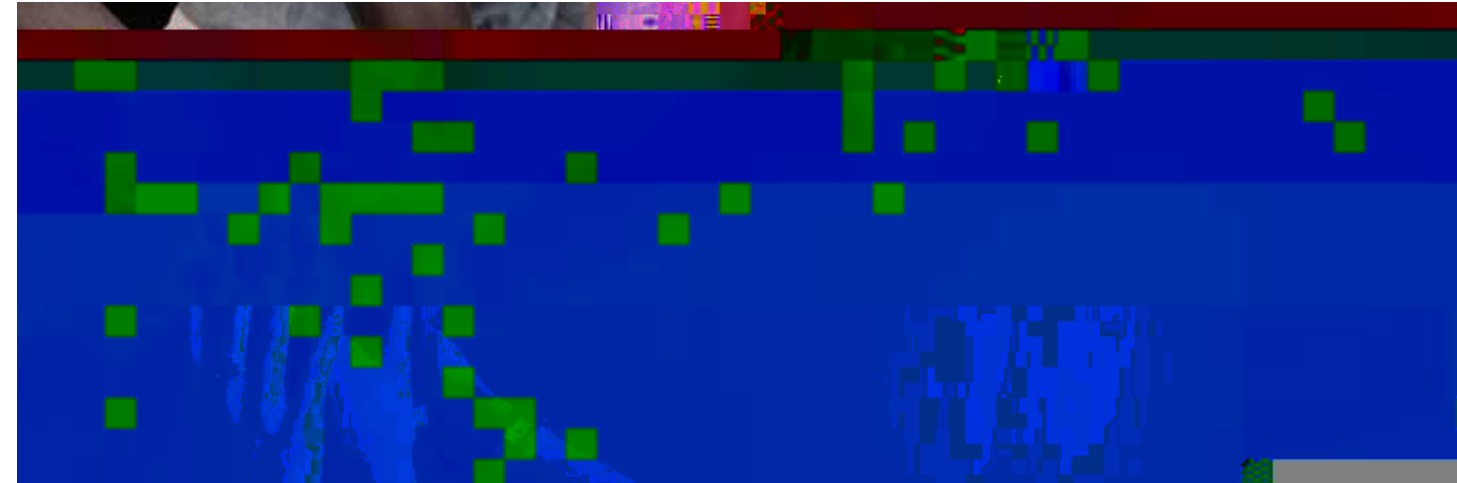
Requirements for Implementation

- Authorize the reallocation of Basic Skills Initiative (BSI) dollars in the annual Budget Act.
- Chancellor's Office will adopt amended guidelines to redistribute the BSI funding to:
- Target a fixed portion of the money to specifically incentivize faculty redesign of curriculum and support innovations in basic skills instruction.
- Develop clear curricular pathways from basic skills into collegiate-level coursework.
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REVITALIZE AND RE-ENVISION PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

P. o S. a. , r. i. :

ENABLE EFFICIENT STATEWIDE LEADERSHIP AND INCREASE COORDINATION AMONG COLLEGES



Policy Statement:

The state should promote greater state-level support and coordination, including the implementation of a new goal-setting framework so that California's diverse community colleges can function more as a system.

Need for a Stronger Community College System Office

Successfully implementing system-wide reforms to improve student outcomes in the California Community Colleges will require stronger state-level leadership and coordination than currently exists.

The community college system needs a structure that can both drive and ensure fidelity to statewide efforts aimed at improving student outcomes. Improved sharing of data, common goal setting, and a stronger Chancellor's Office are foundational to



Recommendation 7.4

The state of California should create a longitudinal data warehouse and a research resource to improve student achievement.

Linked student-level data is tremendously useful to help determine what is working and what is not working to improve student achievement. Under the present system, educational records are housed at each of the segments (CCC, CDE, CSU, UC) respective headquarters. While these institutions routinely share data for a variety of mandated reports and studies, data has not been aggregated centrally or leveraged to improve student instruction or develop centralized student support systems.

Community colleges need system-wide student-level data that can link to the other higher education segments, K-12, and workforce records in order to analyze progress and identify, improve, and implement strategies that are effective at improving student outcomes. The necessity to target resources to support effective strategies has increased as the state budget crisis has led to significant cuts in funding for public education. Information on what is working allows the state to set funding priorities that maximize positive impacts and put students' needs first.

Shared student-level data is also needed to unite the colleges' work to improve student completion. Many community college students transfer among colleges during their educational career or take courses at more than one college at the same time. A shared data system would allow colleges to synchronize assessments, use a common standard to determine readiness for credit bearing coursework, and aggregate academic records. Further, robust data would better enable faculty members to incorporate post-enrollment student outcomes into their curriculum development.

Robust and reliable linked data are essential both for in-person and online education planning and advisement, the implementation system-wide enrollment priorities, and the ability of colleges to match course offerings with actual student educational pathways. Without good student-level information, neither counselors nor online tools will be able to effectively provide the guidance necessary to help students select courses and sequence those courses in a manner appropriate to their program of study. Such data is also needed to maintain transcripts and monitor students' degree status so students not only know how to pursue their postsecondary goals, but also are also aware of when they have reached them. Because of the lack of coordination between community colleges today, many students continue to take courses even after meeting the requirements for a certificate or transfer to a UC or CSU simply because they are not aware that they have completed the requirements. Shared data is essential to making the system more efficient and to improve student completion of their academic goals.

Required for Implementation

- Secure a commitment from the education segments for the development of a longitudinal K-20/wage data warehouse and the creation of an educational research resource.
- Chancellor's Office, together with the other education segments and the labor agency should procure one-time funding (including grant and philanthropic funding) for database development.

- Centralizing the implementation of assessment, technology, and other initiatives to achieve greater economies of scale;
- Modifying the Board of Governors Fee Waiver program;
- Expanding the use of technology to promote efficiency and effectiveness;
- Identifying best practices that can be achieved by redirection of local resources.

Recommendation 8.3

As part of its statutory charge, the Task Force studied outcomes-based funding as one of the potential strategies to promote improved student success. The topic was addressed extensively in both the full Task Force and in a smaller Working Group on Finance. In this examination, the Task Force benefited from input by practitioners from other states that have implemented outcomes-based funding as well as na-

shown to be important “tipping points” leading to successful program completion. Each college is compared against its own past performance, thus neutralizing differences associated with local economic and demographic variables. The outcomes-based funding mechanism involves a relatively small portion of overall funding, thus limiting funding volatility. Lastly, the Washington state model has demonstrated early signs that student outcomes have improved under the new funding formula.

Split Decision

After considerable review, the Task Force was divided on the topic of outcome-based funding. A vocal minority supported implementing some version of outcome-based funding, while the majority of Task Force members did not support such a proposal at this time due to various concerns, some of which are noted above. For many Task Force members, the lack of national evidence demonstrating that outcome-based funding made a positive impact on student success was an important factor in their decision to

Acknowledgments