

COMMUNITY COLLEGE LEAGUE OF CALIFORNIA

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February 16, 2024

Hon. Scott Wiener, Chair
Senate Budget and Fiscal Review Committee

Hon. Jesse Gabriel, Chair
Assembly Budget Committee
Sacramento, CA 95814

**Re: Community College Budget Proposal
6870-101-0001**

Dear Senator Wiener and Assemblymember Gabriel:

On behalf of the Community College League of California (the “League”), representing the community college CEOs and Trustees, we wish to express our appreciation to the Administration and legislative leadership for their support of our institutions and students. We share in your belief that the key to a successful society with a robust and thriving economy is quality public higher education which is grounded in both equity and accessibility.

Amidst a \$38 billion projected revenue shortfall, the Governor expresses tremendous confidence in our community colleges by keeping our revenues stable while prudently using reserves to bridge the difference. This allows us to continue the momentum of increasing such metrics as degree and certificate completion while regaining student enrollment. The Administration’s specific focus on workforce education, moreover, is extremely significant in this period of rapid technological change and economic volatility.

We offer the following comments on the Governor’s proposed 2024-25 budget through the lens of how it offers our colleges stability, predictability, and flexibility in the framework of equity. Recognizing that the budget is a work in progress, we reserve the right to amend our positions as new information becomes available.

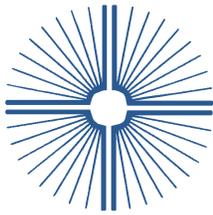
I. Ongoing

\$29.6 million to support 0.5 percent growth

Response: We support this proposal and request that unused funds for growth be considered for a supplemental allocation to base apportionment.

\$69.1 million to support 0.76% COLA on apportionments and \$9.3 million to support 0.76% COLA on select categorical programs

Response: In this period of revenue decline, we are especially appreciative of this proposal, particularly in how it aligns with our K-12 partner in Proposition 98. Although we recognize the limited availability of new funding, we continue to advocate for the policy of applying COLA to categorical programs beyond those identified in the budget.



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II. One-Time

\$60 million to expand nursing capacity

Response: This is an extremely important and timely proposal, which is complementary to our cosponsored measure, SB 895 (Roth), creating a pilot program at the community colleges for Baccalaureate Degree Programs in Nursing.

III. Student Housing

TBL for statewide lease revenue bond and rental subsidies

Response: We are incredibly supportive of state efforts to address the very real housing crisis experienced by our students and will defer specific comment for when the TBL is released.

IV. Cal Grant

Implementation of Cal Grant reform dependent on DOF determining in Spring 2024 that there are sufficient revenues for this purpose.

Response: We continue to place Cal Grant reform as a top priority and appreciate the Administration's overall commitment to this goal.

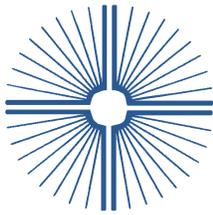
V. Proposition 98

Reduction of \$8 billion in 2022-23 with commitment to multi-year reimbursement

Response: We defer comment pending the release of TBL.

VI. Not In Budget: Flexibility

During times of economic instability, we urge the Administration and Legislature to allow local districts greater opportunity to manage their funds to best serve their local communities. We believe the most important starting point is with a modernization of the Fifty Percent Law found in Education Code Section 84362 to allow for all faculty work to be included in the numerator of this equation.



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We are once again grateful to you to the Governor for the confidence in the work of our colleges and for consideration of our positions on this budget proposal. Please do not hesitate to contact us with any questions.

Sincerely,

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Hon. David Alvarez, Chair, Assembly Budget Subcommittee # 3 on Education Finance
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