

CoFO

COUNCIL OF FACULTY ORGANIZATIONS



ASCCC
*Academic Senate for
California Community
Colleges*
John Stankas, President

November 26, 2019

Re: In Support of “Focus on Faculty and Staff”



CCCI
*California Community College
Independents*
Jeffrey Michaels, President

Dear Leaders of the California Legislature:

Council of Faculty Organizations (CoFO), consisting of the Academic Senate for California Community Colleges, the Faculty Association of California Community Colleges, the Community College Association of the California Teachers Association, the Community College Council of California Federation of Teachers, and the California Community College Independents, appreciates the support that the Department of Finance and Governor Newsom continue to provide toward improving California community college student services in pursuit of student success.



CCA/CTA
*Community College
Association/California
Teachers Association*
Eric Kaljumägi, President

We also recognize that, despite this support, the California community colleges remain underfunded, especially with respect to what is required to meet the challenges of closing student achievement gaps and ensuring full access to success for every member of a student body as diverse as the one we serve. With recent attention focused on the mechanics of our academic and career programs, such as student placement and remediation, our institutional pathways, and our delivery of non-instructional support, the most essential ingredient for student success has been neglected: student interaction with and access to faculty.



CCC/CFT
*Community College
Council/California Federation
of Teachers*
Jim Mahler, President

Faculty are responsible for developing, delivering, and implementing any systemic or institutional initiative that will benefit students, whether locally developed or mandated by legislative action. Faculty work directly with students on a day-to-day basis through instruction, counseling, and other support services. Any changes involving curriculum development or delivery, student access, or student success depend on a properly qualified faculty body that is sufficient in size, motivated, and available for regular and ongoing interaction with students. Furthermore, research concludes that a diverse faculty leads to increased rates of student success. For a compilation of research on the importance of faculty to student success, please see the Faculty Association of California Community Colleges’ literature review, *Why Faculty Matter: The Role of Faculty in the Success of Community College Students*.



FACCC
*Faculty Association of
California Community
Colleges*
Debbie Klein, President

In order for the California Community Colleges System to best serve students and meet the educational and workforce needs of the state, existing funding must be refocused, and additional funding allocated, to provide students with greater access to and interaction with faculty. To this end, CoFO supports the “Focus on Faculty and Staff” components of the Chancellor’s Office 2020-21 Legislative and Budget Request for the California Community Colleges, which include the following items:

1. Implementation of Faculty and Staff Diversity Taskforce Recommendations

Diversification can only succeed if colleges are sufficiently funded for additional full-time faculty positions that present a career option that is attractive to a diverse pool of talented and dedicated college educators. CoFO recommends that this goal be pursued through implementation of a system-wide effort to make progress toward the legislature’s long-standing goal of having 75 percent of instruction in classrooms taught by full-time instructors. At a minimum, any plan to increase the number of full-time faculty must include updating district hiring baselines to reflect current levels of full-time positions as a starting point rather than perpetuating benchmark data from 1988 upon which current faculty obligation numbers are based.

2. Part-Time Faculty Support

Any improvement of student success rates in the California community colleges must include part-time faculty in the effort. Genuine student success requires the full participation and support of all faculty, and 70 percent of the current faculty body is part-time.

On most California community college campuses today, part-time faculty are required and compensated only to prepare and teach classes and assess the students in those classes. In most cases, the rate of pay for the services that are required of part-time faculty is below the rate full-time faculty receive for these same services. On many campuses, part-time faculty are not compensated at all for their additional voluntary but essential work of holding office hours and serving students in other ways, such as writing recommendation letters or providing informal advising.

Research shows conclusively that student access to faculty, whether full- or part-time, is the single most critical college-controlled factor that ensures student success. Some recent institutional reform movements, while perhaps well intended, have had the effect of reducing student access to faculty. California would be better served and students would benefit more if the state were to determine the cost of maximizing student interaction with both full- and part-time faculty, the key component of achieving student success, and provide the funding to prioritize such interaction on every campus.

3. Professional Development to Improve Teaching and Student Support

Funding for access to professional development opportunities for full- and part-time faculty, staff, and administrators is essential to maintaining the quality of our colleges and is a fundamental element of the colleges’ student success effort. Funding should be distributed equitably to the colleges and districts, and the professional

development programs should be locally determined to remain reflective of the needs of each college, its employees, and its community.

Finally, the Council of Faculty Organizations holds firmly to the California Community Colleges System's principle of open access for all Californians. We are steadfastly opposed to performance-based funding and would like to see this component of funding removed from the current funding formula, not only because no evidence exists that it is an effective means to encourage positive behavior in institutions of higher education but also because, in a fundamentally underfunded system like the California Community Colleges, it will lead to a reduction of access, an undermining of student success efforts in colleges that are most in need of supplemental support. Ultimately, performance-based funding leads to a reduction of academic standards and quality that will negatively impact not only the success of students but the economy and productivity of the state.

We also recommend, in view of the times of economic stress surely lying ahead when the Student-Centered Funding Formula will operate at a deficit, that the state fund the formula in the following manner:

1. Fund the General FTES Access Allocation first.
2. Fund the Supplemental Allocation second, preferably with resources outside of Proposition 98. Rather than take money away from the base allocation of some colleges to augment others, maintain the "hold harmless" provision indefinitely and only fund supplemental allocations with additional funds.
3. If still viable, fund the Performance Allocation last and preferably outside of Proposition 98.

Such prioritization will ensure that funding is distributed in a manner that provides the greatest stability for colleges and will emphasize the aspects of the formula that will have the greatest impact on institutional and student success.

Sincerely,



John Stankas
President
Academic Senate for California Community Colleges



Jeffrey Michaels
President
California Community College Independents



Eric Kaljumagi
Community College Association/California Teachers Association



Jim Mahler
President
Community College Council/California Federation of Teachers



Debbie Klein, President
Faculty Association of California Community Colleges

cc: Senate President Pro Tempore Toni Atkins
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