



CALIFORNIA COMMUNITY COLLEGES

CHANCELLOR'S OFFICE

PRESS RELEASE

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Paige Marlatt Dorr
Office: 916.327.5356
Cell: 916.601.8005
Office E-mail: pdorr@cccco.edu

Board of Governors and Community College League Team Up to Support California College Promise Legislation

AB 1721 will provide more financial aid resources to students in need

SACRAMENTO, Calif. – The California Community Colleges Board of Governors and the Community College League of California have joined forces to co-sponsor legislation supporting the “California College Promise,” which includes an Assembly bill aimed at removing barriers to access to community colleges by improving existing financial aid programs.

The bill, AB 1721, by Assembly member Jose Medina (D-Riverside), Assembly member David Chiu (D-San Francisco), Assembly member Evan Low (D-Campbell), Assembly member Freddie Rodriguez (D-Pamona), Assembly member Miguel Santiago (D-Los Angeles) and Assembly member Phil Ting (D-San Francisco) would expand the Cal Grant program for community college students, increases access to the Board of Governors Fee waiver program and provides funding to community colleges to establish regional “promise” programs that would offer even more assistance.

“California already leads the nation when it comes to providing tuition assistance for higher education,” said California Community Colleges Chancellor Brice W. Harris. “This legislation builds on that promise and allows more low-income students the opportunity to pursue higher education, while strengthening the state’s workforce.”

The California College Promise builds on framework laid out by President Barack Obama’s America’s College Promise, a non-partisan initiative to increase access to higher education.

“By providing more financial aid resources to students in need, AB 1721 will help disadvantaged students take more classes, obtain their degrees and ultimately be more academically successful,” said Larry Galizio, President and CEO of the Community College League of California. “We strongly support this legislation and applaud the commitment to make college more affordable for all Californians.”

AB 1721 calls to expand the Cal Grant program to better serve community college students by increasing the number of competitive Cal Grant A and B awards from 25,750 to 30,000 and increasing the amount of the Cal Grant B Access award from \$1,551 to \$3,000. It also seeks to expand access to the California Community College Transfer Entitlement Award by increasing the age limit to 31 from 28, and extending the application deadline.

The legislation also calls to increase access to the Board of Governors Fee Waiver program, which waives community college tuition fees for qualified students unable to afford it. Through outreach programs, districts would work to ensure qualified students take advantage of all aid and waivers available to them. Of the 2.1 million students currently enrolled in California Community Colleges, more than 1 million of them receive a fee waiver.

More information can be found on the California College Promise at: <http://calcollegepromise.org/>.

The California Community Colleges is the largest system of higher education in the nation composed of 72 districts and 113 colleges serving 2.1 million students per year. Community colleges supply workforce training, basic skills education in English and math, and prepare students for transfer to four-year institutions. The Chancellor's Office provides leadership, advocacy and support under the direction of the Board of Governors of the California Community Colleges. For more information about the community colleges, please visit <http://californiacommunitycolleges.cccco.edu/>, <https://www.facebook.com/CACommColleges>, or <https://twitter.com/CalCommColleges>.

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