



PRESS RELEASE

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**Board of Governors of the California Community Colleges Unanimously
Approves Workforce Task Force Recommendations**

Task force on workforce education announced 25 recommendations to increase California competitiveness and job creation with goal of closing skills gap and fueling job creation

WALNUT, Calif. – Today the Board of Governors of the California Community Colleges approved the 25 recommendations put forth by the Task Force on Workforce, Job Creation and a Strong Economy to strengthen workforce education throughout the 113-college system. The recommendations are to help ensure a workforce with relevant skills and quality credentials that meet employer needs.

“The approval of the recommendations decided upon by the task force is a huge win for the entire state of California,” said Board of Governors President Geoffrey L. Baum. “These important changes will allow community colleges to build on the long-established success of educating the state’s workforce, getting students into well-paying jobs and keeping pace with the increasing demand for skilled workers.”

Commissioned by the Board of Governors, the task force is comprised of representatives from community colleges, the business community, labor groups, public agencies involved in workforce training, K-12 policymakers and community-based organizations. It was entrusted to address California’s anticipated shortage of 1 million skilled workers with industry-valued middle-skill degrees, certificates and credentials.

“Employers in key industries report difficulty in filling job openings because of a shortage of workers with the right skills and aptitude,” said Sunita Cooke, chair of the task force and president/superintendent of MiraCosta Community College District. “California’s community colleges are well positioned address this skills gap and the task force recommendations provide a roadmap for enhancing our capacity to prepare students for high-value jobs.”

Through a series of college and faculty meetings, a number of town hall meetings and extensive research, the task force developed a comprehensive plan comprised of the 25 recommendations focusing on seven broad areas:

- Removing barriers to education completion with improved career exploration and planning, work-based learning and other support.
- Putting industry at the forefront of career pathway development with clear, defined sequences for learning industry-valued skills.

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- Continuous program improvement based on robust metrics and outcome data.
- Streamlining the curriculum-approval process. Currently, it takes too long, leaving students without timely skills employers require.
- Increasing the pool of qualified Career Technical Education (CTE) faculty. Currently, it's difficult to attract quality faculty because of education requirements and salary differentials.
- Regional coordination to pool resources and efforts for CTE and responding to industry needs.
- Establishing a dedicated and sustainable funding source for CTE programs. Currently, CTE courses are funded at the same level as general education courses. Yet, they have higher startup and operating costs. Funding gaps are closed with grants, but those are not long-term solutions.

To read the full set of recommendations, please go to <http://bit.ly/1pCGOM>.

The California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office [Doing What Matters for Jobs and the Economy](#) framework and the [Student Success Initiative](#) provided the foundation to launch this task force and have also been working to increase workforce and economic competitiveness. These measures are necessary in light of statistics indicating that there will be 6.3 million job openings in California through 2020, of which 2 million jobs will require a post-secondary certificate or associate degree.

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 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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