

- Additional legislation, SB1440 Student Transfer Achievement Reform or STAR Act in 2010, simplified the process of transferring from a community college to a school in the California State University (CSU) system. This program provides a pathway for students to follow so that they can be admitted to a CSU with junior status. It has been complemented by SB440 in 2013, which further incentivizes transfer students to complete an associate degree.¹⁸

The long-standing commitment to basic skills education has sometimes suffered for lack of adequate funding. However, in the 2016-17 budget there was a \$30 million increase in this targeted allocation. In May 2016 the Chancellor's Office announced a request for applications to be awarded up to \$60 million from Proposition 98 funds to implement or expand evidence-based innovations and redesign in the areas of assessment, student services, and instruction in order to improve the progression rate of basic skills students into college level instruction. Known as the Basic Skills and Student Outcomes Transformation Program, the funds were awarded to 43 colleges.

As second pool of funds was awarded to basic skills partnerships between community college districts or a consortium of districts and at least one California State University for the purpose of developing efficient and effective methods of coordinating remedial instruction and services. Successful applicants centered their proposals on evidence-based remedial education, instructional redesign, or program expansion. Five project proposals were awarded a total of \$10 million.

Perhaps the most potentially far-reaching set of recommendations for change in policy and practice were included in the report from the California Community College Chancellor's Office Student Success Task Force. The group proposed eight areas of focus with 22 recommendations. The Legislature passed the Student Success Act (SB 1456) in August 2012 and the governor signed it shortly thereafter. The measure did the following:

- Commissioned the development of a uniform placement exam for students;
- Directed colleges to provide students with orientation, assessment, placement and counseling services;
- Required students to identify an educational goal (such as degree or certificate for transfer to a four-year university) and complete an educational plan;
- Required colleges that receive student support service funds to complete and post a student success scorecard showing how well the campus is doing in improving completion rates, especially by race, ethnicity, gender, and income;
- Established minimum academic progress standards for students to receive Board of Governors fee waivers, but also developed an appeal process.

The Task Force recommendations came in the wake of a severe shortfall in resources for California's public higher education institutions. Therefore, implementation of these ideas was delayed.

¹⁸ Campaign for College Opportunity. *Keeping the Promise: Going the Distance on Transfer Reform*. March 2016.

Funds allocated for 2015-16 enabled the Chancellor's Office to provide support to colleges that develop a student success and support plan (formerly matriculation) built around some of the recommendations arising from the Student Success Task Force. The provision of effective core services (orientation, assessment and placement, counseling, academic advising, and early intervention or follow-up for at-risk students) has been found to improve students' ability promptly to define their educational and career goals, complete more of their courses, persist to the next term and achieve their educational objectives in a timely manner.¹⁹ As new priority enrollment rules were made effective in fall 2014, one of the incentives for students to complete the core services was the potential loss of priority enrollment or withholding of an enrollment opportunity.

One Student Success Task Force recommendation was the development of a robust common assessment instrument. The assessment services will also include data collection and course placement guidance, but the placement cut scores will remain a local decision. Working groups of faculty from the disciplines of English, Math and ESL have been involved in drafting competencies that address the full range of prerequisite skills found in the curriculum. The common assessment initiative has a "go live" target of the 2016-17 academic year, pending a successful pilot experience.

The effort to exploit technology to support student success blossomed into the Educational Planning Initiative that was launched to help colleges meet the requirements for student success and support program funding by providing an individual comprehensive educational plan for all students. The initiative is also intended to enhance the counseling experience by inducing students to take more responsibility for their educational program plans and to have counseling expertise used only to *verify* the planning. A degree audit system to provide transcript, articulation and curriculum inventory elements is to be provided to help both students and counselors. As a by-product, it is hoped that the numbers of unnecessary units accumulated by students will be reduced. A single sign-on portal is intended to be the student's point of access to this system that is described as a service-oriented experience in which some existing services will be complemented by new services yet to be produced. The project has a "go live" target of the 2016-17 academic year, pending a successful pilot experience.

The legislation implementing some of the recommendations of the Student Success Task Force, SB 1456, requires the coordination of student equity plans and student success and support programs. Student equity identifies groups of students needing more help and focuses on services and instruction for new and continuing students through to completion whereas student success and support programs focus on services for entering students and identifies individual students who need more help. Interest in student equity is not new as the Board of Governors adopted a student equity policy in 1992, but financial support for planning and interventions has not always been available or adequate. In 2014 the Legislature appropriated \$70 million for student equity purposes, added foster youth, veterans, and low-income students as target populations, and required specific goals and activities to address disparities and coordination of them with other

¹⁹ Eva Schiorring and Rogear Purnell. *Literature Review Brief: What We Know About Student Support* 2nd Ed. Research and Planning Group of the California Community Colleges. Fall 2012.

categorical programs. The traditional populations or variables researched for student equity planning are: age, disability status, gender and ethnicity. Unlike the student success and support program funding, dollars for student equity interventions do not require a match of funds or in-kind effort from the colleges. Funding for both efforts was increased for 2015-16 after the May 2015 budget revision. An additional increase is proposed for 2016-17.

The governor's interest in online education garnered an appropriation of \$56.9 million over 55 months to launch the Online Education Initiative for the community colleges. The initiative is intended to increase access to more online courses created by community college faculty members and to provide students well-designed resources that will improve their chances of a successful learning experience. Part of the work in this initiative is to improve student readiness to engage in the learning experience through online instruction and to provide tutoring support for those students. Those two components have had a successful pilot project "go live" in spring 2015. A common course management system launched among the pilot colleges in fall 2015. Within the initiative are efforts to assist faculty in several professional development ways- creating of online course content, teaching strategies for the online environment, course design standards, and course review training.

Adult Education Initiative

The governor's initial proposal for the adult education programs to be absorbed into the community colleges met with stiff opposition in the Legislature. A compromise was fashioned to improve and expand the provision of adult education through regional consortia that would eliminate redundancy and craft pathways into higher education for interested students. Instruction in parenting, home economics and classes for older adults were explicitly excluded from this funding. The 2015 AB104 legislation provided a block grant of funds (AEBG) to support action plans to close gaps for adult learners in four areas: (1) elementary and secondary basic skills; (2) ESL and citizenship for immigrant populations; (3) adults with disabilities; and (4) short-term career and technical education.

Career and Technical Education Initiatives

In 2012 the Legislature passed SB 1402 which the Governor signed to signal intent to recast and rewrite the economic and workforce education division programs and services. The new direction requires industry sector strategies that align collaboratively with labor markets on a *regional basis*. The Chancellor's Office translated these policy directions into a four-part initiative called Doing What Matters (DWM) for Jobs and the Economy. Governor Brown has been generous in funding this work and his 2016-17 budget proposals offered \$200 million more to expand access to career and technical education as well as to implement new regional accountability structures.

The Silicon Valley schools within the Bay Area Community College Consortium (BACCC) selected the three priority sectors or clusters and two emerging sectors as described in the table below.