



January 14, 2026

Dear Colleagues,

Welcome back to a new semester at Cerritos College. With all the activity this week, it is clear our campus hit the ground running. The start of this spring term has been especially busy, and it is energizing to see our colleagues and students back on campus reconnected, engaged, and ready to move forward together.

In this first week, we are already building upon meaningful momentum through our shared work and collaboration across campus. I am particularly excited to see the continued growth of [EC Connect](#), which remains a cornerstone of how we strengthen relationships, celebrate one another, and build a connected campus culture. This semester, Executive Council has much in store, including additional coffee breaks, EC Awards, a reverse job shadow experience, a new employees' breakfast, a managers' retreat, summer BBQ, and of course, the Highland Games. Up next is Knowledge Quest on Thursday, February 5. I've been told it is not too late to sign up, so if you are interested in this fun and friendly competition, please email Wendy Thomas. I am also pleased to share that we are reimagining Falcon Day, March 13th. Thank you to everyone who took the time to provide thoughtful feedback on past Falcon Day experiences, including the sessions and professional growth opportunities. We listened, and your voices are directly shaping a refreshed Falcon Day that will be more engaging, relevant, and meaningful for our campus community. Additional details will be shared by Human Resources as plans continue to take shape.

This semester will be filled with opportunities to come together through events that engage our students, community partners, and employees alike. I encourage you to regularly visit the [campus events calendar](#) and take part in all that Cerritos College has to offer.

2026–27 Governor Newsom's Proposed Budget Update

Last week, Governor Newsom released the [proposed 2026–27 Governor's Budget](#). While the proposal reflects some stabilization in state revenues, it continues to signal a constrained and uncertain financial future. General Fund revenues increased by \$42 billion from the previous budget window, but California still is experiencing a \$2.9 billion projected shortfall. For higher education, the proposal maintains funding for the California Community Colleges, with \$15.4 billion in General Fund and property taxes revenues. While this helps preserve existing commitments, it leaves limited room for significant expansion. Key highlights include:

- \$408.3 million to fully repay Student-Centered Funding Formula (SCFF) deferrals
- \$240.6 million in Proposition 98 General Fund to support a 2.41% COLA
- \$88.2 million to support anticipated enrollment growth of 1.5% across 2025–26 and 2026–27

The budget also proposes adjustments are to student support block grants, credit for prior learning, and categorical program COLAs. We will continue to keep you informed as the state budget moves through the process leading up to the May Revision.

In my last message, I spoke about the momentum we built in 2025 and the importance of carrying it forward. Even in this first week, I can see that momentum reflected in the energy, collaboration, and determination across our campus. The work ahead to help our students start stronger and finish faster remains critical. I am confident that together, through innovation and collective effort, we will continue to meet and exceed our goals.

I hope you take a moment to share with me your ideas and what you are working on this semester. You can reach me via email, stopping by the President's Office, or attending our monthly President's Hour in front of the library.

I hope you have a great first week of the semester and look forward to all that we will accomplish together.

Jose

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