

Dr. Jose Fierro
President's Message
January 24, 2018

Dear Colleagues,

I wanted to provide you with a quick update.

A Great Start to a New Semester

With the new spring semester underway, we are off to an exciting start. Please join me in congratulating Keven Butler, Dr. Frank Mixson, and Dr. Nick Real who were selected for the prestigious 2017 John & Suanne Roueche Excellence Award by the League for Innovation in Community Colleges. This is the second year in a row that our staff and faculty were selected for this honor. Congratulations to all!

Cerritos Complete – Bellwether Award Finalist Presentation

As many of you may know, our Promise Program, Cerritos Complete, is one of 10 community colleges in the nation selected as a finalist for the prestigious 2018 Bellwether Award. It has been very rewarding to see Cerritos Complete grow from a pilot through the K-16 Bridge program into an official Promise Program, having served 1,564 students to date. I'm proud that Cerritos Complete offers students more than a promise of access to college, but it provides merit-based requirements and a host of student services that ensure students are successful. Please give Colleen McKinley and the entire Educational Partnerships and Programs team a round of applause for their tireless efforts.

We are preparing to deliver our presentation at the Community College Futures Assembly in Orlando, Florida on January 28-30, 2018. Our team will present on Monday, January 29, and we are hoping to return with the first-place trophy.

Governor Brown's State Budget

Last week, Governor Brown released his 2018-19 budget. While there are no immediate budget increases, community colleges fared well with dollars being allocated to support higher education priorities set by the Chancellor. The Governor proposes a new fully online community college targeting working Californians without a degree or credential. Some of you may know that I serve as co-chair for the online college project known as Project FLOW (Flex Learning Options for Workers). The team has been working to develop options the Governor can consider as the project advances.

While it is good news the state is on track to generate a \$19.3-billion surplus by July 2019, the budget proposal reduces new spending in anticipation of funds to cover natural disasters, an inevitable recession, pension obligations and uncertainty about federally-funded programs.

A few highlights from the budget:

- Proposition 98: K-14 guarantee for 2018-19 is at an all-time high of \$78.3 billion. Community colleges will receive roughly \$780 million (\$375 million are in one-time funds).

- An initial 2.51% COLA, which includes COLA for the Adult Education Block Grant.
- \$60 million to support enrollment growth across the state. This will allow community colleges to serve 25,000 more students.
- 46 million to fund College Promise programs (in support of AB 19 - Santiago).
- \$100 million (one-time) and \$20 million (ongoing) to establish a fully online community college to provide critical educational and economic opportunities to specified adult working learners.
- New Funding Formula – the Governor proposes \$175 million to fund the transition of community college to a new Student-Focused Funding Formula for general apportionments. The proposed formula is composed of:
 - Base Grant (50% of funding) – based on enrollment using a per-full-time equivalent student (FTES) funding rate, similar to the current general apportionment calculation.
 - Supplemental Grant (25% of funding) – based on the number of low-income students; those who receive a College Promise Grant (formerly Board of Governors) fee waiver or Pell Grant.
 - Student Success Incentive Grant (25% of funding) – based on the number of degrees and certificates granted and the number of student completing them in three years or less, with additional funds for each Associate Degree for Transfer granted.
- One-time funds for ongoing purposes, and emphasizes that the current spending trajectory will lead to a state budget deficit.

There will be more information about the budget coming within the next few weeks. At that time, I will provide a full overview of how the budget specifically impacts the College.

Have a great semester, and please let me know if you any questions or concerns.

Sincerely,
 Jose Fierro, D.V.M., Ph.D.
 President/Superintendent