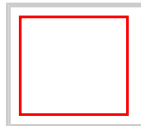


President's Monthly Message (archived)

- updated **March 3, 2004**

[President's Message, March 2004](#)



Learn more about the
< CCA President, Cathy
Crane-McCoy, [here](#).

President's Message, March 2004

CCA/CTA wins one in Sacramento

...But the fight will continue

In spite of dire predictions, the Community Colleges did better than expected in this January's Governor's Budget proposal and it was due largely to negotiations between CCA/CTA and the governor's office throughout December and early January. These negotiations ensured that we received over \$400 million dollars in additional funding for the 2004-2005 school year.

Thanks to CCA/CTA, we were able to preserve Cost of Living Adjustments for 1.84 percent along with Growth, which is funded for 3 percent. In addition, \$60 million in the budget is targeted towards Equalization. These Equalization dollars will more than likely be distributed to the lowest funded districts first, increasing their current per FTES funding level.

Additional changes to our budget is the condensing of categoricals including Partnership for Excellence, Matriculation, Part time equity, Part time office hours, and Part time health benefits into the base. We must continue to remind the governor, the legislature and the chancellor's office the importance of these line items. Other categoricals being condensed are EOPS and the Fund for Student Success. We are concerned that this action will erode the very services that we provide to our students.

Unfortunately tied to the increase revenues for our system is also an increase in student fees. The proposed increase for 2004 raises fees from \$18 a unit to \$26 (a 44 percent increase from Fall 03 to Fall 04 and a 131% increase from Spring 03 to Fall 04!). In addition, an excessive differential fee of \$50 per unit for students who hold bachelor's degree or higher would also be imposed. The governor's office insists that these increased costs are offset by increases to financial aid, but the reality is that financial aid only helps a limited number of our students.

Most of the arguments about increasing student fees are based on how much other states charge students. To compare California to other states in fees is tragic at best. In a recent report by the Public Policy Institute of California, Financing California's Community Colleges, California ranks 45th out of 49 states in revenue spent per community college student. The study also identifies a growing discrepancy between two-year colleges and the UC and CSU systems. Between 1971 and 2000, per-student revenue increased 23 and 24 percent for UC and CSU, respectively, while community college revenue rose a mere 4 percent. We must do a better job lobbying and reminding the public of the importance of the Community Colleges to this state and its economy.

You may be asking what you can do to help. There are several things each of us must do:

1. **Vote for Propositions 55, 56, 57 & 58 on the March 2 ballot.** Proposition 55 the Facilities Bond Act will provide over \$12 billion to repair schools, Kindergarten through the University. Proposition 56, the Budget Accountability Act lowers the vote required to pass the budget by the legislature from 2/3rds to 55 percent (California is one of 3 states that takes this amount to pass a budget), Proposition 57 and 58 are the Economic Recovery and the California Balanced Budget Acts, and both are needed to balance the state's budget. If these two bonds do not pass we will see major reductions in our budget.
2. **Attend the March 15 "Keep the Doors Open" rally and march** with students, faculty, staff and administrators in Sacramento. The march will focus on the loss of over 170,000 students to the community college system and the increases in their fees.
3. **Participate in CTA/CTA's Lobby Day in Sacramento (TBA, after the May revise).** All participants will meet with their legislators and staff and will be able to speak about the issues facing the faculty and students in our system.
4. **Make sure to visit your legislators in their home offices** to remind them of the important work that we do educating the very heart and soul of California and the economic value that they and we provide.

Be assured that CTA and CCA will be fighting for these issues. But we all must be vigilant and continue to fight for what we deserve: to be treated fairly and to maintain adequate funding for all community college faculty, staff and the students that we serve.

Any questions? Call the CCA office at 916/726-4207.

