

Address the true cost of college for community college students.

The cost of attending a California community college is more than just tuition. The true cost of college also includes textbooks, supplies, housing, food, transportation, childcare and more. Under California's current financial aid structure, too little financial and basic needs support is available to help cover these non-tuition costs, as community college students – including working adults – do not have the same opportunity to secure a Cal Grant, the largest financial aid program in the state, as do their counterparts in the UC and CSU systems.

AN AGREED-UPON SOLUTION. BUT NO FUNDING.

To address this inequity, the state Legislature in 2022 passed and Governor Gavin Newsom signed into law the Cal Grant Reform Act, the largest expansion of Cal Grant eligibility in decades that would put community college students on an equal footing with their UC and CSU counterparts.

Under Cal Grant Reform Act guidelines, qualifications pertaining to a student's age or how long they've been out of high school would no longer be considered. This would primarily benefit community college students, nearly 42% of whom are 25 years old or older. Eligible community college students would receive at least \$1,648 annually under the Cal Grant Reform Act to cover non-tuition costs such as food and housing.

There's just one catch: expanding Cal Grant access to more community college students is dependent on available funds in the upcoming state budget.

We continue to advocate for a modernized and equitable Cal Grant Program!



Why your support is needed.

- California's community college students comprise the nation's most diverse and highest-need student populations. The [Affordability, Food, and Housing Report](#) in 2023 based on a survey of more than 66,000 community college students found two of every three students grapple with at least one basic needs insecurity; nearly half are food insecure; nearly three of five are housing insecure; and about one in four are homeless.
- Community college students are forced to make difficult decisions, such as feeding themselves and their families, or dropping out before completing their educational goals. Others opt to into debt by financing their college education using high-interest loans and even higher-interest credit cards.
- In many areas of the state, it is more expensive to attend community college than it is to attend the University of California or California State University campus due to the growing gap between the cost of living and the amount of financial aid community college students receive.

The outdated Cal Grant system was designed for students attending a four-year university right out of high school and does not adequately support working students, part-time students, and students with children of their own – who now make up an increasing number of community college students.

- [Vision 2030](#) benchmarks include increasing by 2030 the number of community college students earning an associated degree for transfer by 30%; increasing the number of students earning a community college baccalaureate degree by 30%; and increasing the number of community college students transferring to a University of California or California State University campus by 20%. We must eliminate barriers to make this happen.
- The Cal Grant Reform Act would provide hundreds of thousands of low-income community college students with guaranteed financial aid for the first time.



Funding an equitable Cal Grant financial aid system will expand access to higher education for thousands of low-income Californians.



The California Community Colleges is the largest system of higher education in the nation, composed of 73 districts and 116 colleges serving nearly 2 million students per year. California community colleges provide career education and workforce training; guaranteed transfer to four-year universities; and degree and certificate pathways.