Dear Colleagues:

**SB 1391 Opens Substantial Opportunities for Educating Prisoners**

The College has started discussing the education that could be provided at the California State Prison this spring. The modality that has heretofore been utilized was correspondence courses. The reason correspondence courses were the only option is teaching face-to-face in the prison would require the class to be open to the general public, deemed an impractical situation. However, there was an inequity in this process because the same was not a problem (open to the public) for incarcerated people in federal or local detention facilities.

This year, the legislature passed SB 1391 that would allow classes taught at a state prison to be closed to the general public, and Governor Edmund G. Brown, Jr., signed the legislation into law last Saturday. The bill further allows apportionment to be claimed at the same rate as any other course taught in a detention facility. This legislation has opened up substantial opportunities for SCC. Since we had already started some planning internally, we are looking to speed up the process of offering courses at California State Prison, Solano (SOL), located in Vacaville.

My thanks go to members of the SCC Governing Board who supported the Prison program and also to those others who wrote letters on our behalf. Two trustees, Dr. Chapman and Mr. Martin, toured the prison facilities with us, and I am indebted to them for conducting the site visit on behalf of their fellow trustees. Professor Kamber Sta.Maria took on the assignment of making this prison opportunity happen. She totally immersed herself in that project and got the ball rolling, as she does with any assignment. I want to thank the following individuals who gave their support to the program: Erin Moore, Michael Wyly, Dale Crandall-Bear, Dr. Leslie Minor, and Dr. Jose Ballesteros.

If the Board approves our moving forward with this program, it will be a great day for inclusive public education.

**Reception for New Faculty**

My family and I hosted a Solano welcome dinner for our first- and second-year faculty this weekend. We had excellent attendance and a good time. The new faculty had an opportunity to interact with those veteran faculty who were invited to join them. Over the past 18 months, we have hired some excellent faculty who have the potential to make SCC become an even greater academic institution. As I talked to these individuals, I realized that our students are in good hands, as is our Institution and the community.
City of Vallejo Interagency Meeting
I attended, with Trustee Young, the Vallejo Interagency meeting at the Vallejo City Hall. This committee brings together different agencies operating within the city to discuss items of mutual interest. Among the major concerns expressed were the effects of the earthquake on citizens of Vallejo. An important issue that may have been overlooked is the damage caused to chimneys (some chimneys fell down, but there are chimneys that may have been damaged without the owners’ knowledge). A damaged chimney that is put to use may cause a fire. So, we are encouraging all our employees and trustees who live in Vallejo to pay particular attention to their chimneys and perhaps have them inspected before using them.

Meeting with President Armiñana
I/V White, Bonds Executive Manager Sata, and I met with Sonoma State University President, Dr. Ruben Armiñana; and Mr. Andrew Rogerson, Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs, in a meeting they initiated. As a reminder, we collaborate with Sonoma State University where it offers its Liberal Studies program at the SCC Vallejo Center. This particular discussion was about taking advantage of an incentive being provided by the Department of Finance to create new opportunities for colleges and universities to ensure that a greater number of individuals have access to Baccalaureate degrees. The legislature made $50M available to the whole state, and there will be multiple competitive grants awarded. In this case, Sonoma State and SCC may compete together for a new program we would house at the Vallejo Center.

Presentation at Adult School in Fairfield
I was invited this past week to address the students at the Adult School in Fairfield. It was a great opportunity for me to speak to students who are pursuing their GEDs about the fact that they can benefit greatly by continuing their education. I encouraged the ESL learners to not let English be a barrier to them and to view the English language as an indispensable means to earn their education. I then shared with them the many programs that are available at the College for them. Some of the ESL students will be with us in the spring for the potluck that our ESL faculty puts together annually.

Meeting with Mr. Jesse Ortiz
I had the privilege of meeting with the newly elected Yolo County Superintendent of Schools, Mr. Jesse Ortiz. He represents the city of Winters and felt it was important to ensure that he interacts with Solano Community College because of the students we have in common. This was non-agenda-driven, as it was our first meeting. He is committed to having students pursue their education, especially at the community college level. We will have other opportunities to interact and I will give him a tour of our facilities in the near future.

Fall Principals’ Breakfast
Ms. Shemila Johnson and I/V Diane White hosted a meeting at the Vallejo Center for school officials of the county and Winters. A good number of the educators from the area attended. As in the past, the event included middle school educators as well. This addition has proven to be very positive as we are able to encourage middle school students to make the decision to attend college early and to be prepared for it. Trustees Thurston and Young greeted the principals and thanked them for their cooperation with the College.
**Scholarship Foundation Awards**
Dr. Dorothy Hawkes and the Scholarship Foundation hosted the annual Scholarship event where over $40,000 was awarded to students. Students from various backgrounds were honored. There were multiple presenters, among them Board Vice President A. Marie Young, who shared with the students an inspiring poem. One of the memorable lines exhorted them to find the time to study when there is no time. Impressive was the number of faculty from different schools who came to support their students. The event was very well attended, and I want to again thank the faculty who came on a Friday evening to support the students and all the administrators and staff who support the event. Thank you also to all the donors who continue to support the Scholarship Foundation.

**In Memoriam**
Tragedy struck the family of one of our students when a 19-year-old student at the College, Raymond Medrano, along with his 16-year-old brother, were killed in an automobile accident. Our sympathies are with the family and his teachers who remember him fondly.

**Legislative Update**

“Dear Jowel,
The League is committed to keeping you up-to-date on issues affecting California Community Colleges. Below are some important updates about the budget and CTE enhancements you should be aware of.

---

**Budget Request Outlines Focus on Four Key Areas**
After collaboration with key stakeholders, the Chancellor’s Office has requested an increase in the system budget for 2015-16 that totals approximately $740 million. The request is posed to address four core areas: 1) increasing access for community college students, 2) supporting student success, 3) enhancing general operations funding, and 4) resources to hire more full-time faculty. These four priorities for funding support the California Community Colleges main principles of improving student success and ensuring sufficient access.

| Student Success & Support Program and Student Equity | $200 million |
| Access                                              | $120 million |
| Funding Rate Increase                               | $180 million |
| Funding for Full-time Faculty Hiring                | $70 million  |
| Restoration of Categorical Programs                 | $115 million |
Professional Development | $25 million
---|---
Economic and Workforce Development Program | $25 million
Technical Assistance | $5 million
Public Outreach - “I Can Afford College” | $1.5 million

**Request Total** | **$741.5 million**

In addition, the Chancellor’s Office is asking for $500 million for implementation of the adult education regional plans, which commence in July of 2015.

**One-Time Funding Request, Cal Grants, and Guaranteed Backfill**
Among the other items in the budget request are the following:

- One-time funds for deferred maintenance and instructional equipment.
- Restoration of Cal Grants to earlier levels.
- Guaranteed backfill for property tax losses.

*Review the full Board of Governor’s budget request at:* [http://extranet.cccco.edu/Portals/1/ExecutiveOffice/Board/2014_agendas/September/2_1_2015-16_System_Budget_Request.pdf](http://extranet.cccco.edu/Portals/1/ExecutiveOffice/Board/2014_agendas/September/2_1_2015-16_System_Budget_Request.pdf)

**No Industry Match on CTE Enhancement Grants**
The Department of Finance has clarified that the $50 million CTE Enhancement Fund is not subject to the 1:1 match by industry. This provides an opportunity for colleges to participate fully in the CTE Enhancement Grants process.

Instead, the process will maximize the successful efforts of Doing What Matters (DWM). Each of the state’s seven macro-economic regions will receive an allocation based on a formula of: 1) the number of CTE students; 2) the number of full-time students (FTES); and 3) the number of colleges in the region. Regional Consortia will then divide the allocation into 1) a 60% Local Share; and, 2) a 40% Regional Share.

The 40% Regional Share is intended to encourage capacity in the region’s priority and emergent sectors. In addition, the 40% Regional Share is not necessarily competitive. Each Regional Consortia will establish a decision-making process, and should the funds be oversubscribed, can rank applications. Those applications with match may receive a higher rank order.

This is an important opportunity for colleges to augment their CTE strengths and build on the collaboration within their regions!

If you have any questions or need assistance, please do not hesitate to contact our office at 916.444.8641 or visit the Web site at [www.ccleague.org](http://www.ccleague.org).
Thank you,
Thelma Scott-Skillman
League Consultant
Community College League of California”

From ACCT
WASHINGTON, DC - The Association of Community College Trustees (ACCT) has reviewed with great interest and concern new data released today by the U.S. Department of Education (ED) analyzing the number of borrowers from institutions of higher education that are in default. The three-year cohort default rate (CDR) for FY 2011 among community colleges is 20.6 percent. The new federal data reflect a decrease from the prior FY 2010 rate, which was 20.9 percent for community colleges. High CDRs can lead to colleges losing eligibility to provide federal grants and loans to students. However, no community colleges are subject to sanction at this time. Community college CDRs should be interpreted with great caution given low rates of borrowing.

"Default rates are inherently limited, because they only look at the outcomes of borrowers entering repayment, and the vast majority of community college students don't borrow. We are still--by far--the most affordable sector of higher education," said J. Noah Brown, president and CEO of ACCT. "At the same time, community colleges are concerned about student loan default and are already actively working to help students be successful in repaying their loans."

Community colleges have the lowest rate of federal loan borrowing across all sectors of higher education; overall, just 17 percent of community college students take out federal loans versus 56 percent of students in all other sectors of higher education. As such, defaults often reflect a very small percentage of the student population, and are a lagging indicator of students who entered repayment several years prior. Community colleges serve 42 percent of all undergraduates in the nation.

When paired with ACCT's report in partnership with The Institute for College Access and Success (TICAS), published in July 2014, Protecting Colleges and Students, the national data underscore the report's recommendations to improve federal policy and regulations regarding CDRs. Default rates have been increasing nationwide, and some community colleges have stopped offering federal loans out of fear of federal sanction.

"Student loans are vital to the academic persistence and success of many of our students who can't afford the climbing cost of college out-of-pocket" said Jee Hang Lee, vice president for public policy and external relations of ACCT. "Even though most of our students don't borrow in any given year, more than a third of those who complete their associate degrees at community colleges need loans to get to graduation. But CDRs give our members great pause about their ability to continue offering critical access to loans without reform to the system. As the primary lender, the federal government needs to step in to help students with loan repayment."

ACCT has long called on ED to thoroughly examine the data on the numerous loan servicing issues experienced by students, and especially before making decisions to end institutional Title IV eligibility. As such, ACCT appreciates the announcement to adjust CDRs based on borrowers with multiple lenders or servicers, known as "split servicing," when borrower have at least one
loan in good standing. It is improper to sanction colleges based on faulty data and defaults that are largely outside of institutional control. ACCT calls on ED to assist these struggling borrowers through all available means.

Furthermore, ACCT continues to call for reforms to the loan servicing system in order to improve repayment. "Community college leaders have heard from students, institutions, and even ED itself that servicers routinely fail to provide adequate assistance to struggling borrowers," said Lee. Borrowers should be given access to a single federal login and repayment portal. Severely delinquent borrowers should be automatically enrolled in income-based repayment plans, and a special servicer should be created to provide additional assistance to students with delinquent or defaulted loans.

ACCT has made numerous recommendations for the pending reauthorization of the Higher Education Act to reduce delinquency and default, such as consumer-testing and redesigning loan entrance and exit counseling, and providing institutions the authority to limit over-borrowing.

ACCT has also called for replacing default rates with a metric known as the Student Default Risk Index, or SDRI, which would multiply the CDR by the institution's borrowing rate. At colleges where borrowing is less common—often due to low tuition—this calculation would provide improved context to the average risk of default, rather than making faulty comparisons based only on a small subset of students. Similarly, appeals and challenges under the Participation Rate Index should be permitted annually, rather than only at the point of sanction, to encourage colleges with low borrowing to remain the federal loan program.

ACCT's public policy experts are available to discuss these and other concerns related to cohort default rates and viable recommendations for improving existing federal policy and regulations.

For more background about cohort default rates and to download a copy of ACCT's recent report, Protecting Colleges and Students, please visit http://www.acct.org/cohort-default-rates.

**Update From Academic Affairs**

In the 2013-2014 academic year, the legislature appropriated $25 million to the California Community College Chancellor’s Office to fund two-year planning and implementation grants to eligible consortia for the purpose of developing regional plans for improving adult education in the following areas:

- Elementary and secondary basic skills, including classes required for a high school diploma or high school equivalency certificate.
- Classes and courses for immigrants eligible for education services in citizenship and English as a Second Language (ESL) and workforce preparation classes in basic skills.
- Education programs for adults with disabilities.
- Short-term career technical education programs with high employment potential.
- Programs for apprentices.

Interim Dean Thom Watkins and Interim Coordinator Leslie Fay from the Workforce Development and Continuing Education Office began the development of our local consortium with the Fairfield-Suisun Adult Education Office. Recently, our Academic Senate has become
involved also in helping to lead this effort; Professor Shawn Carney, adjunct faculty in the Drafting Department, is now chairing our local AB 86 planning committee. Below is an update from Shawn Carney:

“In recent weeks, members of Adult Education, as well as faculty from Solano Community College, have come together to develop and concrete solutions to the requirements brought forth by the objectives from within Assembly Bill 86 (AB 86) of California. The purpose of AB 86 is to create a dialogue between members of both the adult education and community college arenas. When the two educational institutions are able to better align transitional pathways for students, this is when success can be measured. Expert opinions from faculty members of this committee primarily come from English, Math, ESL and CTE education. By extrapolating expert opinions from collaborative weekly meetings, this group continues to strive to meet the objectives of AB 86. With a count of seven objectives, the primary deadline set for October 31 requires that all seven objectives be formally met in some form. The second deadline, set for December 31, will require the committee to prepare a more refined package that details how all seven objectives can formally be met.”

Objectives:

**Objective 1** – An evaluation of current levels and types of adult education programs within its region, including education for adults in correctional facilities; credit, noncredit, and enhanced noncredit adult education coursework; and programs funded through Title II of the federal Workforce Investment Act, known as the Adult Education and Family Literacy Act.

**Objective 2** – An evaluation of current needs for adult education programs within the consortium’s region.

**Objective 3** – Plans for consortium members and partners to integrate existing programs and create seamless transitions into postsecondary education or the workforce.

**Objective 4** – Plans to address the programming and service gaps including lack of providers, services, access, attainment, and/or performance. Plans should also include strategies to incrementally increase capacity in identified gap areas.

**Objective 5** – Plans to employ approaches proven to accelerate a student’s progress toward his or her academic or career goals, such as contextualized basic skills and career technical education, and other joint programming strategies between adult education and career technical education.

**Objective 6** – Plans to collaborate in the provision of ongoing professional development opportunities for faculty and other staff to help them achieve greater program integration and improve student outcomes.

**Objective 7** – Plans to leverage existing regional structures, including, but not limited to, local workforce investment areas.

If you have any questions about AB 86 or would like more information about our local AB planning committee, please contact AB 86 Chair Shawn Carney or Academic Senate President Michael Wyly.

**A Well-Deserved Honor**
Congressman John Garamendi recently honored 14 outstanding women in the 3rd District at his 2014 Women of the Year ceremony. Among those honored was Dr. Frances Nelson, SCC
librarian, educator, and advocate for literacy, a well-deserved honor for one of SCC’s best. Dr. Nelson taught more than 15 years in Vacaville’s secondary classrooms; and, after her retirement, served as adjunct librarian at Solano Community College for two decades. She is the only African-American librarian in the College’s 70-year history. Working with the California School Library Association, Dr. Nelson helped to develop “Standards for Information Literacy: Grades K-12,” and serves on Word Gap at First Five of Solano County (literacy for children from infancy to five). Furthermore, she serves as a Solano County Juvenile Justice Commissioner and an advocate for Senior poverty. As a professional educator, she is active in Delta Kappa Gamma, Beta Psi Chapter, in Fairfield. She volunteers at the Kroc Center and for many other community organizations, as needed, and facilitates donations of books to the local Juvenile Hall Facility. There is no doubt that SCC is proud of Frances!

**Sports Update**
The highlight was the Volleyball Team’s thrilling fifth-set victory over Napa, 15-13. Beating Napa is like the Celtics beating the Lakers. The Soccer Team beat Contra Costa College 8 to 1.

Jowel C. Laguerre, Ph.D.
Superintendent-President

“A paradox is truth standing on its head to attract attention.” Nicholas Falletta

“Theories have four stages of acceptance:
  i. This is worthless nonsense;
  ii. This is interesting, but perverse;
  iii. This is true, but unimportant;
  iv. I always said so.”

J. B. S. Haldane