



CALIFORNIA COMMUNITY COLLEGES

CHANCELLOR'S OFFICE

PRESS RELEASE

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Gov. Brown Signs Student Success Act of 2012 into Law, Ushering in Improvements at California Community Colleges *New law will help students complete educational goals, bolster economy*

SACRAMENTO, Calif. – Gov. Jerry Brown today signed into law the Student Success Act of 2012, the legislative cornerstone of a California Community Colleges reform initiative aimed at improving educational outcomes for students and better preparing the workforce needed for California's changing economy.

The legislation authored by Sen. Alan Lowenthal (D-Long Beach) will help more California community college students reach their goal of earning a degree, certificate, career advancement or transferring to a four-year institution.

Acting California Community Colleges Chancellor Erik Skinner said the law will usher in some of the most significant improvements to the community college system in more than a decade.

"Gov. Brown signed this bill into law because he knows it will put more students on the path to completing their educational goals and that will make California more competitive economically," Skinner said. "This bill came from the Student Success Task Force that was convened almost two years ago and is resulting in some much needed changes to the way we educate our students."

The Student Success Act of 2012 will:

- Restructure the way student support services are delivered to improve the assistance that students receive at the beginning of their educational experience. The bill targets existing student services resources to support orientation, assessment and education planning services and lays the groundwork to expand these services as more resources become available.
- Provide that campuses using an assessment instrument for student placement utilize a statewide system of common assessment once available, to improve consistency and efficiency within the 112-campus system.
- Require colleges receiving student support service funds to post a student success scorecard to clearly communicate progress in improving completion rates for all students and closing the achievement gap among historically under-represented students.

- Require students whose fees are waived because of their economic need to meet minimum academic standards.

Lowenthal’s bill, co-authored by Sen. Carol Liu, D-La Canada Flintridge, enjoyed support from a broad coalition of students, business leaders and social justice organizations. The Academic Senate for California Community Colleges also supported the bill as did the Student Senate for California Community Colleges.

“Our goal - our primary goal - has to be one offering students a better path to graduation,” Lowenthal said. “It is unacceptable that more than 50 percent of community college students are not graduating or transferring within six years. This bill is the first step toward a refocused community college system that is rededicated to student success and achievement.”

“By refocusing matriculation services, SB 1456 will help more students to identify their goals and move ahead in their college experience, without their colleges having to counter-productively cut other programs they may need,” said Mendocino College student Aaron Bielenberg, a senator with the Student Senate for California Community Colleges. “Furthermore, by demanding that students must maintain minimum academic standards to receive the Board of Governors Fee Waiver, and providing the support and safety nets necessary to do so, we incentivize students to work harder.”

The law will be phased-in over a reasonable period of time as funding allows. The California Community Colleges Board of Governors and the California Community Colleges Chancellor’s Office have already begun work on implementing many of the recommendations of the Student Success Task Force. For more information, go to <http://bit.ly/PP5FSY>.

The [California Community Colleges](#) is the largest system of higher education in the nation. It is composed of 72 districts and 112 colleges serving 2.4 million students per year. Community colleges supply workforce training, basic skills courses in English and math, and prepare students for transfer to four-year colleges and universities. The Chancellor’s Office provides leadership, advocacy and support under the direction of the Board of Governors of the California Community Colleges.

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