



Legislative Update

July 2023



'Advocacy Academy' Scheduled for December 1 - 3, 2023

The SSCCC's Advocacy Academy is scheduled for December 1 through the 3, 2023 at the Riverside Convention Center.

This empowering event will provide students with the skills needed to advocate for change on their campus and in their communities. Moreover, Advocacy Academy is not just for students interested in politics, participants will learn strategies for influencing campus leaders, trustee boards, city councils, and legislators to accomplish their goals as students.

Please share this date with your student body association (SBA) to plan and coordinate your attendance with your community college's students and the region.

The registration link can be found [here](#).

VPLA Update

Hello all! My name is Chanelle Win, and I will be serving as your Vice President of Legislative Affairs for the Student Senate of California Community Colleges (SSCCC) for 2023-24 year! Welcome to the inaugural issue of the 2023-2024 Legislative Newsletter!

This newsletter will cover important pending state and federal public policy, advocacy efforts and events, and much more. If there's anything you'd like to see included in these newsletters, please send your feedback to vpla@ssccc.org!



Reviewing the SSCCC's 2022 - 2023 Legislative Priorities: Consolidating What We Have Creating What We Need

The SSCCC Board of Directors approves the legislative priorities for each year based on our mission, passed resolutions and the condition of the state of California community colleges. The current state and federal priorities for the 2022-2023 legislative session were approved at our November 2022 meeting, which were informed by resolutions passed at the 2022 SSCCC General Assembly and the ever-evolving environment of the California community colleges.

These priorities focused on a common theme: "Consolidating what we have, creating what we need." In a time of economic hardship and uncertainty and with the budget constrained by less revenue than in previous years, it is critical for the SSCCC to protect the investments made by the Newsom Administration and legislature to the California Community College (CCC) system.

The SSCCC priorities were as follows:

- Protecting investments in CCC's basic needs infrastructure
 - Financial Aid and Affordability (Cal Grant reform, Open Educational Resources/Zero Textbook Cost)
 - Housing and Food Insecurity
 - Physical and Mental Health and Wellness
 - Child and Dependent Care
 - Transportation
 - Technology and Broadband Access
- Informing policymakers from the perspective of the diverse CCC student body
- Expanding student enfranchisement in the CCC system

Additionally, in an effort to expand advocacy on a federal level, the SSCCC adopted the following federal legislative priorities:

- Eliminate scholarship displacement for Federal financial aid
- Reform GI Bill requirements for veterans in higher ed
- Protect undocumented students in higher ed

Check out [this link](#) for more details about the 2022 - 23 priorities. Please look out for the SSCCC's 2023-2024 legislative priorities in August on the [SSCCC website](#), and reach out to vpia@ssccc.org for questions, comments, or concerns about the SSCCC's legislative priorities.



Federal Issues (SCOTUS)

On June 29, 2023, the Supreme Court ruled on *Students for Fair Admissions v. President and Fellows of Harvard College* that considering an applicant's race in university admissions violates the Equal Protection Clause. This ruling takes away the few programs that are catered towards our historically disadvantaged communities in our system and has ripple effects on diversity in programs, faculty-hiring and transfers. Even though the California community college system has a higher chance of admission, this ruling will exacerbate gaps in transfer rates, in student services and programs, ultimately impacting community college students.

Moreover, the next day, the Supreme Court's ruling to overturn student loan debt cancellation for millions of borrowers in *Biden, President of the United States, et al. v. Nebraska, et al* came out on June 30, 2023. This decision impedes our disadvantaged low-income students and students of color, which in turn have an impact on social and economic growth and opportunity.

Our press releases in response to these rulings emphasize our commitment to advocating for policies that foster diversity, inclusion, and equitable access to education. We remain dedicated to advancing initiatives that ensure fairness and opportunity for all individuals seeking higher education.

See the SSCCC's press releases for the Supreme Court decisions on [affirmative action](#) and [student loan forgiveness](#) for more information.

Governor Newsom and Legislature's deal for 2023-24 Budget agreement

On June 27th, Governor Newsom and the legislature reached a deal for the 2023-2024 State Budget. While constrained by revenue declines, the California community colleges (CCCs) avoided significant cuts, receiving an 8.22% cost-of-living adjustment (COLA) and a continued commitment to workforce development, housing, and public transit for our students, among other things. Here are the main points:

- An 8.22% COLA increase for the California community college system.
- A shift of \$1.1 billion of current and planned funding for CCC housing to CCC-issued bonds.
 - An enacted \$78.5 million in the ongoing state funding for CCC housing projects.
 - Additionally, \$200 million one-time funds dedicated to the Student Housing Revolving Loan program with 25% of that committed to the CCCs.
 - Over the next five years, \$1.5 billion in one-time funding is planned to be provided to the Student Housing Revolving Loan program.
- An 8.22% COLA increase for select categorical programs and the Adult Education Program.
- A \$60 million one-time funding starting in the 2024-2025 fiscal year to expand nursing programs and partnerships across the CCCs.
- We saw \$1 billion of community college facilities projects shift from cash financing to lease-revenue bonds of one-time energy and resources spending omitted from the June 15th package.

There are some trailer bills on the Governor's desk right now that will clarify the details of the 2023-2024 State Budget, and will continue to be allowed until September 14th. As such, we are still monitoring any changes to the budget that affect the CCCs, as the tax revenue used to draft and finalize its still an estimate. The SSSCC continues to be diligent in monitoring the budget process, and is currently developing a budget advocacy toolkit for students to employ on the local level.

This is a snapshot of the current budget negotiations. They are evolving every day so watch for future updates that impact California community colleges. For more information, look at

[Assembly 2023-24 Budget Floor Report](#)

[Senate 2023-24 Budget Bill Analysis](#)



Status of our Sponsored Bills

- With the 2022-2023 legislative session ongoing, the SSCCC continues to advocate for its sponsored, co-sponsored and supported bills, with the support of the students and our system and advocacy partners. Right now, most, if not all bills, fall into three categories:
- Passed the floors of both houses (Assembly and Senate) and are at the Governor's desk
- In the Appropriations Committees of either house and are awaiting a hearing to see if they can pass to the floor for a vote
 - This is only if the bill has an associated cost that meets a certain threshold. For the Assembly, it's a bill that may cost \$150,000 or more. For the Senate, it's a bill that may cost \$50,000 or more from the General Fund or \$150,000 or more from a special fund.
- In policy committees (Education and Higher Education Committees for the Assembly and Senate, respectively) awaiting a hearing to be passed to another committee, the Appropriations Committee, or the floor of the house

In two days, July 14th is the last day for policy committees to meet, meaning that if they haven't been heard or had a vote on them sending them to the Appropriations Committee or to the floor of the house, they will not be considered for the rest of the session. Then, the Legislature will be in Summer Recess until August 14th, 2023.

The SSCCC are sponsoring the following bills, what they would do and their status:

- **AB 1543 (M. Fong):** Community colleges: student representation fees.
 - AB 1543, by Mike Fong, commencing with the 2024-25 academic year, would require the other \$1 of the \$2 student representation fee to be used to establish and support the operations of local student body organization and would give students the right to refuse the \$1 dollar of the \$2 dollar fee. **The bill had a second read and referred to the Senate Appropriations committee.**
- **AB 1541 (M. Fong):** Community colleges: governing board membership: student members.
 - AB 1541 by Mike Fong would give each student member of the governing board of a community college district an advisory vote in comparison to existing law. **AB 1541 has currently passed from the Senate floor on consent on June 29, 2023 and is on the Governor's desk! He has until September 14, 2023, to sign the bill into law**
- **AB 1275 (Arambula):** Community colleges: student-run community college organizations: open meetings: teleconferences.
 - This bill would, until January 1, 2026, authorize a member of the recognized statewide community college student organization and other student-run community college organizations required to comply with the Ralph M. Brown Act to participate remotely in those above-described teleconference meetings that are exempt from the requirements to (1) post agendas at all teleconferencing locations, (2) identify each teleconference location in the notice and agenda, (3) make each teleconference location accessible to the public, and (4) have at least a quorum of the members of the legislative body participate from locations within the boundaries of the territory over which the local agency exercises jurisdiction, as provided. **The bill was currently pulled from the Senate Government and Finance committee hearing by the author and will become a two year bill.**

For information about other bill stances that the SSCCC has taken for the 2022-2023 legislative session, see the SSCCC's [LAC Master Spreadsheet](#)