



January 16, 2020

Dear Colleagues,

It has been a whirlwind couple weeks as I have jumped into my exciting new role as Chancellor of the Grossmont-Cuyamaca Community College District. My days have been filled with meeting many new people on the campuses and in the community, learning more about how the District is organized, navigating East County, and most importantly, learning how to be the new kid on the block. I now know what our students feel like when they first arrive on our campuses!



The highlight of my first week was attending the Foundation's [scholarship breakfast](#), where 537 students received more than \$450,000 in scholarships. A particular moment of pride was the heartfelt remarks of Cuyamaca College Professor Nancy Jennings, who announced the creation of a scholarship endowment, thanks to the generosity of many of you, in honor of her late husband, Grossmont College Professor Brian Jennings.

In a very short period of time, I have been very impressed with the camaraderie in the District and GCCCD's strong reputation in the community. I am so excited to learn more about our programs and services and to meet many more of you in the months to come.

As many of you may know, Governor Newsom released the proposed [2020-2021 California budget](#) last week. While the proposed budget marks the beginning of the state budget development cycle, it provides important insight into what lies ahead for state funding.

The 2020-2021 state budget of \$222.2 billion represents the fifth-largest economy in the world. State general fund spending is increasing by 3.6%, and the Governor is proposing to add \$2 billion to the "Rainy Day Fund" (state reserves) to protect against future economic downturns.

For community colleges, the Governor’s budget includes \$272 million in new ongoing revenue and \$62.6 million in one-time funds. It continues to support student success and closing the longstanding achievement gap in the California Community Colleges.

Following are some **highlights**:

Ongoing increases:

- 2.29% Cost of Living Adjustment (COLA)
- 0.5% enrollment growth
- 2.29% COLA for categorical programs such as DSPS, EOPS, CalWORKS and CARE
- \$11.4 million for continuation of, and support for, food pantries
- \$10 million to provide legal services to immigrant students, faculty and staff
- \$5.8 million to support Dreamer Resource Liaisons and student support services for immigrant students

One-time funding increases:

- \$17.2 million for deferred maintenance and instructional equipment. Note that there is an effort statewide to increase this allocation because it is significantly lower than what is needed.
- \$10 million for part-time faculty office hours

Good news for GCCCD

The proposed budget includes \$27.6 million in capital outlay funds from Proposition 51 to support 24 new projects at community colleges. Both of our colleges have a project on the approved list – Grossmont College’s Liberal Arts/Business/CSIS building and Cuyamaca College’s Instructional F Building. Funding in 2020-2021 will allow our colleges to begin design and planning for these new facilities. Overall, state resources will fund 50% of the total projected cost of the facilities, with the District’s Proposition V funding the remaining cost.

In the March primary election, Californians will be voting on Proposition 13, the School and College Facilities Bond. If the measure is approved, community colleges would receive \$2 billion for educational facilities. Both Grossmont and Cuyamaca Colleges will have additional projects eligible for this revenue should the bond pass.

Next steps in the state budget development process



At the end of this month, a contingent from our District will travel to Sacramento where we will join our colleagues in the region to advocate with our state legislators on fiscal issues important to community colleges, including the large per-student disparity in state funding for community colleges compared to other segments of public education, paying down the unfunded retirement liabilities for CalSTRS and CalPERS, and increasing the allocation for deferred maintenance and instructional materials.

Following the Legislature's review of the budget and updated state revenue projections this spring, a revised state budget will be presented in May, with final approval by the Legislature in June.

Fortunately, like many other districts in the state, we are benefitting from a "hold harmless" provision that protects our funding through 2021-2022. However, we must remain diligent to ensure that our ongoing expenses do not exceed our ongoing revenue. I will be working with the college and District leadership to closely monitor enrollment and develop planning strategies. We will keep you updated.

Thank you for the warm welcome to the District. I am eager to get to know more of the amazing people who work at the Grossmont-Cuyamaca Community College District, and learn more about the outstanding work that you are doing to support our students!

See you at Convocation!

Lynn

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