

The Honorable Arnold Schwarzenegger
Governor
State Capitol Building
Sacramento, California 95814

Re: Equalization Funding for Community Colleges

Dear Governor Schwarzenegger,

I am an employee of the San Diego Community College District concerned about equalization funding. Currently, we are 40th of California's 72 Community College districts and receive \$212 below the state average per full-time-equivalent-student. This per student loss equals \$6,627,120 that our district needs to provide levels of student access, quality programs and services for students, and competitive salaries for faculty and staff comparable to California's other community college districts.

The budget cuts of past years meant hiring freezes and cuts to crucial student services and programs. We need to continue restoring these past losses. All 72 districts have to operate under the same legal requirements, have basically the same mission, and are held accountable for the same outcomes; this funding inequity makes it quite difficult to successfully meet these basic requirements and student needs.

As an under-funded district, we need equalization funds to successfully serve new segments of the community; for example, an increasing number of students accepted by UC and CSU are asked to take two years of general education classes at community colleges, then finish at these four year schools. Community Colleges must also serve high school students enrolled in their high schools' "fast-track" programs. We need the resources not provided by growth and COLA funds, to address these additional students' needs.

With the first installment of the equalization funds that you supported, we were able to reinstate previously cut class sections, hire additional full-time faculty to fill vacated positions, and offer our district's first intersession, thereby serving thousands of students who otherwise would not have been accommodated in the fall and spring semesters.

I urge you to include the second installment of equalization funding in your May revision to the State budget. Each community college district deserves equity in serving our hard working students.

Sincerely,