June 2, 2006

The Honorable Lori Saldaña
California Assembly
State Capitol
Sacramento, CA 95814

**RE: Fully Funding Community College Equalization at $159.4 Million
          Increases Student Access at 97 Community Colleges Statewide;
          Reduction Would Cut Budgets in San Diego County by $8.1 Million**

Dear Assembly Member Saldaña:

The San Diego Community College District urges you to support student access and fair community college funding by fully funding equalization at $159.4 million in the 2006-07 State Budget. This funding level would once and for all ensure that no matter where a student attends a community college in California he or she will have equal access to resources that fund educational programs and services. While the Assembly's interest in reducing fees is laudable, this should not be accomplished at the expense of fair funding.

If the Assembly budget subcommittee's proposal to reduce equalization funds from $159.4 million to $80 million stands, 97 of the 109 community college campuses will face budget reductions from the equalization compromise proposal that has systemwide support, and the inequity for students will continue. Students at seven of the eight community college campuses in San Diego County would not receive the educational resources they deserve if the equalization funds are reduced. The reduction would result in a loss of $8.1 million to colleges in the county. The San Diego Community College District's equalization funds would be reduced by $3.9 million.

With the first two installments of equalization, community colleges have increased student access to quality programs and services by adding thousands of high-demand courses and hiring hundreds of new full-time faculty. Please help us finish the job of equity and fairness among California's community colleges by supporting the full $159.4 million for equalization and the $19.7 million in equalization transition payments for 16 college districts.

Thank you for your continuing support of community colleges. If you have any questions, please contact me.

Sincerely,