



# CALIFORNIA COMMUNITY COLLEGES

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## CHANCELLOR'S OFFICE

### PRESS RELEASE

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### **Public Higher Education Leaders Meet with Gov. Brown to Discuss the Ramifications of an "All-Cuts" Budget for California's Colleges, Universities and Businesses *The Three Leaders Applaud Gov. Brown's Firm Stance in Trying to Avoid Further Reductions***

SACRAMENTO, Calif. – California Community Colleges Chancellor Jack Scott today joined California State University Chancellor Charles Reed and University of California President Mark Yudof to meet with Gov. Jerry Brown at the Capitol to talk about the important role higher education plays in the economic strength and future of California.

Facing the real possibility of a budget that would likely double the cuts currently proposed for California's 112 community colleges from \$400 million to \$800 million, Chancellor Scott emerged from the nearly hour-long meeting encouraged that Gov. Brown understands the gravity of the situation and the important role of California's colleges and universities in providing a trained workforce to fuel the state's economy.

"We applaud Gov. Brown for his very firm stance in trying to avoid an all-cuts budget. We're willing to join forces in support of a tax extension. With an 'all-cuts' budget, in all of our communities, we're going to see young people turned away from our colleges and universities," said Chancellor Scott. "We know the devastation that could occur for our students and our future here in California and we're very concerned."

Scott told the governor that budget cuts from previous years forced the California Community Colleges to deny access to 140,000 students. With an "all-cuts" budget, Scott said, another 400,000 students will not be able to find the classes they need in order to complete their educational goals.

"Not only is this a tragedy for our students but it's a tragedy for our (state's) economy," Scott said. "I'm not saying this to cry the blues, but there's just no way that our system can continue to serve the same number of students with an \$800 million or more reduction in state revenues."

The California Community Colleges is the state's leading supplier of skilled and educated labor. The system provides certificates in 175 fields and educates roughly 2.7 million students annually. More than 25 percent of the nation's community college students are enrolled in California. That's a vast population of skilled and educated personnel from which California businesses can hire.

"Silicon Valley and California's innovation economy and critical infrastructure will only be as robust as the talent and research capacity found in our state's colleges and universities," said Silicon Valley Leadership Group Senior Vice President Dennis Cima in response to news of the meeting. "But, if the pool of qualified

candidates shrinks, particularly in science, math and engineering fields, our businesses won't be able to grow jobs and to compete against other states and nations that have consistently invested in educating their populations."

The fastest-growing jobs in California require more than a high school education, but not necessarily a four-year degree. The Bureau of Labor Statistics projects that over the next seven years occupations that require an associate degree will grow by 19 percent, the fastest of any occupations, and twice the national average - faster even than new job growth for those holding bachelor's degrees.

In 2008, almost half of all jobs required a certificate, an associate degree or post-secondary job training. By 2016, there will be more than 2.7 million new jobs created for individuals with an associate degree and these jobs also will offer higher pay.

"Whatever metaphor you choose, the low-hanging fruit is gone and now we're about to cut through the tissue and the sinew to the bone," said UC President Yudof. "This state will compete with the rest of the nation and the world because of our educated people, not because we're a low-wage state, or a low-tax state or a low-regulation state. But we need a plan and we need to know where we are going."

For every dollar that California spends on higher education it receives \$3 in return and if just 2 percent more Californians earned an associate degree and 1 percent more earned a bachelor's degree 174,000 new jobs would be created, the state's economy would grow by \$20 billion and state and local tax revenue would increase by \$1.4 billion each year. That was the message Chancellor Scott, President Yudof and Chancellor Reed shared with the governor.

"Combined, we've already taken a \$1.4 billion reduction in funds for next year, so we've done our part, that's enough," said Reed. "The legislators have a responsibility to figure out how to reinvest in California's future. Prisons are an investment in failure. Higher education is an investment in the future."

*The [California Community Colleges](#) is the largest system of higher education in the nation. It is composed of 72 districts and 112 colleges serving 2.76 million students per year. Community colleges supply workforce training, a basic skills education 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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