



# CALIFORNIA COMMUNITY COLLEGES

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## CHANCELLOR'S OFFICE

### PRESS RELEASE

March 1, 2012

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### **California Community Colleges Chancellor Jack Scott Praises West Hills Community College District for Offering Priority Registration to Graduating High School Seniors** *35 percent increase in enrollments from qualified high school seniors*

*LEMOORE, Calif.* – California Community Colleges Chancellor Jack Scott on Thursday praised a new priority enrollment system that has resulted in more high school graduates entering West Hills Community College District campuses, saying it can serve as an example for system-wide registration changes called for by the California Community Colleges Student Success Task Force.

“After severe state budget cuts started, West Hills Community College District saw a decline in enrollment of high school seniors from its feeder schools, so they did something about it,” Chancellor Scott said. “Students who completed a few minor requirements, such as completing a diagnostic academic assessment and going through a college orientation session, received priority registration, and within a year the enrollment numbers went up. This is the kind of initiative that will help students achieve their educational goals on time and help power our state’s economic recovery.”

Scott noted that the Student Success Task Force recommended 22 system-wide changes that will help students complete their educational goals and better prepare the state’s workforce. Many colleges, such as those in the West Hills district, were already well on their way in making some of these improvements, and their experiences will help guide implementation of the task force’s recommendations.

“I’ve said all along that the most significant improvements will come as a result of innovations developed by college leaders, faculty and staff at the local level,” Scott said. “We want to take those best practices and bring them to scale so all our students can benefit.”

Currently, registration priority at most of the system’s 112 colleges is given to students with the most units, thus rewarding unit accumulation rather than progress in their program of study. Due to course reductions brought on by budget cuts, hundreds of thousands of potential first-time students are being denied access to community colleges.

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The Student Success Task Force recently recommended that registration priority be updated to give priority to students focused on transfer, career technical education and degree attainment. The new policy will provide more access to potential first-time students who have taken a diagnostic assessment, participated in orientation and have developed an educational plan.

The West Hills Community College District's two campuses (West Hills College Lemoore and West Hills College Coalinga) switched to the new priority registration process in the summer and fall 2011 registration sessions and through a focused effort in outreach to high school seniors at the district's 15 feeder high schools, West Hills Community College District saw a 35 percent increase in high school graduates enrolling compared to 2010. This outreach also aligns with the task force's recommendation to foster better coordination between K-12 schools and community colleges.

"Chancellor Scott's visit to our district to observe firsthand the impact of our new priority registration system is great," West Hills Community College District Chancellor Frank Gornick said. "Our success with this new system and his visit validates his advocacy on behalf of all of the community college students and the hard work of our staff with the registration implementation."

For more on the Student Success Task Force recommendations, visit <http://bit.ly/xcxG3W>.

*The [California Community Colleges](#) is the largest system of higher education in the nation. It is composed of 72 districts and 112 colleges serving 2.6 million students per year. Community colleges supply workforce training, basic skills courses in English and math, 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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