



CALIFORNIA COMMUNITY COLLEGES

CHANCELLOR'S OFFICE

PRESS RELEASE

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Contact: Paige Marlatt Dorr

Office: 916.327.5356

Cell: 916.601.8005

Office E-mail: pdorr@cccco.edu

Mobile E-mail: pmarlatt@comcast.net

~ OR ~

Contact: Paul Feist

Office: 916.327.5353

Office E-mail: pfeist@cccco.edu

California Community Colleges Chancellor Brice W. Harris Says Voters Made Wise Investment in California by Passing Prop. 30 *Measure will stabilize funding and begin to make room for more students*

SACRAMENTO, Calif. -- California Community Colleges Chancellor [Brice W. Harris](#) on Wednesday said the passage of Proposition 30 means colleges will be spared devastating mid-year budget cuts and can begin to serve some of the hundreds of thousands of students who have been shut out of community colleges over the past four years.

"Voters placed their faith in public education as a means of getting our state's economy back on track," Harris said. "We have a long road back to financial health, but state commitment for our colleges is now pointed in the right direction, and we can continue to be the leaders in educating the workers needed for our changing economy."

With the passage of Prop. 30, community colleges will receive \$210 million in additional funds for the 2012-13 academic year. Most of that money will be used to make good on deferred funding commitments by the state, but the measure will allow colleges to serve an additional 20,000 students this year.

If the measure had failed, Harris told reporters in the Wednesday morning news conference that colleges would have been cut an additional \$338 million in January. The cuts would have translated into 29,000 fewer classes offered and 180,000 fewer students served throughout the 112-college system.

Harris said that Prop. 30 by no means will restore California community colleges to their pre-recession levels. Recent budget cuts have shut nearly 500,000 students out of community colleges since the 2008-09 academic year, and course offerings have been slashed by 24 percent.

Also on the media conference call with Chancellor Harris were San Diego Community College District Chancellor [Constance Carroll](#), Los Angeles Community College District Chancellor [Daniel LaVista](#) and Contra Costa Community College District Chancellor [Helen Benjamin](#).

Colleges in Carroll’s district reported earlier this year that 700 course offerings would have been cut if Prop. 30 didn’t pass. LaVista said Los Angeles area colleges avoided cutting 2,000 courses and Benjamin reported that her district will no longer need to cut 278 courses.

“I’m so glad my fellow Californians saw the value in our community colleges,” Chancellor Carroll said. “They saw all the good that a community college education means and realized the impact on the economy had the cuts occurred.”

LaVista said his district will receive a little budget breathing room with the passage of Prop. 30 and the deeper cuts his district faced won’t have to be made.

“In this economy, our citizens look to their local community colleges for a way to a better life, a life of learning and a greater chance at success,” LaVista said. “We can now serve more people who want to realize their educational goals and achieve more. We have a little more room and will have more resources now to help those who start on an educational journey, or want to retrain for the jobs of tomorrow.”

Benjamin said she knew Californians would see that the community colleges are worth the investment.

“Our community colleges will now continue to train the vast majority of our state’s firefighters, police, emergency medical technicians and nurses, so vital services will not be impacted down the road,” Benjamin said. “Our state’s businesses are constantly looking for well-trained employees to hire, and the community colleges provide them. Those businesses will be able to find the employees they need, and that only helps our economy.”

Harris believes community college students and the governor made the difference in the passage of Prop. 30.

“I would like to thank our students for the tremendous turnout, the voter registration efforts and the support of this measure,” Harris said. “I would also like to thank Gov. Brown who over the last month worked very hard up and down the state to bring attention to this measure. We are pleased that the voters of California have been very supportive of their community colleges and of education in general and we’re looking forward to adding back classes and serving our students.”

The [California Community Colleges](#) is the largest system of higher education in the nation. It is composed of 72 districts and 112 colleges serving 2.4 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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