

# CALIFORNIA LEGISLATURE

STATE CAPITOL  
SACRAMENTO, CALIFORNIA  
95814

April 18, 2023

Daisy Gonzales, Ph.D  
Interim Chancellor  
California Community Colleges  
1102 Q Street, 6<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Sacramento, California 95811

Amy Costa  
President, Board of Governors  
California Community Colleges  
1102 Q Street, 6<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Sacramento, California 95811

Sonya Christian, Ph.D  
Incoming Chancellor  
California Community Colleges  
1102 Q Street, 6<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Sacramento, California 95811

Dear Chancellors Gonzales, Christian and President Costa,

As Chairs of the Senate Education Committee and Assembly Committee on Higher Education, we write to express our thoughts and unified position on the approval of bachelor's degrees by the Board of Governors of the California Community Colleges.

Senate Bill 850 (Block, Chapter 747, Statutes of 2014) created the Baccalaureate Degree Pilot Program, demonstrating that community colleges throughout the state are well-positioned to offer baccalaureate degrees. In their letter of support for SB 850 (Block), the California State University Chancellor's Office wrote that "we believe that three core principals reflected in the latest amendments are critical for success: protecting against duplicating programs and curricula; identifying unmet workforce needs and related student demand for new programs; and, encouraging public colleges and universities to examine collaborative approaches for meeting local needs."

AB 927 (Medina, Chapter 565, Statutes of 2021) extended the operation of the statewide baccalaureate degree pilot program indefinitely. Intersegmental collaboration was again at the heart of the effort, with the Community College Chancellor's Office writing in their support letter that the "bill strikes a suitable balance between allowing for an expansion of new baccalaureate degree programs, while also ensuring the implementation of a thoughtful and intentional consultative process with our higher education system partners."

Collaboration and coordination among California's public higher education segments is crucial for the success of California students and the state. The California Community Colleges, the California State University, and the University of California work together to provide students with the best possible education and opportunities. It is essential that California's public higher education segments remain collaborative partners in order to ensure that state resources are used efficiently and effectively, and that our students have access to the highest quality programs and services.

It is in this spirit of collaboration that we strongly urge the Community College Chancellor's Office and the Board of Governors to pause cycle two applications. This pause will allow an intersegmental workgroup to convene in order to discuss a resolution process for disputes and further refine the duplication consultation process, and to better define program duplication.

It is also in the spirit of cooperation that we express our expectation that when there are concerns about duplication, we expect that the final approved bachelor's program will not duplicate a CSU or UC degree regardless of location and, as called for in the law, that there will be a written agreement to that effect signed by the impacted systems.

We take great pride knowing that the California Community Colleges are among the greatest drivers of education and workforce preparation in the world, and know that your efforts strive always to place the needs of our students at the forefront. We strongly believe that a pause to cycle two application and deliberative collaboration now will ensure that the Community College Baccalaureate Program best serves our students and the State of California in the years ahead.

Sincerely,



JOSH NEWAMN  
Chair  
Senate Education Committee



MIKE FONG  
Chair  
Assembly Committee on Higher Education

cc: Wendy Fong, Chair, The California State University Board of Trustees  
Jolene Koester, Chancellor, The California State University  
Michael Drake, President, The University of California  
Rich Leib, Chair, The University of California Board of Regents