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Improving Effectiveness and Efficiency of Outreach Services

LEGISLATIVE ANALYST'S OFFICE

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Senate Education Committee





State Funding for Outreach Programs Has Varied



Outreach Funding Increased Rapidly in Late 1990s

- Following the UC Regents' 1995 decision to prohibit the use of race and ethnicity as admissions criteria, the state significantly increased UC's General Fund outreach budget from \$17 million in 1997-98 to \$82 million in 2000-01.
- From 1998-99 to 2002-03, CSU General Fund support for outreach grew by \$26 million—from \$39 million to \$65 million.



Outreach Funding Declined for Next Few Years

- From 2001-02 through 2004-05, General Fund support for UC outreach was reduced by \$53 million, leaving \$29.3 million in 2004-05. Although state support was again reduced by \$12 million in 2005-06, the budget instructed UC to redirect an equal amount from other programs to maintain total outreach spending at \$29.3 million.
- From 2002-03 through 2003-04, General Fund support for CSU outreach declined from \$65 million to \$52 million. Although state support was again reduced by \$45 million in 2004-05, the budget instructed CSU to redirect an equal amount from other programs to maintain total outreach spending at \$52 million.



Outreach Funding Has Remained Stable, Despite Recent Reduction Proposals

- Although the Governor has proposed in his recent budget requests to reduce funding for outreach programs, the Legislature has made it a priority to maintain stable funding for these programs.
- The 2006-07 budget essentially provides the same amount for these programs as provided in the prior year.



Governor Proposes Outreach Reductions Again

Total Funding for UC and CSU Outreach Programs		
<i>(In Millions)</i>		
	Budgeted 2006-07	Proposed 2007-08
University of California	\$31.3	\$12.0
California State University	52.0	45.0
Totals	\$83.3	\$57.0

- ☒ For the fourth year in a row, the Governor's budget proposes to reduce support for UC and CSU's outreach programs. Specifically, the budget includes a total General Fund reduction of \$26.3 million to these programs.
- ☒ Under the Governor's proposal, UC and CSU would maintain \$12 million and \$45 million, respectively, to allocate across their various outreach programs.



UC and CSU Charged With Evaluating Their Own Outreach Programs



Legislature Has Requested Annual Evaluation Reports.

Over the years, the Legislature has sought to evaluate how well outreach programs are helping disadvantaged students enroll in college. Specifically, the Legislature has required UC and CSU to annually report on the effectiveness of their programs. In fact, UC received a combined total of about \$10 million since 1998-99 for outreach evaluation purposes.



Evaluations Have Not Been Conclusive. Past outreach evaluations have not been structured in a manner to provide evidence of program effectiveness. This is not to say that outreach programs are ineffective in helping students enroll in college. Rather, the data does not conclusively demonstrate whether participating students would have been eligible or likely to attend college without these services.



Evaluation Reports Due This Spring. The *2006-07 Budget Act* requires UC and CSU to report to the Legislature on the effectiveness of their outreach programs this spring. Until we have had an opportunity to review these reports, we withhold recommendation on the Governor's proposed outreach reductions.



Alternative Approach for Evaluating and Funding Outreach



External Evaluation of UC and CSU Outreach Programs

- Rather than continue to ask UC and CSU to evaluate their outreach programs, we suggest requiring an external evaluation. Thus, if the Legislature decides to restore UC and CSU outreach funding, we recommend transferring evaluation funding from UC to another state agency for the purpose of contracting out for an independent evaluation of both UC and CSU's outreach programs.
- An advisory committee consisting of representatives from interested parties (such as the universities, community colleges, California Department of Education, legislative staff, and Department of Finance) could be established to assist in selecting an appropriate vendor.



College Preparation Block Grant for K-12 Schools

- In the past, we have recommended the Legislature create a College Preparation Block Grant for K-12 schools with very low college participation rates. We continue to believe that this proposal merits legislative consideration.
- Our proposed block grant is designed to (1) target limited resources to students most in need of additional help to enroll in college and (2) leverage local schools' knowledge of their students to determine the best mix of outreach interventions.
- Schools would be accountable for the use of their block grant funding.



Major Features of College Preparation Block Grant

- ☒ ***Addresses Specific Needs of K-12 Students.*** The block grant approach recognizes that the academic barriers to higher education vary from individual to individual and school to school, and that local schools are in the best position to select and administer programs for their students.
- ☒ ***Prioritizes Schools With Low College Participation Rates.*** Unlike the current structure, a block grant is designed to ensure that limited resources are in fact used to serve students most in need of additional assistance.
- ☒ ***Reduces Administrative Complexity.*** The consolidation of the many existing outreach programs—which tend to have overlapping goals and services—into a block grant would create greater efficiency and effectiveness in the state’s outreach efforts.
- ☒ ***Focuses on Preparing Students for Any College.*** Our block grant proposal recognizes that outreach should prepare disadvantaged students for higher education more generally, rather than for admission to a particular system (such as UC or CSU).