

The 2022-23 Budget: CCC Chancellor's Office Staffing

MARCH 2022

Summary. The Governor's budget proposes a total of 19 new permanent Chancellor's Office positions and an associated \$2.8 million ongoing non-Proposition 98 General Fund augmentation spread over the next two fiscal years. We find the Governor's proposal is a mixed bag. Specifically, two of the proposed positions are justified, though not as permanent positions. An additional two positions also are justified, though we recommend funding them beginning in 2022-23 rather than waiting until 2023-24. The Governor's other proposed positions either are not justified or to date have not been sufficiently justified to warrant legislative approval. Rather than rejecting the latter group of proposed positions, the Legislature could give the administration an opportunity to submit improved proposals before the May Revision. Such proposals should include more details on the specific workload the proposed positions would undertake and why current staffing levels in those areas are insufficient.

Introduction

In this post, we provide background on the California Community Colleges (CCC) Chancellor's Office, discuss the Governor's proposal to add 19 new staffing positions and associated funding over a two-year period, assess the proposal, and offer recommendations.

Background

Chancellor's Office Has Several Key Systemwide Responsibilities. Located in Sacramento, the Chancellor's Office is led by a Chancellor who has overall leadership and responsibility for the office. The Chancellor is appointed by the Board of Governors—the governing body entrusted with overseeing the CCC system. (The CCC system consists of 72 local districts and 115 local community colleges, along with the state-level Calbright College.)

The Chancellor continues to serve as long as he or she remains in good standing with the board. Key responsibilities of the Chancellor's Office include:

- Setting and enforcing minimum standards for districts (such as student graduation requirements).
- Allocating state funds to districts and monitoring district fiscal health.
- Monitoring district compliance with state and federal law.
- Centrally collecting and reporting student data (such as enrollment and graduation rates).

Chancellor's Office Is Organized Into Units by Programmatic and Functional Areas.

The Chancellor's Office is organized into nine divisions, each of which is led by a vice chancellor. The divisions are: (1) College Finance and Facilities Planning, (2) Communications and Marketing, (3) Digital Innovation and Infrastructure, (4) Educational Services and Support, (5) General Counsel, (6) Governmental Relations, (7) Institutional Effectiveness, (8) Internal Operations, and (9) Workforce and Economic Development.

Non-Proposition 98 General Fund Is Chancellor's Office's Main Source of Support.

In 2021-22, the Chancellor's Office is budgeted \$30 million (all funding sources) for personnel and other operational expenses (including its office lease and supplies). The Chancellor's Office's largest single funding source for its operations is non-Proposition 98 General Fund (\$21 million in 2021-22). (Historically, the Chancellor's Office has not directly received Proposition 98 funds for its operations.) The Chancellor's Office operating budget also relies on reimbursements from other departments (such as a contract with the California Department of Education to provide technical assistance for the federal Perkins program) as well

as certain fee-for-service agreements with districts (totaling \$6.8 million in 2021-22). In addition, the Chancellor’s Office received \$2.5 million from bond funds and one-time funds for specified programs in 2021-22.

Chancellor’s Office Staffing Has Increased Over Past Decade. Figure 1 shows that the Chancellor’s Office currently has 177 authorized positions. Staffing increased by 31 positions (21 percent) over the past decade. During this period, the Chancellor’s Office’s vacancy rate has ranged between 7 percent to 22 percent. As of December 31, 2021, 154 of its authorized positions were filled, reflecting a 13 percent vacancy rate.

Chancellor’s Office Workload Has Been Increasing. The increase in workload is primarily due to the Chancellor’s Office having to administer the many new programs the state has established for community colleges. For example, the state has funded the Guided Pathways initiative, which creates a comprehensive framework for colleges to improve student outcomes. The Chancellor’s Office assists colleges in implementing this initiative by running workshops and reviewing college improvement plans, among other activities. The state also approved a complex new general-purpose funding formula (known as the Student Centered Funding Formula) and many new categorical programs (including basic needs, mental health, and various other student support programs) that require administrative support from the Chancellor’s Office. The Legislature also has passed policy legislation requiring the Chancellor’s Office to participate in certain systemwide improvement efforts. For example, Chapter 566 of 2021 (AB 928, Berman) requires the Chancellor’s Office to do certain things relating to improving the transfer process for students.

State Has Provided Chancellor’s Office With Some Additional Staff to Address Higher Workload. To help with general office support, the state has provided the Chancellor’s Office new attorney and accountant positions, among others. The state also has provided the Chancellor’s Office with additional programmatic support upon creating or expanding certain categorical programs. For example, the Legislature authorized an additional administrator position at the Chancellor’s Office to oversee the Guided Pathways initiative.

Figure 1

Chancellor’s Office Has Grown Somewhat in Recent Years

	Authorized Positions	Filled Positions	Vacancy Rate
2012-13	146	136	7%
2013-14	151	139	8
2014-15	160	144	10
2015-16	166	140	16
2016-17	166	141	15
2017-18	172	141	18
2018-19	172	134	22
2019-20	176	137	22
2020-21	177	146	18
2021-22	177	154 ^a	13

^a Through December 31, 2021.

In other cases, the state has created a new program but not authorized any new positions at the Chancellor’s Office. For example, in 2021-22, the state provided ongoing funding for the CCC basic needs program without authorizing any additional positions at the Chancellor’s Office.

Proposal

Governor Proposes Two-Year Staffing Plan.

As Figure 2 shows, the Governor proposes a total of 19 new permanent Chancellor’s Office positions and an associated \$2.8 million ongoing non-Proposition 98 General Fund augmentation spread over the next two fiscal years. Of the new positions, the Governor proposes adding nine in 2022-23 and ten in 2023-24. In 2023-24, Chancellor’s Office staffing would be 11 percent higher than in 2021-22. As the figure shows, the new positions would be added within several divisions of the Chancellor’s Office. The *Governor’s Budget Summary* indicates that the administration and Chancellor’s Office are considering requesting further positions, with additional proposals potentially made as part of the May Revision.

New Positions Are Associated With Various Workload.

According to the administration, the new positions are intended to accommodate new workload demands and enhance the office’s leadership so as to improve the functioning of the CCC system. Figure 3 on page 4 describes the main responsibilities for each proposed position.

Assessment and Recommendations

Proposal Has Some Merit and Some Shortcomings. As described below, the Governor’s proposal to fund 19 new positions over the next two years is a mixed bag. We find a few of the proposed positions to be justified, though not as permanent positions or in the fiscal year proposed by the Governor. The Governor’s other proposed positions either are not justified or to date have not been sufficiently justified to warrant legislative approval.

Figure 4 on page 5 summarizes our recommendations.

Two Positions Justified but Not as Permanent, Recommend Making Limited Term. We find that the two Specialist positions proposed in 2022-23 for supporting implementation of certain transfer reforms (as required by Chapter 566) are justified.

Figure 5 on page 5 highlights the new workload stemming from the legislation. In particular, the new positions would support the Chancellor’s Office in chairing the first two years of a statutorily required transfer-reform implementation committee, as well as provide assistance to colleges on complying with the legislation. Although we think the positions are needed given the additional workload stemming from the legislation, we do not think permanent authority is justified. Statute requires the relevant activities be completed by July 2025, with Chapter 566 sunseting at that time. For these reasons, we recommend the Legislature approve these positions and the associated funding but only on a three-year, limited-term basis (through 2024-25).

Two Proposed 2023-24 Positions Are Justified, but Recommend Funding in Budget Year. We see merit for two of the proposed positions in the Educational Services and Support

Figure 2

Governor Proposes a Total of 19 New Chancellor’s Office Positions Over Next Two Years

General Fund (In Thousands)

Division	Proposed Positions	Cost ^a
2022-23 (Nine Positions)		
Digital Innovation and Infrastructure	Information Technology Specialist II	\$170
	Specialist	157
	Specialist	157
	Research Data Specialist II	139
Educational Services and Support	Specialist, Academic Affairs	157
	Specialist, Academic Affairs	157
	Specialist, Academic Affairs	157
	Program Assistant II	136
	Program Assistant II	136
Subtotal		<u>(\$1,366)</u>
2023-24 (Ten Positions)		
College Finance and Facilities Planning	Specialist	\$157
	Specialist	157
	Associate Governmental Program Analyst	116
Digital Innovation and Infrastructure	Research Data Specialist II	139
	Research Data Specialist I	127
Educational Services and Support	Specialist, Student Services	157
	Specialist, Student Services	157
	Staff Services Analyst	88
General Counsel	Attorney III	213
Governmental Relations	Staff Services Manager I	136
Subtotal		<u>(\$1,447)</u>
Total		<u>\$2,813</u>

^a Reflects salary, benefits, and operating/equipment costs associated with each position.

Division. Specifically, the two Specialist positions proposed for 2023-24 would help the Chancellor’s Office administer the recently created ongoing basic needs program and other student service programs. Because these programs are already authorized and currently being developed by community colleges, we are unclear as to why the administration postpones funding the associated staffing positions until 2023-24. We recommend the Legislature modify the Governor’s proposal by approving these positions and the associated funding beginning in 2022-23.

Given Chancellor’s Office Existing Staff, Recommend Rejecting Two Positions. The Governor’s budget proposes two other positions—a Program Assistant II and a Specialist—in the Educational Services and Support Division that

Figure 3

New Chancellor’s Office Positions Would Be Charged With Various Responsibilities

Division	Proposed Position	Key Responsibilities
2022-23		
Digital Innovation and Infrastructure	IT Specialist II	Oversee upgrades to Chancellor’s Office’s data system and monitor quality of data submitted by districts.
	Research Data Specialist II	Develop new data metrics, perform program evaluations, create and analyze student and college surveys, and manage data dashboards.
	Specialist (2)	Support systemwide cybersecurity efforts. Oversee entity responsible for redesigning CCCApply. Serve as a point person for CCC on state’s Cradle to Career data system.
Educational Services and Support	Program Assistant II	Provide general support on systemwide implementation of common course numbering and transfer reforms.
	Specialist (2)	Coordinate systemwide transfer reform efforts in support of Chapter 566 of 2021 (AB 928, Berman).
	Program Assistant II and Specialist	Provide support on new ethnic studies course requirement. Provide support for initiatives on developing competency-based education and credit for prior learning.
2023-24		
College Finance and Facilities Planning	Specialist (2)	Monitor fiscal health of districts. Review accuracy of fiscal and attendance data provided by districts. Develop alternative attendance accounting methodology for competency-based education programs.
	Associate Governmental Program Analyst	Provide support on Student Centered Funding Formula (SCFF), including the hold harmless transition and updating SCFF dashboards.
Digital Innovation and Infrastructure	Research Data Specialist II and Research Data Specialist I	Develop new data metrics, perform program evaluations, create and analyze student and college surveys, and manage data dashboards.
Educational Services and Support	Specialist (2)	Provide continued support for Guided Pathways initiative as well as new state-funded programs, such as basic needs, mental health services, and the Rising Scholars Network.
	Staff Services Analyst	Provide general support for entire division’s workload.
General Counsel	Attorney III	Draft regulations. Aid in contract procurement and review. Monitor districts’ implementation of equal employment opportunity plans.
Governmental Relations	Staff Services Manager I	Manage staff that perform bill analysis and write legislative reports.

IT = information technology.

would work on ethnic studies curriculum and competency-based education. Chancellor’s Office documentation provided to our office shows that the agency already assigns two staff to overseeing those issues. Given the Governor’s proposal appears to duplicate already authorized and assigned positions, we recommend the Legislature reject these proposed positions.

Insufficient Detail on Remaining Positions, Withhold Recommendation. The Chancellor’s Office may need some of the remaining requested positions but without better back-up and justification, the Legislature is unable to make this

determination. For example, a proposed Information Technology Specialist II position would support “critical upgrades” to CCC’s centralized data system. The administration, however, has provided no information on what the critical upgrades are, how long they will take, and how often they need to occur. Similarly, a proposed Staff Services Analyst position in the Educational Services and Support Division would “provide administrative and staff support services associated with the entire division’s workload.” No detail, however, is provided on current unmet workload needs in the division and what workload the proposed position

would cover. In the case of the attorney position, the administration identifies the general nature of the work the attorney is to undertake but provides no backup information suggesting that the current number of attorneys in the Chancellor’s Office is insufficient given workload. Rather than rejecting the remaining positions at this time given this lack of specificity and justification, the Legislature could

give the administration an opportunity to submit improved proposals before the May Revision. Such proposals should include more details on the specific workload the proposed positions would undertake and why current staffing levels in those areas is insufficient. Until such proposals are provided, we withhold recommendation on the associated positions.

Figure 4

Summary of LAO Recommendations

Division	Proposed Position	LAO Recommendation
2022-23		
Digital Innovation and Infrastructure	IT Specialist II	Withhold recommendation.
	Research Data Specialist II	Withhold recommendation.
	Specialist (2)	Withhold recommendation.
Educational Services and Support	Program Assistant II	Withhold recommendation.
	Specialist (2)	Convert to limited-term positions (through 2024-25).
	Program Assistant II and Specialist	Reject.
2023-24		
College Finance and Facilities Planning	Specialist (2)	Withhold recommendation.
	Associate Governmental Program Analyst	Withhold recommendation.
Digital Innovation and Infrastructure	Research Data Specialist II and Research Data Specialist I	Withhold recommendation.
Educational Services and Support	Specialist (2)	Fund positions one year sooner (in 2022-23).
	Staff Services Analyst	Withhold recommendation.
General Counsel	Attorney III	Withhold recommendation.
Governmental Relations	Staff Services Manager I	Withhold recommendation.

IT = information technology.

Figure 5

Chapter 566 Contains Several Requirements Over Next Few Years

Requirement	Time Frame
CCC Chancellor’s Office and other specified educational entities designate representatives to serve on Associate Degree for Transfer (ADT) Intersegmental Implementation Committee (“implementation committee”).	March 1, 2022
Chancellor’s Office representative chairs implementation committee.	First two years of convening
Implementation committee submits report to Legislature setting annual transfer goals and goals for closing equity gaps, among others. Committee also is tasked with making recommendations in various areas, including how to re-engage ADT earners who do not transfer.	December 31, 2023
If designated faculty organizations cannot decide on single general education course pattern, Chancellor’s Office and other administrators from public higher education segments set the course pattern.	December 31, 2023
Default placement for CCC transfer students becomes the ADT pathway.	August 1, 2024
Implementation committee to develop statewide communications and outreach plan on student transfer, along with meeting certain other requirements.	December 31, 2024
Implementation committee sunsets.	July 1, 2025

LAO PUBLICATIONS

This post was prepared by Paul Steenhausen, and reviewed by Jennifer Pacella and Anthony Simbol. The Legislative Analyst's Office (LAO) is a nonpartisan office that provides fiscal and policy information and advice to the Legislature.