

MSJC Budget Message
Jan. 2011

Dear MSJC Colleagues,

It's a new year, a new semester and California has a new Governor. However, Californians are still dealing with an old problem: a serious state budget crisis.

By now, you've heard that California Governor Jerry Brown unveiled his proposed budget for the 2011-12 fiscal year. It's very early in the state budget process and it will be months before we know exactly what we will face. Still, we will continue to share with you updated news from the state so we can all prepare for the decisions our legislators make.

All public sectors expect to share some pain in order to lower the state's deficit, but the proposed cuts to community colleges are deep.

The Community College League of California breaks down the proposed cuts to community colleges succinctly:

- Cut \$400 million to community colleges by "reforming census dates"
- Provide 1.9 percent enrollment growth funding (\$110 million)
- Increase student fees to \$36 per unit (a \$10 per unit increase that would generate \$110 million)
- Additional \$129 million inter-year funding deferral
- Other "modest accounting changes"

This proposed state budget, if adopted as is, would mean 350,000 students statewide would lose access to community colleges. Students would offset the state cuts by paying higher per-unit fees and gimmicks like "reforming census dates" could result in reductions in the very classes students need, like math and science.

In addition, the proposed budget relies on the assumption that California voters will approve \$12 billion in additional revenue in the form of taxes on a June ballot. If they don't, the CC League warns that community colleges could take cuts totaling \$2.5 billion over the next five years.

Again, remember that this is a *proposed* budget. We have a long way to go. There will be changes. Legislators from both parties now have the task of combing through the governor's proposal and pitching counter-proposals. The CC League has not yet started its advocacy campaign to let legislators know the impacts this proposed budget would have on students and to offer up less harmful alternative budget solutions.

The fiscal year starts July 1, and a state budget should be adopted before then, however California has not passed a state budget on time in years. If you recall, last year the state budget was adopted 100 days late – the latest in state history.

Also keep in mind that advance planning by the executive leadership, the Board of Trustees and the Budget Committee has allowed Mt. San Jacinto College to be fiscally stable throughout this statewide economic downturn. Clearly, we will be impacted by the economic crisis further, but our college remains committed to protecting the classes students need to transfer or earn degrees or certificates. By working with all of our shared-governance groups, MSJC will continue to identify ways to reduce costs with the least impact to students and staff.

MSJC budget leaders are keeping up-to-date on the fast-paced changes at the state level. They will attend budget sessions in Sacramento as early as Friday, Jan. 14 to quantify the impact the proposed budget could have on our institution. We will keep you informed with updates, so expect more budget messages in the coming weeks as the information becomes available.

Please familiarize yourselves with the issues because the decisions we make here at MSJC are a result of the decisions made by our state leaders. The Chancellor's Office, the MSJC Budget Watch and the CC League web sites provide a host of facts relating to the state budget.

Chancellor's Office:

www.cccco.edu

http://www.cccco.edu/Portals/4/News/press_releases/2010/MEDIASTATEMENTChancellorScottonGovJerryBrownStateBudgetProposal%20FINALWITHFACTSHEET_1-10-11.pdf

The CC League's Budget Advocacy Action Center:

<http://www.ccleague.net/>

MSJC Budget Watch:

www.msjc.edu/budgetwatch

My experience here at MSJC means that I know what a great team we are. As in the past, I know we will pull together, work together and make the best decisions together to offer our students and communities the highest quality in higher education.

Dr. Roger Schultz

MSJC Superintendent/President