Chancellor White Commits $50 M More for Student Achievement & Degree Completion Initiatives

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Inaugural State of the CSU address outlines vision for 23-campus system

Timothy P. White, chancellor of the California State University (CSU), announced today that the CSU will commit an additional $50 million to advance student achievement and bolster degree completion. The announcement was the cornerstone of White’s inaugural State of the CSU address, which was delivered before a crowd of about 200 staff, faculty, students and guests at a regular meeting of the Board of Trustees at the Chancellor’s Office in Long Beach.

According to White, $50 million will be used to expand and enhance existing strategies that support student success. The seven priority investment areas include: hiring more tenure-track faculty; enhancing student advising; increasing the number of online and concurrent enrollment classes, expanding the application of technology and scaling the instructional practices that reduce the course bottlenecks that hinder students from earning degrees in a timely manner; expanding the Early Start Program and other measures that ensure college readiness among first-time freshmen; expanding data collection and data-driven decision making; improving access and increasing degree completion among community college transfer students; and expanding high-impact practices that support persistence to degree such as undergraduate participation in applied research, service learning, internships and study abroad.

White kicked off the State of the CSU address by talking about the system’s mission, punctuating his remarks with observations from his first year of service in which he visited all 23 campuses. “I now know enough about us to report that the state of the California State University is strong, proud and aspirational. What we do is simply remarkable – and California needs more of it. Our state needs one million more college graduates by 2025 to enable the health of the economy. This need is enormous, and we must intensify our efforts to do our part to meet that need,” White said.

With the CSU awarding about half of the state’s baccalaureate degrees and 35 percent of the master’s degrees, “our top priority must be to firm up our fiscal and policy commitments to access, persistence to degree and degree completion – to improve the educational experience and degree attainment for all students, and to enable students to earn a high-quality degree in a shorter amount of time.
The vision for the CSU gives consideration to the enormous potential of our campuses, the workforce needs of our state, and the demographic characteristics of our current and future students,” White explained. “Achieving our ambitious goals will require a solid and sustained commitment of the people of the CSU – and it will also require investment by our public and private partners across California. But, it will be done with our eyes on the collective goal: a strong, successful, and prosperous future – for our students, our communities, our state, and our nation.”

What Statewide Leaders Are Saying About the State of the CSU Address…

“Chancellor White’s focus on student success and degree completion is in tight alignment with the priorities of the California Community Colleges. With these shared goals, our two systems can work even more closely together to educate the workforce that is needed for our changing economy. Our recent work on improving transfer is but one example of collaboration that will help students achieve their educational goals and improve our communities.”
– Brice W. Harris, Chancellor, California Community Colleges

“Chancellor White’s ambitious vision is grounded in the realities of California and the needs of current and future generations. We look forward to working with the CSU and California Community College systems to help accomplish our shared goals.”
– Janet Napolitano, President, University of California

“The CSU is a gateway to a high quality affordable education to all Californian’s and especially to first generation and minority students. That is why the CSU is so important to the future of our great state. The initiatives that Chancellor White is implementing that support student success will go far in increasing the number of degrees the CSU confers. I am also thankful that Chancellor White is putting an emphasis on students of all backgrounds by creating a seamless partnership with the K-12 and community college system. Long Beach students have long benefited from such a seamless partnership through the Long Beach College Promise.”
– Eloy Ortiz Oakley, Superintendent-President, Long Beach City College

“The CSU remains one of the key economic engines of California, and a strong and healthy CSU is vital to a strong and healthy California economy. I am delighted to see the progress the CSU has made in recovering from the effects of a deep and damaging recession, and as the Chancellor’s State of the System Address shows, the CSU is making significant progress at every one of the system’s 23 campuses. I am particularly pleased to see such a strong focus on student achievement and degree completion, with a thoughtful and comprehensive approach to ensure that every student who attends a CSU graduates with the skills they need to contribute to our state and its workforce. I look forwarding to working with the Chancellor and my fellow Trustees in the coming months, especially on issues like the launch of the Middle Class Scholarship in the Fall 2014 semester and on improving campus climate for every student in the CSU.”
– John A. Pérez, Speaker (D-Los Angeles), California State Assembly

“Chancellor White’s vision for the CSU affirms a welcome commitment to collaboration among the state’s public education systems and the business community, so that our graduates are better prepared to meet California’s workforce needs. The Chancellor’s focus on equipping graduates with skills demanded by our 21st Century economy sets CSU students on a stronger path to employment opportunities and greater lifetime earnings.”
– Darrell Steinberg, President Pro Tempore (D-Sacramento), California State Senate