



## Affirming Equity, Ensuring Inclusion, and Empowering Action: 2024 State Legislative and Budget Priorities

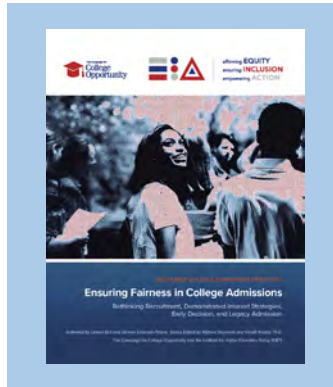
In June 2023, the U.S. Supreme Court announced a decision to curtail the use of race in college and university admissions, a powerful tool that has been used to address the legacy of racial injustice and advance the inclusion and integration of Latinx, Black, Asian American and Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander (NHPI), and American Indian/Alaska Native (AIAN) students. In response, the Campaign for College Opportunity launched a national initiative, [Affirming Equity, Ensuring Inclusion, Empowering Action](#), partnering with state and national experts to promote evidence-based solutions that advance more equitable strategies in college preparation, access, and completion to ensure those who have been historically excluded and underserved by our colleges and universities have a real opportunity to go to college and succeed despite the Supreme Court decision.

The culmination of this work has led to a clear and resounding call to action: **it is incumbent upon California to lead the nation by example to enact policy to proactively combat the chilling effects in higher education enrollment and persistence stemming from the Supreme Court's decision.** Our 2024 California State Legislative and Budget Priorities responds to this urgent call for action. Comprised of high-impact budget and legislative priorities based on key findings and recommendations from our research brief series, statewide policymakers have before them a clear roadmap that, if enacted, will uplift California as a national exemplar in affirming racial equity, ensuring inclusion, and empowering action in higher education.



# affirming **EQUITY**

## Related Resource



## College Admissions

Legacy admission policies, or providing preferential admissions treatment to family members who have graduated from a college or university, favor students who are not the first in their family to attend college. This presents a significant structural inequity in the college admissions process – giving affluent students a leg up in competitive applicant pools while systemically limiting opportunity for first-generation students who are more likely to be minoritized and have the most to gain from a college education. Historically, legacy admissions was used at several Ivy League colleges to favor white Christian students and purposely exclude Jewish students and non-white Latinx, Black, AIAN, and other minoritized students.



## Legislative Priorities

**AB 1780 (Ting) – SPONSOR:** Bans legacy admissions at private colleges in California.



## Strengthening Transfer

Transfer from a community college to a four-year institution has long been envisioned as an accessible and affordable route to a bachelor's degree – particularly for students who are Latinx, Black, underrepresented Asian American and NHPI, and AIAN, who are more likely to enroll in community college. California has made notable progress in creating a streamlined pathway to transfer via the Associate Degree for Transfer (ADT) – utilizing a 60 lower division unit + 60 upper division unit framework to provide students with clear streamlined pathways to complete the requirements necessary to transfer, aligning transfer requirements with associate degree requirements so that student earn a degree on their way to transferring, and allow students to remain on a timely pathway to earning a baccalaureate degree after transferring by guaranteeing that they transfer with junior standing. Policymakers can ensure that the benefits of the ADT are extended to science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) pathways, and create more efficient pathways to meet our state's evolving workforce needs.

## Related Resource



## Legislative Priorities

**AB 2057 (Berman) – SPONSOR:** Strengthens the ADT by increasing access to STEM ADT pathways and setting statewide goals to close racial equity gaps in transfer attainment, as recommended by the [AB 928 ADT Intersegmental Implementation Committee](#).



## Equitable Dual Enrollment Access

Dual enrollment represents a promising lever for increasing educational equity, given its large scale and demonstrated effectiveness for increasing college access and success among its participants. Black, Latinx, and other minoritized students have the most to gain from participating in dual enrollment, and yet research demonstrates that access to dual enrollment still remains inequitable. Strong dual enrollment programs have the potential to raise college enrollment rates among high school graduates and improve college-attainment rates for students who participate.



### Legislative Priorities

**AB 359 (Holden):** Expands equitable dual enrollment opportunities for all students, and requires that enrollment and outreach efforts prioritize underrepresented students.

**SB 1244 (Newman):** Allows dual enrollment partnerships between community college districts and K-12 districts to expand outside of a community college district's service area, if a neighboring community college district is unable to enter into a partnership to offer dual enrollment courses.

## ensuring INCLUSION



## Financial Aid and College Affordability

By increasing access to financial aid and shifting the way colleges and universities equitably award and disburse funds, statewide policymakers can leverage financial aid as a marketing, recruitment, enrollment, and retention tool for both low-income and minoritized students. Socio-economic status is not a perfect proxy for race, but affordability policies are a critical lever for racial equity, given that Latinx, Black, NHPI, and AIAN students receive multiple forms of grant aid at higher percentages than their white counterparts.



### Budget Priorities

**Prioritizing a Phased Funding Solution for Cal Grant Reform** – The 2022 Budget Act directed the state to fund the [Cal Grant Equity Framework](#) by 2024-25, contingent upon available resources. By simplifying the Cal Grant program and removing racially inequitable barriers to financial aid, we can keep the college dream affordable for generations of Californians to come. Recognizing the challenging fiscal realities we face this year, we call for the Governor and Legislature to prioritize funding for Cal Grant Reform with a meaningful down payment as a first step toward full implementation.



### Legislative Priorities

**AB 3240 (Calderon):** Extends the Ban on Scholarship Displacement Act (AB 288 - Calderon, 2021) to Cal Grant recipient students, preventing students who earn private scholarships from seeing a decrease in their Cal Grant awards.

**AB 1887 (Cervantes) - PASSED:** Extends the application deadline for state financial aid programs from April 2 to May 2, in response to the delayed federal updates to the FAFSA.

# Supporting Historically Minoritized Students

In a forthcoming brief, we find that colleges will need to be intentional in their focus on serving historically minoritized students – not just in college recruitment and admissions, but in building comprehensive systems and strategies to support the persistence and success of these student populations. (Forthcoming Brief: Strategies for Ensuring a Welcoming Campus Environment - Anticipated Release in Summer 2024)



## Legislative Priorities

**SB 1348 (Bradford):** Establishes the California Seal of Excellence in Serving Black and African American Postsecondary Students to recognize campuses of the California Community Colleges (CCC), California State University (CSU), and University of California (UC) segments that excel at providing academic resources to Black students.

## empowering **Δ**ACTION



[↑ Related Resource](#)

## Structural Support and Coordination

To enact key diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility (DEIA) protections across California's higher education systems to achieve racially equitable college outcomes, policymakers will need to establish standing authoritative structures for meaningful intersegmental collaboration, while leveraging existing funding mechanisms to improve college access and student success.



## Budget Priorities

**Maintain Compacts Funding with an Increased Focus on Accountability:** The UC and the CSU have received close to \$1 billion over the past two fiscal years. If funding to the UC and CSU continues to be prioritized, even in a resource-constrained environment, we should expect both systems to make more meaningful, consistent progress towards their goals, particularly on transfer outcomes and reducing racial equity gaps. As the Compacts are now at the mid-way mark, we urge the legislature to hold the UC and CSU accountable towards making progress on all goals, especially transfer and equity goals.

**Higher Education Coordination:** Student-centered alignment between California's systems of higher education begins with collaboration and ultimately requires a fundamental shift in culture that requires both system and faculty buy-in. Policymakers should look for opportunities to strengthen the postsecondary coordination that is critical to achieving racially equitable outcomes in college access, persistence, and student success.



## Legislative Priorities

**AB 1142 (Fong)** – Establishes a higher education coordinating body in California.

# Strong Disaggregated Data:

In a forthcoming brief, we find that disaggregated data can be leveraged as a powerful tool to identify, track, and measure the impact of targeted interventions for persistent racial and ethnic equity gaps in college access and completion. Ensuring that data is reliably collected – and disaggregated to capture racial and ethnic subgroups – will be a vital tool policymakers need to leverage. (Anticipated Release in Summer 2024)



## Budget Priorities

**Support for Proposed C2C Data System Funding:** As proposed in the Governor's January Budget, a \$5 million investment to the Cradle to Career (C2C) Statewide Longitudinal Data System to benefit the California Career Guidance Initiative, which will further simplify and streamline the process of applying to college.



## Legislative Priorities

**AB 2458 (Berman)** – Ensures disaggregated data is collected for college-level student parents, allowing for cost projections for financial aid packages to include childcare costs and to integrate data on student parents into the Cradle to Career Statewide Longitudinal Data System.

**SB 782 (Limon)** – Ensures that disaggregated data on racial, ethnic, gender, and geographical diversity of gubernatorial appointments is collected and reported.

**AB 2723 (Irwin)** – Ensures that the Cradle to Career Statewide Longitudinal Data System governance structure and data dashboard tools are seamlessly operationalized.

Learn more on  
our website:



The Campaign for College Opportunity is a California non-profit bipartisan policy and research organization focused on a single mission: to ensure all Californians have an equal opportunity to attend and succeed in college in order to build a vibrant workforce, economy and democracy. Your contribution is tax-deductible. Our Tax I.D. number is 20-0427622.

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