June 2015

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Update: Board of Governors Task Force on Workforce, Job Creation, and a Strong Economy

Excerpt from CAEconomy blog coverage of the June 11th Task Force meeting

Sunita Cooke, chair of the Task Force on Workforce, Job Creation and a Strong Economy, and president and superintendent of MiraCosta Community College District (Photo Credit: Steven Hellon)

"I don't think it's too much of an overstatement to say that the future of the state's economy and the future of the state rests significantly on the success of this and other efforts in the community colleges," said Tim Gage, consultant from Blue Sky Consulting Group.
Career technical education (CTE) which includes many high-pay, in-demand jobs like nursing, IT and welding has been tapped as the main driver of this effort, given California will need 1 million middle-skill workers in the next 10 years.

The task force formed by the Board of Governors of the California Community Colleges Chancellor’s Office met for the fourth time to brainstorm ideas to help the College system adequately fund and coordinate CTE programs regionally.

The big challenge for the task force members from schools, industry and workforce development is that CTE courses can cost colleges four to five times more to offer than a traditional academic program.

But the group soldiered on and discussed ways to boost that additional funding need for CTE programs, which need expensive equipment. Their ideas will provide further direction for the Community College system and its Board of Governors on reforming the state’s CTE funding, which has been dropping for more than a decade in California.

"Traditionally how we're funded in the community colleges is by measuring Full Time Equivalent Students, FTES's--we call them "butts in seats"--and so we're looking at what are alternate ways to supplement the current model," said Lynell Wiggins, CTE counselor in the Pasadena Area Community College District.

Some of the solutions discussed, already in use in other states included tiered or differential funding, whereby state funding formulas take differential program costs into account in funding for institutions. Instead of funding "per seat," the model provides core funding and then more for high-cost programs like CTE. Another model is using performance funding, which incentivizes increased funding based on outcomes like the increase in wages graduates earn.

The difficulty with these models, hashed out extensively during the task force meeting, is choosing which data to use to decide the additional funding, such as student demographics, the cost of programs and how it's demonstrated they're meeting needs of local employers.

On top of that, calculating this data is made more difficult by the fact that community college students are a diverse group of learners, spread out across varied regions, and often have different goals as students.

“One of the scariest pieces of data--and this is about measuring what matters--is skill builders were getting more jobs and at higher wages than completers," said Sunita Cooke, chair of the task force, and president and superintendent of MiraCosta Community College District. "So I think we want to be really careful about what we're incentivizing and driving."

Follow along by reading Task Force background papers:

- Workforce Data & Outcomes »
California Joins Colorado and Kentucky in Clinton Global Initiative Commitment to Action

The California Community Colleges Chancellor’s Office (CCCCO) was invited to attend the Clinton Global Initiative (CGI) earlier this month. As part of the CGI Education and Workforce Development Track, California, Colorado, and Kentucky has made a Commitment to Action entitled “State-Industry Engagement to Improve Workforce Outcomes.” The Commitment aims to create a nationally networked system of workforce engagement across states and localities to ensure employers consistently have the real-time talent they need to succeed and citizens have the skill-building opportunities they need to become that talent and achieve economic mobility. According to Debra Jones, CCCCCO Dean of Career Education Practices, “California continues to push under the Doing What MATTERS for Jobs and the Economy to evolve the State’s workforce infrastructure.”

Learn More »

Regionalized Economic Data & Labor Market Reports Now Available

The popular interactive maps on Doing What MATTERS for Jobs and the Economy now provide economic data and labor market reports regionalized for ease of viewing:

Economic Data

The Economic Data Map, created by the California Center for Jobs and the Economy, provides an in-depth look at the underlying data trends of the California economy by region, including data on employment, demographics, and industry-specific data for Assembly districts, Senate districts, counties, and regions.

View Economic Data Map »
Labor Market Research

The Labor Market Research Map, created by the Centers of Excellence, provides an overview of regional labor markets, including the largest and top growing industries and occupations, and job statistics for specific sets of occupations relevant to regional college programs.

View Labor Market Research Map »