

2022 Federal Policy & Budgetary Agenda



Maricopa County Community College District (MCCCD) is one of the largest community college systems globally, proudly empowering 200,000 students annually to succeed by providing the education, training, and skills needed to thrive in tomorrow's economy. MCCCD has 10 colleges spanning across Maricopa County and is the largest workforce development provider in the state, adding \$7.2 billion in income to the state's economy in Fiscal Year 2017, the equivalent of three percent of the total gross regional product of Maricopa County. Recognizing the statewide and global impact of the District, MCCCD developed a 2022 legislative agenda to support the preservation, innovation, and expansion of programs that ensure students enrolled in our colleges are ready for the workforce of today and the workforce of tomorrow. The following items are anticipated to arise during the next legislative session and are the recommended positions of MCCCD's elected governing board.

1. Support continued stimulus support to sustain students and colleges through the pandemic recovery.

Congress continues to monitor the nation's progress of pandemic recovery, and remains vigilant to develop targeted supports as necessary. Maricopa Community Colleges shall continue to monitor student enrollment and success and advocate for additional student or operational support as appropriate and necessary.

2. Support the development of a dedicated community college job training program and the bolstering of other workforce-focused federal programs, such as Career and Technical Education (CTE), the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), the Adult Basic Education and Literacy Act (AEFLA).

The pandemic enhanced Congressional interest in developing a federally-funded job training program administered by community colleges to support the reskilling and upskilling of the workforce. In addition, other federally-funded programs currently exist to support the workforce through our colleges, including CTE, WIOA, and AEFLA. Maricopa Community Colleges shall continue to support the development, preservation and enhancement of federally-funded community college workforce development programs.

3. Support changes to Pell Grants that support students and minimize operational inefficiencies, such as the ending of taxation of Pell Grants, increase to the maximum award, and allow for the use of Pell Grants for short-term programs, including noncredit.

With a large number of students at Maricopa Community College receiving Pell Grants, the support of policy revisions and enhanced appropriations and efficiencies to Pell Grants will better serve our students and enhance access and efficiencies at our colleges.

4. Support investments in enhancing college access, affordability, enrollment and essential student supports to promote completion, such as the creation of tuition-free community college and promote validated college savings programs such as Earn to Learn.

President Biden's launch of "Build Back Better Act" and the congressional launch of the "American Family Plan" includes an initiative to create a tuition-free community college pathway. Maricopa Community Colleges shall support federal policy and budgetary items that promote both the enrollment and completion of programs, including the essential student supports that result in enhanced student success. In addition, Maricopa Community College currently pilots a college savings program called Earn to Learn which is under consideration at the federal level. Maricopa Community Colleges shall advocate for this funding in the best interest of our colleges and our state.

5. Support legislation that would establish a path to citizenship for qualifying undocumented students who entered the U.S. as minors.

- These are students that have lived, worked, and attended school in Arizona since they were young children. Yet, they must pay out-of-state tuition and fees, making attending college financially unmanageable.
- Attempts have been made at the state level in Arizona the past few years to allow for higher education institutions to accept in-state/in-county tuition for these students. None of these have successfully passed, requiring colleges to charge out of state tuition.
- Enactment of the Dream Act to provide Dreamers with permanent legal status will get many of these students back into community colleges because of the affordability, leading to a better education and higher skilled workforce.

6. Strengthen resources to Hispanic Serving Institutions.

With 9 out of 10 of our colleges being designated as Hispanic Service Institutions (HSI), and congressional interest to continue to provide ample resources to support both the students and operations of these colleges, Maricopa Community Colleges will support federal advancement for additional support and resources for HSI's.

7. Submit requests to Arizona's congressional delegation for Congressionally Directed Funding to develop and enhance student access to programs in the highest need workforce areas in the state and the nation.

2021 was the first time in 10 years that Congress allowed for the submission of Congressionally Directed Spending (CDS) requests. Maricopa Community Colleges shall develop CDS requests for the Arizona congressional delegation and Senators to consider for Federal Fiscal Year 2023 Budgets based on the development projects in the highest need areas of the workforce.

8. Support investments in basic needs supports for students beyond tuition, such as food, housing, transportation, child care, mental health needs and medical expenses as a stand-alone measure or as part of a more comprehensive set of community college student supports.

The true cost of attending community college extends beyond the price of tuition. Maricopa Community Colleges shall support federal policies that enhance student access to vital basic needs services to support the increase of both enrollment and completion.

9. Protect and expand local district authority and governance in the administration of the colleges and minimize administrative barriers and bureaucracies in federal compliance, including policy, rules, and regulations that supports and protects students, staff, and faculty both academically and professionally.

Recognizing the vast differences of community colleges just within our district, sweeping federal policy enacted on all higher education can be challenging. Maricopa Community Colleges shall promote local decision-making in the best interest in our colleges and our students.