

COVID RECOVERY BLOCK GRANT

Memo Number: FS22-10

TO: Chief Executive Officers
Chief Business Officers
Chief Student Services Officers
Financial Aid Officers

FROM: Lizette Navarette, Executive Vice Chancellor
Institutional Supports and Success Office

RE: California Community College COVID-19 Recovery Block Grant

The 2022-23 state budget provides \$650 million in one-time funding to establish the California Community College COVID-19 Recovery Block Grant. This memo provides information on the COVID-19 Recovery Block Grant, including allocation methodology, allowable expenditures, and reporting requirements.

Background

Budget trailer bill, AB 182 (2022) includes a **one-time** \$650 million block grant for districts to address issues related to the COVID-19 pandemic. The funds are intended to be used on activities that directly support community college students and mitigate learning losses related to the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic. Community college districts should prioritize the use of these one-time funds for purposes, including, but not limited to, professional development, technology infrastructure, developing open education resources and zero-textbook-cost degrees, and supporting the mental health and wellness needs of students and staff.

Revenue Recognition

The COVID-19 Recovery Block Grant funds should be recorded in the district's restricted general fund. There is no legislative deadline to expend the funds; however, districts must report on use of funds to the Chancellor's Office by December 2023, as described below.

Allowable Expenditures

Funds from this block grant can be expended for any of the following purposes:

- Support access to basic needs and mental health services for students impacted by COVID-19.
- Reengagement strategies for students who received an incomplete or failing grade in the spring 2022 due to COVID-19.

- Engagement strategies with high schools and local communities to restore broader access.
- Grants to faculty for development of online, accelerated learning modules to allow students who received an incomplete or failing grade in the spring 2022 term due to COVID-19 to make progress toward their degrees instead of retaking courses in the fall 2022 term.
- Professional development opportunities for faculty and student services professionals to continue educational instruction due to COVID-19, including supporting students impacted by learning loss and preparing and supporting faculty to develop online instructional capabilities in response to COVID-19.
- Investments in information technology infrastructure, facilitating students' access to technology to be able to access online coursework, and technology, software, or other electronic instruments and materials for faculty to support courses that are difficult to teach online.
- Cleaning supplies and personal protective equipment.
- Discharge unpaid fees due or owed by a student to a community college in the district.

Other Considerations and Potential Uses

Districts have many options to use block grant funds on strategies that directly support community college students and mitigate disruptions to persistence. Below are other allowable uses that districts can also consider.

- **Increase online student service hours to evenings and weekends.** Increased availability and access to student supports on evenings and weekends, without the need to drive to campus, has been an effective strategy deployed by many districts in the last two years. Block grant funds can be used to maintain and expanded access to academic support services, including student counseling, tutoring, and mental health services.
- **Help meet students' financial and basic needs.** The pandemic-era has reinforced the urgency to connect students to financial aid and basic needs supports. For students who have not completed the FAFSA or California Dream Act application (CADAA), these resources provide flexibility to directly support and connect student to all available resources. Further, expand eligibility criteria for CalFresh food assistance benefits enables more community college students to qualify. Colleges can align FAFSA/CADAA assistance with efforts to help more students apply for CalFresh. Coupled with campus

basic needs centers, these strategies provide yet another tool for holistically supporting students.

- **Professional development focused on culturally responsive campuses and classrooms.** The block grant allows colleges to invest in professional development to enhance teaching and student supports. Colleges can invest in practices that explore strategies and initiatives for incorporating students' cultural backgrounds and experiences, providing inclusive environments.
- **Provide direct emergency grants to students in need.** Similar to federal stimulus funds, block grant dollars may be used to provide emergency grants or learning tools (such as laptops) to students.

Allocation of Funds

The COVID-19 Recovery Block Grant funds will be allocated to districts based on actual reported FTES in the second principal apportionment for the 2021-22 fiscal year. Funds will be certified at the 2022--23 Advance September revision.

Reporting Requirements

Reports on Part-Time Faculty Health Insurance

As a condition of receiving these funds, districts are required to report to the Chancellor's Office metrics on their employer-sponsored health insurance for part-time faculty in 2021--22 (by March 1, 2023) and 2024-25 (by March 1, 2026). Metrics include:

- Whether the district offers health insurance to its part-time faculty, and if so, the minimum conditions for obtaining employer-sponsored coverage.
- The total number of qualifying part-time faculty and the number of participants in the Part-Time Community College Faculty Health Insurance program.
- The total number of part-time faculty who do not qualify for the Part-Time Community College Faculty Health Insurance program, but whose total cumulative teaching assignments at two or more community college districts equals or exceeds 40% of the cumulative equivalent of a minimum full-time teaching assignment.
- The source of health insurance by the number of part-time faculty in each category or type, which may include, but is not limited to, a community college district, a pooled health benefit plan, a spouse or domestic partner's employer, another employer, private insurance, Covered California, Medi-Cal, or no health insurance.

Report on Use of Funds

Districts will also be required to provide information on the expenditures of the allocated COVID-19 Recovery Block Grant funds to the Chancellor's Office by December 2023. The report will include a description of how funds were used for each of the allowable purposes, a description of how expenditures prioritized services for underrepresented students, and an explanation of the effectiveness of services or supports provided by the funds. Additional information on specific reporting requirements will be provided closer to the December 2023 due date.

Contact

If you have questions regarding the California Community College COVID-19 Recovery Block Grant, please contact fiscalstandards@cccco.edu or Lorena Romero at lromero@cccco.edu.

Attachment: California Community College COVID-19 Recovery Block Grant Allocation