

3 years
\$ 600,000

II. California Education Policy Grant Application Questions

1. Please identify the education reform issue area(s) on which your organization focuses

Postsecondary system leaders occupy a key place that spans institutional practice and state policy. The Central California Community Colleges Committed to Change (C⁶) Consortium has agreed to work together to pilot a series of innovative approaches to educational policy reform efforts focused on **College Readiness**. These policy experiments will allow state officials to truly determine a best practice for the entire state. Amid growing research that a narrowly focused policy change produces very limited outcomes or confounding results, the C⁶ Consortium strongly recommends that our pilot policy reform efforts focus on interrelated educational areas and will utilize action-oriented advocacy as a comprehensive strategy to policy making.

✓ **College Readiness** was identified by twelve Central California college presidents and top administrators as the most strategic area to begin reform. College Readiness is critical to all student success. In order to prepare the students for college, change must begin with standards, assessment and accountability. The C⁶ Consortium will work with policies to increase college readiness and the proportion of and pace by which low-income young adults progress through community colleges to postsecondary workforce credential and degree completion.

The C⁶ Consortium has identified the following interconnected educational reform issue area(s) that support College Readiness efforts:

- ✓ **Standards and Accountability:** The C⁶ Consortium members have agreed that high standards and aligned curriculum is the ideal starting place for reform. All students must have access to a challenging curriculum that's aligned to the standards – K-16 with an emphasis on college readiness. There is a well documented need to reform and align current standards, college placement assessments, and accountability policies in order to prepare students to succeed in college and the workplace and to compete in the global economy (see reference cited). The C⁶ proposal supports efforts to Assembly Bill 743 (Block).
- ✓ **Finance Reform:** There have been subsequent reform efforts, since *Serrano vs. Priest*, and California continues to struggle to develop a more equitable system. The C⁶ Consortium understands that K-14 finance flexibility is fundamental to systemic, sustainable changes.
- ✓ **Data Systems:** In the era of "data-driven decisions" it is clear that incomplete data and the lack of strong data analysis capacity has driven poor decisions both in educational practice and reform efforts which has lead to, in part, California's current fractured education policy environment. The C⁶ Consortium will pilot policy and procedures that will provide a systematic feedback mechanism in order to evaluate the initiative's progress, as well as measure student growth and success from Pre-K through college and the workforce. Data will be shared to inform teachers and principals on how they can improve instruction.

2. Please describe: The mission and objectives of your organization

Mission: The C⁶ Consortium will champion policymaking processes and pilot regional reform efforts focused on improving California K-14 education policies.

Objectives: The C⁶ Consortium, representing 12 Central California colleges, is working together to reform educational policies in California. Change will occur on three levels: administrative procedures, college and high school policy and state legislation. By piloting the following changes across a broad region of the state, the data will validate the need to change policies that hamper the community college students' ability to complete their degree in a timely manner. Grassroots organizations, like community colleges, can affect policy change by providing conclusive success data, constituent "buy-in" and group advocacy from many factions such as faculty, administrators and task force groups and working with influential lobbying groups such as LearningWorks and CalPASS. The C⁶ administrators can influence statewide policy changes by demonstrating leadership and effective practices on state policy advisory committees.

The problem/issue your organization addresses and your approach to solving it

The C⁶ Consortium has identified a group of inter-related and inter-dependent factors that are associated with high student success rates in both the K-12 and community college arena. More specifically, researchers

(*Significant Discussions*, Shulock) have identified three key lessons from examining other state efforts.

These are as follows:

1. There are basic policy issues that must be addressed in order to bring about success in closing the achievement gap. States that have made strides are all drawing from the same menu of effective policy options, and that menu encompasses the basic elements for gap-closing success
2. The policy options for closing the gap and those for just plain ensuring good education are one and the same; the key is making sure that all groups of students get the benefits
3. Success requires a coherent approach that not only includes the basic ingredients but also appropriately targets resources. Using one or two of the essential policy options is unlikely to lead to gap-closing; success requires a coherent policy framework that includes all the key ingredients. More than that, it must particularly focus on students who are falling behind.

Problem across the state: About 85% of incoming CCC students are not proficient in college-level math, and about 70% arrive unprepared for college-level English. These basic skills are fundamental to student success, and a core mission of CCC is to provide basic skills education. However, in the absence of appropriate assessment, students may seek placement in courses for which they are unprepared. According to the Legislative Analyst's Office, most studies recommend that incoming CCC students be assessed prior to enrolling in classes and link assessment with improved course completion and graduation rates. The C⁶ proposal marks an unprecedented opportunity for our region to develop replicable educational policy reforms that will result in improved graduation rates and shorten time to degree completion. More students will be able to earn a degree or credential that will enable them to transfer to a four-year college or begin a career.

Three fundamental issues have been identified. These are as follows:

Issue 1: There is a misalignment between high school curriculum and standardized placement testing in preparation for college coursework. Solutions: Alignment of 9-14 curriculums by standardizing student learning. High School and college content faculty will work together to revise high school senior year English. Also, a senior year math review should be added beginning with diagnostic assessment of skills, followed by strategies to remediate weak areas, and the subsequent retaking of the college placement test upon completion of class. Additionally, a summer freshman math review class should be offered prior to students enrolling in college level math courses. Finally, creation of a required 21st Century Skills Seminar class for high school seniors that supports their transition to the academic behaviors and cognitive strategies necessary in college or career.

Issue 2: College placement tests are not aligned with high school standards and do not adequately reflect the student's readiness to take college level math and English courses. Solutions: There should be common acceptance of a regional common placement test. High school senior year English should be redesigned to strengthen needed college English skills. Also, high school seniors who do not demonstrate pre-collegiate math skills must take a math review as students stop math classes by their 11th grade year.

Issue 3: Conflicting board governance policies create barriers for students. Solutions: Standardize board policy pertaining to common assessments and course alignment. Work with local high schools to change board policy for the senior year experience. Policies should be revised to allow for the preparation in math, English, and college awareness through collegiate model instructional delivery.

Problems faced by community colleges and students:

There are several problems inherent in our systems that hinder students' success:

1. Students: the transition curriculum between college expectations for math and English and high school 12th grade instruction need alignment. High school English is based on literature and freshman college is non-fiction/analysis based. Additionally, CA standards only require 3 years of math which most students complete by 11th grade, which leaves them unprepared for the college math placement test. These two challenges explain why students "need" 2-4 semesters of "remediation".
2. Community colleges: policy is still in place that research is demonstrating as ineffective, such as the misalignment between CA 12th grade standards and college English skills. This is one of the first chances

the college leadership has had to focus on the changes needed in policy to correct these problems. If Central CA leads a statewide effort to affect simple changes this message will be shared across the state and policy will be changed.

The target audience for your organization's work and your strategy to reach it:

Legislators and/or the CA Community College Chancellor's Office The Central Valley Higher Education Consortium, composed of 26 Central CA CEOs have the ability to influence state academic advisory taskforces such as the Student Success Task Force, using the research of CalPASS, and working with advisory organizations such as LearningWorks and the Career Ladder Project which are state initiatives to create change by sharing best practices. These groups can assist the colleges in being designated as pilot program for flexibility on a variety of policies that hamper student success such as waivers utilizing categorical funds, assessment of student material fees, hiring basic skills instructors who do not have the requisite Master's degrees and dual enrollment strategies.

Superintendents/Presidents/Principals of K12 systems will need assistance in changing their own board policies to allow flexibility in the high school "Senior Year Experience". College and high school faculty will work together on timing of placement assessments, curriculum alignment and senior year academic experience. **Academic instructors** are the key to making instruction changes in areas such as 12th grade English curriculum as well as first year college curriculum, basic skills instruction using diagnostic identification of missing skills sets and remediate prior to retaking college placement test. Changes in these areas, based on our efforts to influence policy changes, will be carried to the state on multiple levels. The Academic Senate representatives and Chief Instructional Officers will share findings on student success based on data with colleagues statewide to influence other regions to adopt same policy changes.

Beneficiaries of the work and our strategy to reach them:

The primary beneficiaries are the California students who will complete college in less time, better utilize their senior year, and are better prepared for college coursework. This will increase the completion rates and improve student success, thus preparing the next generation for the workforce needs of 21st century. **Additional beneficiaries are parents** who will save money and time for their children as they attend college. This is also a response to the national movement for a better return on taxpayer investment and greater accountability in degree completion. **K-12 Unified School Districts** also benefit from closer partnerships between college and high school faculty who are jointly preparing students for college. Our strategy will improve the quality of the senior year experience and increase the percentage of seniors successfully completing college more efficiently.

3. Summarize the research and best practices which support our organization's policy framework

This project is grounded in established research and input from regional higher education leaders, employers and Workforce Investment Boards and will transform the design, structure and delivery of education at 12 Central California Community Colleges. The seminal report, *Closing the Achievement Gap*, detailed key elements to systematically "develop, implement, and sustain a specific, ambitious plan that holds the State of California accountable for creating the conditions necessary for closing the achievement gap" many of which this proposal will implement (2008).

The California P-16 Council outlines strategies that the C⁶ Consortium is the foundation of the proposed policy reform. For example, use of a **common placement test** across all colleges and high schools and **implementation on common cut scores** for placement test which will lead to articulation across grade spans. The C⁶ consortium policy framework **regarding alignment of curriculum between 12th grade and college freshman year** (Significant Discussions, 2010) is supported by research conducted at UC Davis which states, "...it is a 'ground-up' approach with some promise" (Timar, 2011).

Research from UC Davis demonstrates a need to translate research findings and syntheses into language most suitable for immediate use in a policy-making environment, this is the cornerstone of the C⁶ initiative. Based on Shulock's (2011) research, there is a call for "next generation" leadership to lead comprehensive policy reform at local and state levels, the C⁶ consortium is taking the effort to "collect and report data on intermediate measures. The goal is to encourage common practices and definitions, as well as

more thoughtful and effective uses of these data for institutional improvement, policy reform, performance funding, and accountability purposes.”

Priority registration for targeted groups such as students with a certain number of units, persisting students, high school freshmen is based on Shulock’s cited best practice evidence of an emerging strategy to use data to improve postsecondary outcomes. This allows the C⁶ consortium to measure the patterns by which students reach and move through intermediate stages as they progress toward completing degrees. **Change high school policy to create a common “Senior Year Experience”** that requires college readiness in the instructional delivery of classes and changes in content, as well as math review class for students not placing into college level math. “Postsecondary system leaders... need to know where and why students are stalling, what might be done about it, and what policy changes at the system and state level are needed” (Shulock, 2011). This change in academic behavior to improve the student’s chance of degree completion is also supported by Shulock and UC Davis research.

4. Potential our organization has to impact the California education policy reform issues identified

The potential of C⁶ consortium to impact the California education policy reform issues identified in #1 is based on the successful California Leadership Alliance for Student Success model which focused on a subset of institutions with high potential to affect state policy (Center for Community College Student Engagement 2009). The C⁶ consortium is comprised of leaders from 12 community colleges and several K-12 superintendents who have the authority to adopt administrative procedures that support policy reform and that will ensure sustainability. The C⁶ consortium will provide nonpartisan, research-based education policy recommendations to the state based on the effectiveness of the piloted regional policy changes.

Our organization has been involved in the issues and the desired policy outcomes are for our areas.

Central Valley Educators, through many years of collaborative effort, have found that by working together they can influence positive change for their region which has caught the attention of legislators and often leads to policy reform. As a recent example, the Central Valley Higher Education Consortium, composed of C⁶ consortium members, piloted the “Guarantee Transfer Program” which led to the passing of AB 1440. Following the passage of that historic bill, our region then hosted a “1440 Summit” which resulted in the Commission on the Future recommending the establishment of a statewide Student Support Taskforce to advocate for policy reform for community colleges leading with the charge of recommending legislative policy changes. Two C⁶ consortium members service on that taskforce and have been instrumental in identifying the priorities of this proposal.

is this how it happened?

Policy outcomes for our focus area include:

- Use of a common placement and advisement test across all colleges
- Agreement on common cut scores for placement test
- Alignment of curriculum between 12th grade and college freshman year
- Priority registration for targeted groups such as students with a certain number of units, persisting students, high school freshmen
- Change high school policy to create a common “Senior Year Experience” that requires college readiness in the instructional delivery of classes and changes in content, as well as math review class for students not placing into college level math.

The C⁶ initiative will implement system-level and state policy that will ultimately affect student success in California community colleges.

5. C⁶ consortium has a track record of influencing state education policy issues

The potential of the Central California Community Colleges Committed to Change (C⁶) consortium rests on the unprecedented collaborative effort among California’s Central Valley K-12 and Community College educational leaders to build on past success and leverage future opportunity to address wide gaps in student achievement and college readiness. Our policy reform proposal is grounded in established research, and input from K-12 and community college leaders from the ranks of administrators and faculty, regional employers, community leaders and policy makers. The proposal has the potential to impact educational policy and

transform the educational practices and student outcomes at 12 California Community Colleges and multiple K-12 districts. The C⁶ consortium is comprised of skilled educational leaders and key constituencies who have a research-based understanding of the efficacy of the policies and share the collaborative philosophy needed to pilot regional policy reform.

Evidence of past success with similar types of objectives The C⁶ Consortium started as sub-regional collaborative groups consisting of two to three colleges and a K-12 school district working together on grant projects. Over the past 8 years, the C⁶ Consortium colleges have worked together on various action-oriented advocacy projects and have piloted a number of initiatives that have led to meaningful reforms. In addition to the previously cited example, our regional leadership organization is being mentored by the Gates Foundation and working with Complete College America, which is a national nonprofit working to significantly increase the number of Americans with a college degree or credential of value and to close attainment gaps for traditionally underrepresented populations. The organization was founded to focus *solely* on dramatically increasing the nation's college completion rate through state policy change, and to build consensus for change among state leaders, higher education, and the national education policy community. Furthermore, the Little Hoover Commission has identified the C⁶ partnership as a "Model for Collaboration" The C⁶ Consortium movement towards more active policy reform is the natural progression of the substantial, on-going collaborative work we have done in our region.

West Hills College District (WHCCD) has past **success with similar types of objectives** and our organization's actions have led to the establishment of new educational policies in use of technology. WHCCD was an early leader in establishing extensive online classes, online registration, online orientation, and tuition payment, and initially received negative feedback from the Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges for the progressive use of technology in matriculating students. Since then, the evidence of success demonstrated by WHCCD policy practice has evolved to become standard policy among California community colleges. The administrative leadership team who led this policy reform is the same innovative group in the C⁶ partnership again recommending adoption of new educational policies.

West Hills College District, due to its visionary administrative leadership team, won the "Outside the Box Thinkers" award by the Community College League of California. WHCCD continues to create positive change in a region of the country identified in U.S. Congressional reports as "Western Appalachia."

6. Plan to impact state education policies and why you expect success on state, and local policies.

The C⁶ Consortium plan to impact state education policies by working with the following:

- Legislative Analyst Office to provide data and support for passage Assembly Bill 743 (Block) for implementation of a common assessment system and AB78 (Portantino), which will removed certain restrictions on concurrent enrollment and authorize school districts to enter into partnerships with community college districts.
- Student Support Taskforce, of which two members are C⁶ Consortium representatives, to introduce new policy items, as outlined in this proposal, to the Consultation Council to establish legislative reform.
- California Department of Education to implement regulatory changes to allow for the alignment of student learning outcomes related to math and English skills from grades 9 through 14.
- California Community College Academic Senate and California Community College Chief Instructional Officers (CCCCIO) to implement regulatory changes to allow for the alignment of student learning outcomes related to math and English skills from grades 9 through 14.

The C⁶ Consortium has identified a number of policy areas that the Central Valley is well suited to pilot the necessary change. The C⁶ policy reform plan rests simply on the ability of the region to work collaborative and systematically to implement a policy initiative. For example, the current policy surrounding assessment does not offer a common tool. However, it does not preclude C⁶ Consortium from piloting a **common early regional assessment system starting in the 10th grade** in which tests taken in high school also serve as readiness tests for college and work. While there is wide-spread agreement on this policy reform, this pilot program will provide state policy makers the empirical data to validate this reform effort.

Advantage of current federal, state, and local policy, legislative conditions

College Readiness The achievement gap in California has complex causes and will not be solved over night with one policy change. Rather a multipronged approach that is first piloted will work towards significantly improving College Readiness. Existing partnerships of many years standing among our colleges will create a model for change and Federal funding is supporting broad based regional activity to implement sustainable reforms and change.

Standards and Accountability Plan - K-12 and CC/CSU Teaming: Work with college and K12 leaders to align curriculum and assessments between K12 and College. The alignment gap is most evident in the comparison of high school graduation requirements and college entry requirements, most notably for math and science. Additionally there exists a mismatch of expectations. For example, high school graduates who may be assessed as English proficient do not have the experiences in expository text or composition in order to be successful in college level classes. This has caused a significant percentage of college freshmen to enroll in remediation courses and employers to claim recent high school graduates lack the skills to advance.

Finance Reform: The C⁶ will advocate for K-14 finance flexibility to support sustainable changes.

Data System Common assessment: While there is pending legislation regarding standardizing placement testing, this is not the first time California has attempted unsuccessfully to legislate this reform. This proposal will support AB743 by statewide advocacy, working with the faculty groups, the LAO, and Assembly Member Block. Additionally, the C⁶ will implement a standardize placement test and cut scores that will demonstrate the rational and effectiveness for policy change.

This initiative will improve high school to college transition, improve testing results, shorten time in college and strengthen K-12 and college partnerships. The C⁶ Consortium has been in discussion with representatives from C.S.U. EAP test and CalPass who producing data on a statewide basis that supports the use of standardization to accurately compare student progress toward degree achievement across the state. CalPass has expressed a desire to partner with the C⁶ region to assist in the evaluation of this

The C⁶ Consortium acknowledges that the collaborative component of our strategy may appear different from traditional approaches to policy reform. Change on a microcosm has the ability affect change on a much larger scale such as state educational policy. It has been the region's experience that this collaborative approach in piloting and demonstrating has resulted in effective policy changes as demonstrated by social change phenomena (Critical Mass Consciousness: The hundredth monkey, Keyes, 1984). The C⁶ plan builds on a history that demonstrates that a regional policy change approach can affect state thinking and policy reform. As a variety of advocacy groups, educational policy recommendation committees, and legislators interface with our work, the political will to change will drive effective educational policies.

7. Collaborative partners & each organization's roles and responsibilities

Collaborative partners include twelve (12) community colleges which will replicate implementation of policy changes across a region equal in size to the Southern Coast of the United States. Their respective administrations are committed to working to change state policy, serving as members on policy recommendation committees, and working with legislative analysts and policy research groups such as LearningWORKs and the Careers Ladder Project. **Educational leaders:** Approximately forty (40) top administrators will implement local policy changes, working with multiple regional unified school districts to validate data, in order to influence state policy. **Faculty:** Academic Senate presidents of the twelve colleges will share instructional reforms with colleagues at state meetings beginning the grass roots movement for change. College faculty will work with 12th grade English and math teachers to develop transitional coursework to better prepare seniors for college work. Our current regional participation in the state's Career Advancement Academy model will fund developmental faculty to compress basic skills classes.

Educational Advocacy Organizations: C⁶ Consortium will partner with CalPASS and national and state advocacy groups including the **Gates Foundation**, Complete College America, California Community College Chancellor's Office, Student Support Taskforce, California Department of Education, California

Community College Consultation Council, California Community College Academic Senate, California Community College Chief Instructional Officers (CCCCIO), Central Valley Higher Education Consortium, the Career Ladders Project, and LearningWorks. LearningWorks is funded by from the **William and Flora Hewlett** and the **Walter S. Johnson Foundations** and founded on a unique partnership across three organizations: Career Ladders Project, the Research and Planning Group for California Community Colleges (RP Group), and the California Community Colleges Success Network. LearningWorks operates under the fiscal sponsorship of Foundation for California Community Colleges (Foundation), the non-profit auxiliary for the California Community Colleges. **LearningWorks has agreed to provide strategic assistance** to the C⁶ project by analyzing the statewide policy implications of the regional Closing the Gap Initiative and help to connect these to ongoing community college policy discussions. **Legislative Analyst Office:** The LAO will partner with the C⁶ Consortium by providing support for legislative policy change. **K-12 and CC/CSU Teaming** efforts will focus on assessment, standards and curriculum alignment. C⁶ Consortium builds on existing partnerships through Central Valley Higher Education Consortium, Tech Prep consortium and other faculty-lead collaborative projects. C⁶ Consortium is currently collaborating with all of the above entities on various projects and has collaborated with them during the past several years.

How would you rate the experience of collaboration?

Collectively, we are much more influential in affecting change than separately. Our region has a multi-year history of working collaboratively to create change and solve major problems collectively. For example, the Department of Labor funded a manufacturing and health care grant to improve workforce training across a broad region in high job demand areas over the last five years. Our collaborative out performed every other competitor across the state by the quality of program delivered and the high number of successful outcomes.

How willing are you in collaborating with other organizations on education reform issues?

The Central California Community Colleges have learned that if anything is to get done of lasting significance, it must be a regional initiative achieved through meaningful collaboration. This knowledge and experience makes us flexible and receptive to working with all partners on educational reform issues. C⁶ Consortium appreciate the benefit of outside perspective that lends breadth to missions and objectives.

8. Major challenges your organization is facing and how you are addressing these challenges:

The following represents some of the key challenges faced by the C⁶ Consortium:

- **Outdated educational policies that do not serve changing economy or national trends** continue to hamper innovation and local needs. In response, colleges are lobbying for change using multiple channels to affect policy constraints including assuming leadership on state boards, partnering with the Workforce Investment Boards, visiting Sacramento to provide data and discussion concerning change and implementing local policy changes to further local reform.
- **Major funding gaps** caused by California state budget deficits. In response, colleges are lobbying for: flexibility in spending categorical funds, reducing costs through relaxing of the 50% rule and reducing salary costs for basic skills instructors. Colleges are looking at technology to help deliver services more cost effectively, urging staff to do more with less and seeking external funds to offer improved services that may have been lost due to budget cuts.
- **Changes in Leadership** due to retirements and upward mobility is causing challenges in institutional memory. In response, colleges are relying more on strategic plans, 5 year goals and accreditation documentation. Also colleges are providing experiential learning experiences and training for junior managers who will eventually replace retirees.

9. Anticipated outcomes of your organization's efforts

The C⁶ Consortium is proposing to implement regional policy reforms that could serve as the model for state-wide policy changes. The anticipated **short term** policy outcomes of C⁶ Consortium efforts are:

- Use of a common placement test across all college - The C⁶ will support efforts to Assembly Bill 743 (Block) by providing data and support to implementation of a common assessment system.

- Agreement on common cut scores for placement test- The C⁶ supports efforts to Assembly Bill 743 (Block) by providing data and support to implementation of a common assessment system.
- Alignment of curriculum between 12th grade and college freshman year is based on the research by the P-16 Council & League for Innovation in the Community College, Significant Discussions
- Based on Shulock's cited best practice evidence, priority registration for targeted groups is of an emerging strategy to improve degree outcomes. The C⁶ consortium can measure patterns as students move through intermediate stages as they progress toward completing degrees.
- Change high school policy to create a common "Senior Year Experience" that requires college readiness in the instructional delivery of classes and content changes, as well as math review for students not placing into college level math. We will provide data & support for passage of AB78 (Portantino), which is held under submission. This bill will removed restrictions on concurrent enrollment and authorize K-12 districts to enter into partnerships with community colleges.

As a result of policy changes, the **long term outcomes** will include robust empirical data for future policy change and create social change models that can be replicable in other areas of educational reform. Aligning K-14 curriculum along with standardization of college placement assessments will result in a seamless transition for students, decrease in time needed to complete a college degree, and increase college completion rates. Alignment of formative assessments and benchmarks of assessments will provide needed information to develop accurate, appropriate and coordinated interventions as needed. In addition, having CalPASS as a partner will improve data-driven decision making at both the local and state level.

The C⁶ policy proposal will support the emerging national trend to standardize academic and career readiness education to better meet the workforce needs of 21st century employers where critical thinking, communication, math and science skills are highly sought after.

10. How do you/will you evaluate your impact?

Assessment and evaluation of each of the above policy reforms is critical for continuous monitoring and improvement of systematic change, as well as serve as the bases for in-depth research to be used to shape national policy and other state-wide educational reforms. The C⁶ plan for policy reform includes an evaluation matrix that measures impact both at the regional and state level. The evaluation will include but not limited to: a survey of educational administrators and students in terms of satisfaction, student data collection to measure progress as defined by metrics and internal evaluation of vertical integration of guiding principles at each participating college. CalPASS has agreed to evaluate the project on both a micro and macrocosm level. This will provide college and K-12 leaders with the site level data needed for on-going program improvement as well as provide legislative and regulatory groups with required cumulative student success data. Additionally, LearningWorks will assist in the evaluation of policy implementation.

How do you define success?

The C⁶ Consortium has defined success based on numerous research studies examining the effects of failed policies. Without the C⁶ policy reform work, the State Community College system will continue to experience 85% of incoming students who are not proficient in college-level math, and about 70% arrive unprepared for college-level English. The K-12 system experienced an adjusted four-year derived dropout rate for the same school year is 21.5 percent, up from 18.9 percent last year. (CDE, News Release, Dec. 2010). The C⁶ Consortium defines success as the State-wide adoption of policy reform that improves student success rates across both the community college and K-12 system. Specifically, the C⁶ policy reform that will allow removal of restrictions on concurrent enrollment and authorize school districts to enter into partnerships with community college districts; adaptation of a common placement test; and passage of a local policy to provide a common "Senior Year Experience" that requires college readiness in the instructional delivery of classes and changes in content. Finally, state-wide utilization of CalPass data will be used in further educational policy reform work.

How will you track progress toward your objectives? The C⁶ Consortium and its partners, CalPass and LearningWorks, will track progress by continuously monitoring progress towards regional and state policy change. The project will share data with K-14 professionals in the field, advocacy groups and others to evaluate changes in policy and make changes in local policy.

How will that evaluation be used to shape your organization's path forward? The C⁶ Consortium and its partners will analyze 3 years of data on a regional basis to determine next steps. This ongoing evaluation process will be sustained by C⁶ Consortium and will be lead by partner, Central Valley Higher Ed Consortium. Effectiveness in influencing policy changes will encourage leaders in identifying and supporting the next set of beneficial state policy changes.

West Hills College District has a history of being a leader in innovation and forward thinking. With its partner colleges and organizations, it will continue to focus on policy change and reform issues meeting with organizations and foundations seeking to improve education such as many of the partners who are participating in this grant proposal. Next steps for policy change might include: gaining local authority to assess fees similar to CSU and UC system, greater flexibility in use of categorical funding, relaxing of minimum qualification for basic skills instruction to bring in alignment with Adult Ed regulations.

Please describe what tangible policy "wins" would be for your organization.

- Statewide use of a common placement test for entering freshmen with same cut scores
- Change high school policy to create a common "Senior Year Experience" that requires college readiness in the instructional delivery of classes and changes in content, as well as math review class to improve basic skills – reduce time by better sequencing, compressed delivery systems that leverage out of class time and standardize curriculum
- Based on the research provided by the P-16 Council and League for Innovation in the Community College, Significant Discussions: Alignment of curriculum between 12th grade and college freshman year

11. Our organization will use CEPF funds to leverage existing resources and meet key objectives

We will utilize the partnerships created by common mission to leverage funds and services. Multiple partners have already offered mentoring and support, joining our efforts at state policy change with their own such as CalPass, Central Valley Higher Ed Consortium and LearningWORKs. Our region is also being mentored by educational reform leaders at several foundations such as Gates and advocacy organizations funded by Hewlett. The strength of the national leadership behind our grassroots college efforts, as well as the administrative will of a large geographic section of California, ensure our success in policy reform that one entity alone could not affect. This project will leverage the efforts of multiple organizations to create policy changes.

12. C⁶ Consortium team and why they are the right people to promote the change

- Dr. Frank Gornick, WHCCD Chancellor since 2001, enrollment has increased three fold while the total district revenues have been matched with an aggressive federal and state grant program. As a Board Member of the Central Valley Higher Education Consortium (CVHEC), Dr. Gornick unites with education leaders to increase higher education participation and success in the Central Valley.
- Dr. Barbara Hioco, President of Reedley College from 2004 to 2011. Prior to that, she served as the founding president of West Hills College, Lemoore, one of two colleges in the West Hills Community College District. Dr. Hioco is the new CVHEC Executive Director. **Project Co-Director**
- Elaine Cash – As Superintendent of the Riverdale School District from 2001 until 2010, Mrs. Cash led in the transformation of the district from low performing to one where the elementary school was named a California Distinguished School and the high school was one of three in the nation to receive the College Board's Inspirational Award for inspiring students to go on to college. Less than 1% of Riverdale students dropped out of school and more than 90% of the graduating high school students enrolled in

post-secondary education. Executive Director of the regional Closing the Gap Initiative. **Project Co-Director**

- Dr. Ben Duran and Dr. Sandra Serrano, Statewide Representatives to Student Success Taskforce, President of Merced College since 1991 and currently President of the CVHEC Executive Committee and Chancellor of the Kern District, respectively, **policy reforms advocates.**
- Dr. Carole Goldsmith, WHCCD Vice Chancellor of Educational Services and Workforce Development - With 15 years experience in CTE education, WIA and other grant program management, Dr. Goldsmith's expertise is in developing and implementing new systems as well as maintaining linkages and partnerships.
- Pete Faragia, Current Superintendent of the Riverdale Unified School District, Mr. Faragia is continuing the transformation of the Riverdale educational culture.
- Jordan Horowitz, Vice President for Foundation Relations and Project Development and Senior Director for Special Projects, Cal-PASS.
- Dr. Diana Baneulos, Director of External Fund Development, State Center Community College District, local expert on policy change.
- Linda Collins – Executive Director, LearningWorks will lend expertise and strategic assistance to the WHCCD in analyzing the statewide policy implications of the regional Closing the Gap Initiative and help to connect these to ongoing community college policy discussions. Founded on a unique collaboration between three established community college organizations—the Career Ladders Project, the Research and Planning Group and the California Community College Success Network (3CSN)— LearningWorks aims to strengthen student achievement in the California community colleges, working to facilitate, disseminate and support practitioner-informed recommendations for changes at the system and classroom levels, infusing these strategies with statewide and national insights.
- Dr. Deborah Blue, Chancellor and Debbie Ikeda, VP of Instruction, State Center Community College District, **policy reform advocate.**
- Mike Hansen, Superintendent Fresno Unified School District

Throughout this project, it has become glaringly apparent that there has been a considerable amount of government and foundation funded research on the needed policy and practice changes in the P-16 educational system, based on this significant volume of evidence, it is now time to allow for the practitioners to implement the changes that have been so adeptly argued for among academics and legislators. "In order to be successful, it will take the work of many—from the grass roots instructional level to the policy level." (*Significant Discussions, League for Innovation in the Community College, 2010*).

Signature _____

Dr. Frank Gornick, Chancellor
West Hills Community College District

Date June 22, 2011