New CCC Funding Formula Applauded by VCCCD

Governor Schwarzenegger signed SB 361, the California Community College funding formula reform, on Friday, September 29, 2006, thereby ensuring a more equal distribution of $209 million in funding set-aside for Community Colleges. Secretary of Education Alan Bersin will hold a press conference related to the bill signing today at Glendale Community College. In August, the State legislature unanimously passed Senate Bill 361, which had the potential to deliver $209 million to California's 109 community colleges to ensure equal funding per student and end decades of funding inequities among the 72 college districts.

"Ventura County Community College officials are very pleased with the Governor's signature on this landmark bill, ensuring that up to $2.6 million more will be coming our way during the 2006/2007 academic year," said Vice Chancellor Sue Johnson. "As enrollment is restored, the district will continue to benefit from this new funding formula."

The VCCCD is one of 57 of the state's 72 community college districts that were under-funded due to an inequitable funding formula that was locked into place with the passage of Proposition 13.

Under SB 361, each community college district will receive funds based on the number of colleges and centers it manages and the number of full-time equivalent students they serve, instead of basing funding on a much more complex formula including when the college district was formed, what the tax base was when the district was formed, etc. Called equalization by college officials, the full -time equivalent student rate would be $4,367 system wide.

Prior to SB 361, Districts were paid per full-time-equivalent student, with funding ranging from a low of $3,500 to a high of more than $8,100. The VCCCD's funding was $3,813 per student. The state average was $4,559 according to the Community College League of California. SB 361 provides equal funding for 90 percent of the districts within the state. (Some districts will continue to receive higher revenues due to their local tax base.)

"SB 361 has reduced the state-wide funding gap and improved VCCCD's capacity to provide needed educational resources for our students," said Johnson. "We now have a level playing field that will result in improved education for the students of our county."