



## Illinois Community Colleges 2011 Issues

### FY 2012 STATE BUDGET SUPPORT THE GOVERNOR'S RECOMMENDATION

Illinois community colleges are supporting the Governor's Fiscal Year 2012 budget recommendations for community colleges. The Governor has recommended a budget that is generally the same as last year's funding level, which was 4% below the year before. Community colleges can support this budget level if it is actually paid out to the colleges in a timely manner.

The Governor's budget recognizes that declining revenues over the past two years caused a cash flow calamity that continues to plague the state. The Governor's budget for community colleges is a flat budget that appears to be "a high water mark" in comparison to probable budget reductions in other areas of State government.

The Governor's budget for community colleges continues the downward trend in State support that has resulted in decreased or level-funded state budgets for the past eight years, even as student enrollments have sharply increased. State funding reductions in past years for community colleges have contributed to **tuition increases that have more than doubled since 2002**. The average full-time community college student paid about \$50 a credit hour for tuition and fees, (or about \$1,500 per year) in 2002. The average tuition is projected to increase by 10% to approximately \$108 a credit hour this year, or more than double what it was ten years ago.



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### PERFORMANCE-BASED FUNDING

Community colleges are involved in the development of “performance-based” measures of student success that could be used to determine levels of state funding for institutions of higher education. Community colleges must therefore collectively come to a consensus as to what constitutes “performance” standards.

Community college advocates are mindful of important elements that should be included in measuring performance. The community college definition of “student success” is critical: Students may transfer to four-year institutions and may not receive a degree from a community college, yet they experience success. Other students may earn certifications or return to college to upgrade skills needed in their jobs. Some may take a longer time to earn a degree than the average student, while some students may already have earned a degree when they come to a community college. All of these functions of a community college must be recognized in any future state funding models for higher education.

**It should be recognized that community colleges already receive state funding based upon performance.** State dollars that flow to the community colleges are largely determined based upon the number of credit hours a college produces. In theory, the more credit hours a college produces, the more the state pays out to the college in credit hour grants. Stated in another way, **community colleges are currently paid only for the credit hours they produce.** No other institutions of higher education are currently funded based upon performance.



## **Illinois Community Colleges 2011 Issues**

### **MONETARY AWARD PROGRAM SUPPORT THE GOVERNOR'S RECOMMENDATION**

The Illinois Community College Trustees Association is supporting a \$25 million increase in the amount of state funding for student need-based scholarships. This is the first proposed increase for Monetary Award Program (MAP) grants in several years, which would result in raising the amount of annual state funding from \$405 million to \$430 million.

Sharply increased tuition and increased community college enrollments has placed more demand than ever on the MAP program. In 2010, approximately 137,000 qualified students were turned away from receiving a MAP award because funding remained level while demand continued to increase.

This year, MAP grant funding ran out of money and awards were suspended for the fall 2011 semester on March 26, 2011. Since community college students are among the last to make decisions about where they will attend, they are the students most severely impacted by an early cutoff date. Many students do not enroll in a community college until July or August for the fall semester. MAP grants are not now available to students in 2011 unless they were awarded the grant prior to March 26.

An additional \$25 million for MAP grant funding could provide funding to serve more than 10,000 more needy students and could help move the deadlines for MAP applications to a later date in the year.