

A non-profit, non-partisan corporation of public-spirited leaders who have joined together to be catalysts for the economic well-being of the Inland Empire region of California – San Bernardino and Riverside counties.

Investing in Higher Ed

1. Funding instability and rising costs threaten access, affordability, and student success across UC, CSU, CCC, and private universities.
2. Workforce gaps are widening, particularly in healthcare, STEM, education, and technical fields, especially in the Inland Empire.
3. Aging infrastructure and limited capacity, including deferred maintenance and insufficient student housing, constrain growth and innovation.
4. Threats to research and innovation leadership due to federal funding uncertainty risk California's economic competitiveness.



- California's higher education system (UC, CSU, CCC) is the largest in the nation and the primary driver of workforce development, social mobility, and economic growth.
- Several independent colleges and universities, such as the University of Redlands, California Baptist University and La Sierra University collaborate to expand access, uplift underserved communities, and strengthen the region's economic vitality.
- Inland Southern California serves over 4.6 million residents and continues to grow rapidly, increasing demand for higher education, workforce training, and healthcare services.
- Strategic investment in higher education yields long-term returns through increased tax revenue, job creation, and economic competitiveness.

Proposed Solutions

1. **Stabilize Core Funding Across All Systems**
 - Fully fund the UC Compact and CSU commitments.
 - **Honor Proposition 98** for Community Colleges.
 - Restore prior reductions and address mandatory cost increases.
2. **Invest in Workforce, Research, and Student Success**
 - Fund enrollment growth (including CCC 3% growth target).
 - **Support SB 895** to sustain research and innovation.
 - Fund student support programs (mental health, basic needs, retention).
3. **Expand Infrastructure, Housing, and Capacity**
 - Dedicate funding for student housing.
 - Address deferred maintenance backlogs across all systems.
 - Invest in modern facilities for workforce-aligned education and research.

Anticipated Outcomes

1. Increased access to affordable higher education and improved student success outcomes.
2. Stronger workforce pipeline aligned with California's economic needs.
3. Economic growth driven by research, innovation, and job creation.
4. Greater regional equity, particularly in underserved areas like Inland Southern California.

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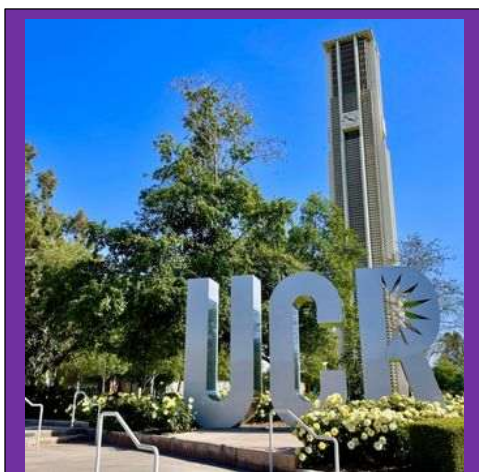
Support the 2026 State Budget Proposal to Increase



San Bernardino Valley College



Cal State San Bernardino



UC Riverside

- 1. California Community Colleges (CCC):** \$15.4 billion total (combining General Fund and property taxes).
 - Includes a **2.41% cost-of-living adjustment (COLA)**, providing roughly \$241 million in new ongoing funding.
 - Provides \$87 million for enrollment growth over two years.
 - Includes \$408 million in one-time funds to fully repay prior year deferrals.
- 2. California State University (CSU):** \$5.6 billion total.
 - Includes a **7% unrestricted base increase** (\$366 million ongoing), composed of a 5% "compact" increase and a 2% delayed increase from the previous year.
 - Expects the system to grow resident undergraduate enrollment by approximately 10,161 students (2.9%).
- 3. University of California (UC):** \$5.3 billion total.
 - Includes a **7% unrestricted base increase** (\$351 million ongoing).
 - Provides \$61 million ongoing to continue a plan replacing nonresident students with resident students at high-demand campuses.
 - Targets resident undergraduate growth of 2,968 students (1.4%).
- 4. Financial Aid and Student Support**
 - **Cal Grant Program:** The budget maintains **\$4 billion** in ongoing funding for the state's largest financial aid program, serving approximately 500,000 students.
 - **Student Support Block Grant:** \$100 million in one-time funds for flexible community college district support.
- 5. ELO-P funding by \$62.4M.**
 - This would guarantee that school districts receiving "Tier 2" reimbursements would receive a minimum of \$1800 per child per year from the state, thus ensuring that all youth receive strong afterschool/summer programming and support.