

A CONTRACT WITH CALIFORNIA'S YOUTH: A MARSHALL PLAN FOR INCREASING ACCESS TO COLLEGE

Arguably, those who will be most impacted by the election for Governor of California in November are those who cannot vote – California's youth. The educational policies that the next governor helps create will directly impact every young person in California.

Access to postsecondary education is not merely of individual benefit to the young. A better educated citizenry will benefit every Californian. Those who are most disenfranchised and unable to gain access to college are low-income youth. For a governor serious about providing equal access to college for California's youth and improving the economic future of the state here are the elements of a College Access Contract:

- 1.** Guarantee free tuition to a two- or four-year public institution in California to all 8th graders who qualify for the free or reduced lunch program, graduate on time from high school with a standard diploma, and enroll full-time within two years of high school graduation.
- 2.** Ensure access to at least 12 units of college credit (either by Advanced Placement, International Baccalaureate, and/or concurrent enrollment at an accredited two – or four-year college) for all eligible high school students prior to high school graduation.
- 3.** Provide summer and inter-session seminars for all high school students who are not reading/writing or doing math at grade level beginning in the 9th grade.
- 4.** Ensure that the ratio of students to college counselors in low college-going high schools is no more than 250:1 and that college counselors focus exclusively on college-going activities for their high school students.
- 5.** Require all high school graduates who have been admitted to a postsecondary institution and are not reading/writing or doing math at the college-level to participate in an intensive summer of writing and/or math classes and mentoring prior to their freshmen year.
- 6.** Require that any postsecondary institution that receives state funding establish and maintain intensive partnerships devoted to academic preparation and mentorship with at least two public low-college-going high schools.
- 7.** Allow all students who demonstrate financial need and have attended a California high school for three years or more to gain access to Cal Grants.
- 8.** Provide college loan relief to a maximum of \$20,000 for all California high school students who participate in two years of public service in California after graduation from an undergraduate college.

About CHEPA

The Center for Higher Education Policy Analysis (CHEPA) is an interdisciplinary research unit led by Director, William G. Tierney, and Associate Director, Adrianna Kezar. The Center was established to engage the postsecondary-education community actively, and to serve as an important intellectual center within the Rossier School of Education; it draws significant support and commitment from the administration. The Center's mission is to improve urban higher education, strengthen school-university relationships, and to focus on international higher education, emphasizing Latin America and the Pacific Rim. Working on fulfilling that mission are the Center's faculty, research assistants, and staff. We are currently involved in a three-year study of college access and financial aid for low-income students, a multi-year investigation of governance and decision-making in higher education, a study on ways to increase the diversity of faculty, and a project that will provide ways to increase the transfer rate of urban community college students to four-year institutions.

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Lumina Foundation for Education, an Indianapolis-based, private, independent foundation, strives to help people achieve their potential by expanding access and success in education beyond high school. Through grants for research, innovation, communication, and evaluation, as well as policy education and leadership development, Lumina Foundation addresses issues that affect access and educational attainment among all students, particularly underserved student groups, including adult learners. The Foundation bases its mission on the belief that postsecondary education remains one of the most beneficial investments that individuals can make in themselves and that society can make in its people. For more details on the Foundation, visit its Web site at www.luminafoundation.org.

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