



July 14, 2017

Board of Governors  
Chancellor Eloy Ortiz Oakley  
California Community Colleges  
1102 Q Street, 6<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Sacramento, CA 95811

Dear Members of the California Community Colleges Board of Governors and Chancellor Oakley,

On behalf of Asian Americans Advancing Justice-Los Angeles (Advancing Justice-LA), I wish to express our appreciation and support for the release of the report, *Vision for Success*, the strategic vision for the California Community Colleges that the Board will discuss at its July 17 meeting.

Advancing Justice-LA is the nation's largest civil rights and legal organization serving Asian Americans, Native Hawaiians and Pacific Islanders (AANHPI) in solidarity with other diverse communities. We engage in policy advocacy, leadership development, impact litigation, coalition building, capacity building, and annually serve 15,000 community members with a range of services, including citizenship, immigration, family law, and health access enrollment. For over 15 years, we have worked with diverse high school and college students in Los Angeles and the San Gabriel Valley, primarily AANHPI and Latino students, promoting their leadership development and educational success.

As the *Vision* notes, the California Community Colleges are indispensable to California's future and overall social and economic well-being, and we commend the Chancellor and the Board for seeking to understand what the state and especially our students need from this system—the largest system of higher education in the world.

While we look forward to reviewing and analyzing the *Vision* in more detail, we applaud the fact that the *Vision* establishes system-wide and college-level goals to improve performance, outcomes, and accountability to students and, in particular, the report's focus on reducing equity and achievement gaps to improve outcomes for traditionally underrepresented student groups. We believe strongly that closing equity and achievement gaps must be at the core of the vision for success of the California Community Colleges.

We also appreciate the student-centered framework of the seven core commitments set forth in the *Vision*. In order to realize the promise of these commitments and to promote student success, as measured by the goals and benchmarks outlined in the report and as defined by students themselves, it is essential that students and community stakeholders be engaged at every level and at every step of the implementation process.

Advancing Justice-LA strongly recommends that the Chancellor of the Community Colleges and the Chancellors of every community college in the state meaningfully engage and partner with student and community groups around the *Vision* and how it can and will be collectively achieved. Specifically, there should be public forums both systemwide and at every community college campus to engage with and seek input from students and community members around the *Vision*. Moreover, decisionmaking bodies that will play a role in implementing the *Vision* both systemwide and at the college-level should have robust student representation, especially from traditionally underrepresented student groups, as well as community participation. Advancing Justice-LA would be pleased to collaborate with the California Community Colleges in supporting such student and community engagement efforts.

Californians care deeply about the future of our community colleges, and the goals and principles recommended in the vision are an important commitment to our state, our students, and to our collective future.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Stewart Kwoh". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Stewart Kwoh, Esq.  
President and Executive Director  
Asian Americans Advancing Justice-Los Angeles