

## October 2007 Educational Equity Brief

1. The College Cost Reduction and Access Act (H.R. 2669) signed by the President on 9/27/07 summary:
  - Pell Grant increased by \$1090 over the next five years, reaching \$5400 by 2012. About 5.5 million low- and moderate-income students will benefit from the increase.
  - Cuts interest rates from 6.8% to 3.4% over the next four years on Subsidized Stafford Loans
  - Borrowers will not have to pay more than 15% of their yearly discretionary income on federal loan repayments (PLUS loans excluded).
  - Borrowers in economic hardship will have their loans forgiven after 25 years.
  - TEACH Grants established. Teacher Education Assistance for College and Higher Education (TEACH) Grant program provides \$4,000 a year for undergraduate and graduate students pursuing their teaching credential. Recipients must agree to teach for a minimum of four years in a high-need subject in a high-need school within eight years of graduation.
  - Loan forgiveness on any Direct Federal Loan after 10 years of public service. A public service job is defined as a full-time job in emergency management, government, military service, public safety, law enforcement, public health, public education, social work, public interest law services, child care, public library sciences, or any other job at an organization that is described in section 501(C)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986.
  - Established "College Access Challenge Grants" that provide a two to one matching grant to be spent on efforts to increase college access and success among underserved student populations.
  - Making a landmark new investment of \$510 million over five years in Historically Black Colleges and Universities, Hispanic-Serving Institutions, Tribal Colleges, Alaska Native and Native Hawaiian institutions, and the newly designated Predominantly Black Institutions and institutions serving Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders and Native American students – to ensure that students will not only enter college, but remain and graduate.
- National Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators.  
<http://www.nasfaa.org/publications/2007/highereducationaccessact2007062007.html>.  
Accessed 9/11/07.

## 2. Latino Baby Boom

For the first time in modern history the majority of babies born in California are Latino. 51.5% of the babies born in California in 2005 were born to Latina mothers. The average birth rates for Latina women in California is 2.64 children and 1.74 for white women and 1.77 for black women. Researchers claim that the future of California's economy will rest increasingly on Latinos' educational and economic success.

"Latino baby boom changing demographics in California." By Mike Swift, San Jose Mercury news, 7/29/07.

### **3. Focusing on Community College Students**

Of lately there has been a proliferation of grants and programs to serve low-income and under-represented students by high-profile universities. However, in order to really make an impact on college access and success for low-income and under-represented students, more resources need to funnel into where they attend school: community colleges. Two-thirds of Californian college students attend a community college, thereby making community colleges the make it or break it point for college completion. There is currently a \$33 million initiative for each community college to examine how its approach to serving under-prepared students compares with research about best practice.

“Too many California Students Not Ready for College.” New America Media, 7/5/07.

### **4. High School Graduation Rates Accountability**

Nationally, one in four students who begins ninth grade fails to earn a high school diploma four years later. For Black and Latino students, that number is closer to three. According to NCLB’s graduation accountability, states define their own AYP for graduation rates, and this has resulted in low goals for improvement and gaps between students groups persist due to lack of disaggregation of the data. For 2005 graduation rates, the US Department of Education calculates California’s rate as 74.6% whereas the State of California calculates the rate at 85%. Disaggregating the data shows us that the 85% broken down by groups is: 93.2% for Asian/Pacific Islander, 73.7% for African American/Black, 31% for American-Indian, 79.1% for Latino, and 91.2% for White. The statewide annual improvement target is only 0.1%. Therefore as long as the graduation rate for the state as a whole improves by at least 0.1% annually, then the high school graduation is considered fine. NCLB reauthorization discussions are currently contesting the states ability to determine their own AYP.

“Graduation Matters: Improving Accountability for High School Graduation.” By Daria Hall, Education Trust, August 2007.

### **5. Students Campaigning for A-G Requirements**

The advocacy group Californians for Justice is working with students in the Long Beach Unified School District to campaign for changes to high school graduation requirements. The students are asking the school board to implement the A-G requirements as the high school graduation requirement. Californians for Justice also worked with San Jose to implement the A-G requirements as the default curriculum.

- “Graduation Policies Protested.” By Kevin Butler, Presstelegram.com, Accessed 9/11/07.

### **6. California’s Community Colleges**

California’s community college low-tuition model has been very successful at getting students in the door, but struggles to produce high completion rates. In fact, Californian community college students’ completion rate (transfer to four-year, AA/AS or certificate/license) is near the bottom nationally. Only about a quarter of students who are seeking degrees at community colleges do so within six years. For black and Latino students the rate is even lower. Even so, in 2006, more

than half of the CSU graduates and about one-third of UC students started at community colleges. There are many barriers to completion for this diverse group of students. The community colleges claim that 80% of incoming students are not prepared for college-level work and need remediation. Furthermore, students who attend full-time are four times more likely to complete their educational goals than those who attend part-time. Only about 29% of California student can attend full-time. Some advocates claim that higher tuition will allow more money to funnel to support systems that could help students get in and out more quickly.

“California’s community college system gets student into school, but not always out.” By Justin Pope, Associated Press, 7/14/07.

### **7. University Endowments Could Be Doing a Lot More**

Last year the value of college and university of endowments grew by 17.7% while the value of private foundation assets increased by 7.8%. Only 3.3% of this university endowment growth can be attributed to new gifts; it’s the unregulated pay-out of the endowments that allows them to re-invest massive sums year after year. A recent survey found that universities are spending 4.2% of their endowment each year while private foundations are required to spend 5% and actually average around 7%. For example, Stanford University uses 0.5% of its endowment for financial aid. If they just spent 1% that would create \$211 million in additional support. Making college and universities abide by an annual payout would create a huge amount of additional financial aid for students.

- “Robbing the Rich to Give to the Richest” By Lynne Munson, Inside Higher Ed, July 26, 2007.

### **8. NBC to follow group of kindergarteners through high school graduation**

NBC News has launched a longitudinal project that follows a class of 20 students from kindergarten through high school graduation. The students attend a public school in the LAUSD. NBC will give updates through the “Today Show” throughout their 13 years of schooling. The project is meant to expose the public to what the public school system is like and what happens to kids over the years.

“NBC News Goes to ‘Class’ For Next 13 Years.” By Reuters, New York Times, September 13, 2007.

### **9. 2007 Updates to the Benefits of Higher Education**

Median Earnings for full-time workers ages 25 and older by degree attainment:

Professional degree	\$100,000
Doctoral degree	\$79,400
Master’s degree	\$61,300
Bachelor’s degree	\$50,900
Associate degree	\$40,600
Some college, no degree	\$37,100
High school graduate	\$31,500

Not a high school grad            \$23,400

Furthermore, “by age 33, the typical college graduate who enrolled at age 18 has earned enough to compensate for borrowing to pay the full tuition and fees at the average public four-year institution, including interest on student loans to cover those charges, and earnings forgone during the college years.”

A college degree is also associated with:

- Likelihood of employer sponsored health insurance.
- Lower rates of unemployment
- Lower rates of poverty
- Less reliance on public assistance
- Better overall health
- lower smoking rates
- higher rates of physical fitness
- higher rates of volunteerism
- higher rates of blood donation
- higher rates of voting

“Education Pays: The Benefits of Higher Education for Individuals and Society, 2007.” By Sandy Baum and Jennifer Ma, College Board, 2007.