

Ventura County Community College District

Infrastructure Funding Model

Recommendation

The District Unrestricted General Fund Budget Allocation Model be revised to exclude specific revenues, and that revenue be re-directed, through a new and different allocation process, to the colleges to address infrastructure needs such as scheduled maintenance, furniture and equipment, library materials and databases, technology refresh, etc., and the revenue be re-allocated gradually through a transition process over the next several years.

Introduction

This proposal is meant to concentrate upon a multi-faceted and interlocked issue. The proposal addresses: providing partial funding for each college's infrastructure at a time when the state has eliminated or reduced that funding; taking action to correct the Accreditation Recommendations from the ACCJC's identified problem of "Total Cost of Ownership"; and, further stabilizing the District's Unrestricted General Fund Budget Allocation Model, used primarily for instruction, some student services, and general operations.

In the last few years, the State has reduced or eliminated funding for Instructional Equipment/Library Materials (IELM), Telecommunications and Technology Infrastructure Program (TTIP), and scheduled maintenance. All of which seems invisible but essential aspects of our institutions' infrastructure. The District's past practice of including variable, and sometimes volatile, funds in its Unrestricted General Fund Budget Allocation Model further destabilizes funding. In 2010, our colleges received Accreditation Recommendations from the ACCJC to address resource allocations for the "Total Cost of Ownership." In an effort to initialize the foundational funding of these needs and take direct corrective action to remedy the Accreditation Recommendations, the District Council of Administrative Services (DCAS) proposes a modification to the Unrestricted General Fund Budget Allocation Model and an establishment of an Infrastructure Funding Model. This proposed modification stabilizes the Unrestricted General Fund Budget Allocation Model by moving the variable revenues to a model to be created for purposes that have variable needs.

Background

Currently, the District distributes nearly all its unrestricted general fund resources through a single funding allocation model. Those resources include state apportionment (enrollment fees, property taxes and state appropriation), non-resident tuition and fees, lottery revenue, interest income, and miscellaneous other fees and

revenues. The Unrestricted General Fund Budget Allocation Model recognizes that certain services, such as payroll, purchasing, accounting and human resources are best provided centrally. The costs of these centralized services are removed from the funds to be allocated to the colleges. Through the Unrestricted General Fund Budget Allocation Model, the balance of the resources is distributed to the colleges using three allocation segments: Class Schedule Delivery Allocation, Base Allocation, and FTES Allocation.

The Unrestricted General Fund Budget Allocation Model considers the instructional program and what is necessary to deliver the class schedule, based on several factors. Approximately 55% of the funding is based on the colleges' respective instructional programs. The Base Allocation recognizes and provides for the fact that, regardless of size, a college has particular fixed costs, for example administrative salaries. That assumption is evidenced in the Base Allocation of 15% of available resources being distributed equally to each college. FTES Allocation, which is the remaining approximate 30%, is distributed based on each college's share of the District's total FTES.

FTES is the basis for the State's allocation of Unrestricted General Fund to the District. Conspicuously, neither the State allocation model nor our current district Budget Allocation Model considers funding based on, or for, college infrastructure (e.g. size of the campus (number of buildings), age of the buildings, number and age of equipment, etc.)

Rationale

Several years ago, faced with its own funding constraints, the District eliminated the majority of Unrestricted General Fund (Fund 111) support for library books and materials, instructional materials and equipment (IELM), scheduled maintenance, and technology equipment refresh and replacement and relied primarily on restricted (categorical) funding provided by the State for those purposes as well as college carryover of general funds unspent from the prior year.

During periods of economic downturn, the State has eliminated categorical funding for IELM, TTIP and scheduled maintenance. Furthermore, the receipt of Restricted Lottery Funds, which could also be used for those purposes, has also fluctuated widely. Faced with the elimination and reduced funding from the State for these items coupled with the ongoing and growing need to support facility maintenance, the District faces a structural budget deficit and must alleviate the strains on the infrastructure.

For several years, the District has faced these infrastructural financing deficits in several critical elements that are central to the core mission of the colleges and the District. These internal circumstances have been called to the attention of the Board of Trustees over the past several years and specifically during the approval processes for the Adoption Budget for 2010-11 and the Tentative Budget for 2011-12, as well as through

the recent accreditation process, with an acknowledgement that they must be addressed.

Status

Over approximately a two-year period, DCAS has diligently studied and discussed this matter extensively and now, after months of review and deliberation, is presenting an Infrastructure Funding Model (IFM) to address this multi-faceted problem. Although the proposed Model will not fully address all funding needs identified, the intention is to establish a foundational allocation process that will provide each college a dedicated, ongoing (although variable) source of funds for mitigating some operating concerns while assisting in the maintenance of facilities and equipment in order to provide quality instructional programs. In addition to the pressing need to address the deficits in deferred maintenance and other infrastructure needs, the Board of Trustees long recognized that the inclusion of certain variable revenues such as interest income, lottery, and miscellaneous revenue in the existing resource Budget Allocation Model was not optimal. The historical practice of mixing on-going—and therefore relatively stable—revenue streams such as apportionment, with unpredictable and less reliable revenue such as interest income is out of alignment with sound financial management.

Additionally, colleges received “Recommendations” from the ACCJC for giving insufficient attention to the “total cost of ownership” in their operating budgets as it relates to their facilities and infrastructure. This is a strong “recommendation”; the visiting teams cited Standard III.B.2.a most frequently. The proposed changes to the Budget Allocation Model would begin to address this recommendation and demonstrate progress to remedying the deficiency cited.

Considerations

DCAS’ emphasis has been focused on the identification of:

- Structural deficit categories that demanded the most attention,
- Revenue sources that could best be used to resolve the deficits,
- A rational basis for allocation of funding to each category,
- A reasonable funding rate, and
- A method of transition to redirect resources from the Unrestricted General Fund Budget Allocation Model to address the issue, while resulting in the least impact to ongoing college operations.

It was emphasized throughout the review process that the reallocation of resources from the General Allocation Model to an Infrastructure Funding Model would not generate additional resources. It would, however, provide a dedicated, ongoing foundational allocation that the colleges could use annually to address these needs. DCAS both understood and accepted this concept and saw the benefit in the reallocation and the resultant easing of contention from competing factions for the use of these resources during budget development.

Recommendations

The results of this review and deliberation are as follows:

Specific Revenue Categories would be segregated from the current Unrestricted General Fund Budget Allocation Model. They are:

- Lottery Proceeds
- Interest Income
- Enrollment Fee Admin Fee
- Miscellaneous - other

These revenue sources were identified as a result of their relative instability to other funding sources and in recognition that a number of districts, statewide, did not include these resources as a part of their Unrestricted General Fund Budget Allocation Model, but instead allocated them for specific purposes. Further, based on their unrestricted nature, the redirection of these sources does not violate any state regulations or statutes. These revenues will be accounted for in the Unrestricted General Fund (Fund 111) with the equivalent amount being transferred out at year end. Finally, DCAS fully understands that the colleges were currently using a portion of their General Fund allocations to address their infrastructure needs and, thus, the redirection of these sources could, over time, be mitigated.

Specific Expenditure Categories would be established for:

- Scheduled Maintenance and Capital Furniture (including classroom, faculty and administration)
- Library Materials and Databases
- Instructional and Non-instructional Equipment
- Technology Refresh and Replacement (hardware and software)
- Other – To be restricted to one-time and not on-going expenditures, such as new program/process start-up costs, staff innovation, and program specific accreditation (e.g., nursing, dental hygiene, child development)

Although these costs are necessary and fundamental to the maintenance of a quality educational institution, each category's need and frequency is ongoing and variable and, therefore, is better funded from resources which demonstrate a similar pattern.

Specific Funding Rates would be agreed to and regularly reviewed.

A transition plan would be used as a vehicle to move the funds from the current Unrestricted General Fund Budget Allocation Model to the Infrastructure Funding Model over a period of years beginning with FY13. The transition process reallocates the funding as follows:

- In the first year move receipts in excess of that budgeted for those specific revenues in FY12 to the Infrastructure Funding Model.
- Reallocate any savings between budget and actual expenditures in FY12 in budgets that are not eligible for carryover (i.e. Districtwide Services and Utilities)

These resources were identified for the initial implementation as they would not impact general operations as these dollars would otherwise flow into Unallocated Reserves as stated in the Unrestricted General Fund Budget Allocation Model. The use of these resources for one-time/capital expenditures is consistent with the current philosophy regarding the use of reserves.

- In subsequent years (FY13 and beyond) a portion of the budgeted revenue in the specific revenue sources identified (interest and enrollment fee admin fee) be moved from the Unrestricted General Fund Budget Allocation Model to the Infrastructure Funding Model each year based on the plan attached.

These dollars would be moved in their entirety within eight years of gradual realignment. The movement would be a part of the annual budget assumptions, and the gradual transition plan could therefore be modified at any point to slow down or accelerate the results.

As part of DCAS's annual review, the elements of the Infrastructure Funding Model will be reviewed in a parallel process similar to that of the Allocation Model review.

Conclusion

For the past several years, the District has faced structural deficits with financing several critical elements which are central to the core mission of the colleges and the District. These internal circumstances have been acknowledged by the District over the past several years but not addressed.

Although the proposed Model will not fully address all funding needs identified, it is intended to establish a foundational allocation process which will provide the colleges a dedicated, ongoing source of funds to use in mitigating these operating concerns and maintain quality facilities and equipment in order to provide quality instructional programs.

Even though this will eliminate one of the sources of increase to District reserves (unbudgeted and under-budgeted revenue), the call on reserves would be somewhat

mitigated by providing resources for the current structural deficits, and growth revenue in the first year of receipt would continue to be directed to reserves as an in-flow.

Great care has been exercised in developing the Model to ensure the colleges' General Fund operating budgets will be buffered from any long-term impact and that the instructional and student service needs of the District will be preserved and adequately funded to meet the needs of our students.

Specific Considerations and Details

After months of data review, discussions, and model simulations, DCAS has agreed on the following recommendations:

Categories to be addressed for Infrastructure Funding Model:

- Scheduled Maintenance and Capital Furniture (including classroom, faculty and administration)
- Library Materials and Databases
- Instructional and Non-instructional Equipment
- Technology Refresh and Replacement (hardware and software)
- Other – To be restricted to one-time and not on-going expenditures, such as new program/process start-up costs, staff innovation, and program specific accreditation (e.g., nursing, dental hygiene, child development)

Next, DCAS examined the various revenue sources in the Unrestricted General Fund Budget Allocation Model to determine which were the best candidates for reallocation. Once the specific sources were identified, they focused on a phase-in process to minimize the impact on the colleges' ongoing operating budgets. The result of these discussions is as follows:

- Interest Income
- Enrollment Fee Admin Fee
- Miscellaneous - other

Proposed Transition/Phase-in (Triggers) for Reallocation of Identified Resources

To minimize the reallocation impact of the above identified resources from the Unrestricted General Fund Budget Allocation Model on the colleges' budgets, DCAS recommended transitional implementation for year 1 (FY 2012-13), year 2 (FY 2013-14), and year 3 (FY 2014-15). FY 16-17 would be year 5 of the IFM. DCAS recommends the following for years 4 and beyond:

- Years 4-and beyond
 - Any unbudgeted Unrestricted General Fund revenue except growth and COLA
 - Any net savings between budget and actual expenses from District Wide Services and Utilities
 - Enrollment fee local revenue
 - Interest income

This implementation strategy should provide the colleges adequate time to restructure their Unrestricted General Fund operating budgets and properly transfer their structural deficit expenditures to the new allocation base and adjust their ongoing operating expenses within the Unrestricted General Fund.

As part of DCAS's annual review, the implementation strategies of the Infrastructure Funding Model will be reviewed in a parallel process similar to that of the Allocation Model review.

Basis for Allocation of Resources to Identified Categories:

<u>Category</u>	<u>Allocation Basis</u>
Scheduled Maintenance and Capital Furniture	Assignable Square Footage
Library Materials and Databases	FTES
Instructional and Non-instructional Equipment	FTES
Technology Refresh and Replacement	Number of Computers
Other	Equal shares (1/3, 1/3, 1/3)

Funding Rate Proposed for Each Category:

<u>Category</u>	<u>Funding Rate</u>
Scheduled Maintenance and Capital Furniture	\$1.60/square foot
Library Materials and Databases	\$10.00/FTES
Instructional and Non-instructional Equipment	\$30.00/FTES
Technology Refresh and Replacement	\$150.00/computer
Other	\$150,000/college

The rates were determined based on the most recent experience/estimate of need, previous funding levels used by state, etc. It will be necessary that as a part of the annual review by DCAS the categories and goal funding rates be assessed for appropriateness.

- **Other**

DCAS finally recommends the following for implementation of the Infrastructure Funding Model:

- All resources reallocated will be budgeted and accounted for in a new fund separate from the Unrestricted General Fund (111).
- The colleges will be allowed to carry over all unspent balances in these accounts from year to year in order to meet fluctuating needs.

- In the first two years of implementation, the colleges will not be required to spend their allocation in accordance with the specific categories which generated the allocations, but will be restricted to use these funds for only expenses associated with allocation categories in total. For example, for the first two years, a college may elect to fully expend its entire annual allocation for scheduled maintenance even though the allocation was derived from all infrastructure funding categories.
- As with the Unrestricted General Fund, the colleges will have control over the internal budgeting of these funds as long as they are within the allocation categories. These budgets will be presented to the Board for approval as part of the overall budget development process.
- During years when the total dollar allocation to the Infrastructure Fund is insufficient to fully fund the Model, based on the then approved funding rates, the funding rates for all categories will be adjusted downward by a coefficient equal to the total of the funds available divided by the calculated full funding amount. For example, if the calculated full funding amount, based upon funding rates and allocation bases is \$4 million and the available funds based upon the allocation parameter is only \$3 million, then the funding rate for all categories will be computed at 75% (3 million/4 million) of their then approved rate.
- As the District Office does not participate in the Infrastructure Funding Model allocation, as revenue is removed from the Unrestricted General Fund Budget Allocation Model, the DAC percentage of revenue in that model will be adjusted to hold them harmless.
- DCAS has agreed, as with the Unrestricted General Fund Budget Allocation Model, to oversee the Infrastructure Funding Model and review it annually. Any proposed revisions to the Model will be presented to the Board for review and approval.