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CSU Board of Trustees Meeting September 10-13, 2023

Faculty Trustee Report Darlene Yee-Melichar

The CSU Board of Trustees meets six times a year. Meetings allow for communication among the Trustees, Chancellor, campus presidents, Academic Senate, California State Student Association and Alumni Council.

The autumn meeting of the Board occurred on September 10-13, 2023. It started on Sunday, September 10 (full day) and Monday, September 11 (half-day) in Closed Session for discussion about Executive Personnel Matters (Government Code §11126), Pending Litigation (Krug v. CSU (PAGA); Kumar, et al v. Koester, et al; Hernandez, et al v. The Fraternity of Phi Gamma Delta, et al.; Kyeyune v. CSU), and Committee on Collective Bargaining [Government Code §3596(d)]. The Board then met on Tuesday, September 12 (full day) and Wednesday, September 13 (half-day) in Open Session for public comments, information items and action items.

The Board's full agenda and background materials (221 pages) for the September 2023 meeting are available at <https://www.calstate.edu/csu-system/board-of-trustees/past-meetings/2023/Documents/FULL-BINDER-sep-10-13.pdf>. The Board meetings are broadcast live to the public; you may access the live stream videos on YouTube associated with Open Session at <https://www.calstate.edu/csu-system/board-of-trustees/past-meetings/Pages/September-10-13-2023.aspx>.

For the full Board and committee meetings held in Open Session, I provide links to the specific meeting materials and videos; brief summaries using ChatGPT with technical assistance provided by [SF State Academic Technology](#) and in concurrence with my personal meeting notes; and share my brief queries or requests for feedback below for your consideration. If you have any comments, corrections, and/or questions regarding my Faculty Trustee Report, please let me know (dyee@calstate.edu). I look forward to hearing from you; **thank you**.

###

September 10-13, 2023 (Full Agenda)

On September 10-13, 2023, the meeting of the CSU Board of Trustees was held in Long Beach—at the Marriott Hotel on Sunday, and at the Chancellor's Office on Monday through Wednesday.

On Sunday, September 10, at 9:00am, the Board convened in Closed Session on Executive Personnel Matters. Discussion centered on candidate interviews, selection process and compensation package for the new President of California State University, Los Angeles. See Committee on University and Faculty Personnel below.

On Monday, September 11, at 1:00pm, the Board convened in Closed Session for further discussion on Executive Personnel Matters, Pending Litigation (Krug v. CSU (PAGA); Kumar, et al v. Koester, et al; Hernandez, et al v. The Fraternity of Phi Gamma Delta, et al.; Kyeyune v. CSU), and Committee on Collective Bargaining. Note: According to [California Education Code § 66602 \(c2\)](#), the Faculty Trustee "shall not participate on any subcommittee of the board responsible for collective bargaining negotiations."

On Tuesday, September 12, at 9:00am, the Board convened in Open Session.

Tuesday, September 12, 2023

9:00am - Plenary Session (Day 1)

Agenda

Video 1 (Public Comment)

During the California State University (CSU) Board of Trustees meeting, a series of passionate and emotionally charged comments were made by students, faculty, and community members regarding the proposed tuition hike. The speakers strongly opposed the tuition increase and outlined various reasons for their concerns.

The speakers emphasized that the proposed tuition hike would disproportionately affect students from marginalized communities, especially first-generation, low-income, and people of color. Several highlighted their experiences as students facing financial hardships, such as working multiple jobs and struggling with housing and food insecurity. They argued that increasing tuition would make it even more challenging for them and their peers to access higher education, which should be affordable and accessible to all.

Many speakers criticized the CSU administration for prioritizing excessive administrative salaries, including the high wages of campus presidents and the Chancellor, over the well-being of students. They questioned the logic of raising tuition when the CSU system has an 8.8-billion-dollar reserve fund that could be used to support students and address pressing issues like outdated facilities and inadequate resources. Several speakers also highlighted issues such as asbestos in campus buildings, lack of air conditioning during heatwaves, and the need for improved cultural resource centers.

The speakers called on the Board of Trustees to reconsider the proposed tuition increase and instead prioritize the needs of students. They urged the Board to tap into the substantial reserves available to the CSU system and allocate funding to make education more affordable, address student hunger and housing insecurity, and improve the overall quality of education within the CSU system. Many speakers passionately voiced their discontent and frustration, making it clear that they would continue to fight against the tuition hike and advocate for a more equitable and accessible higher education system in California.

Video 2 (Reports)

Wenda Fong, Chair of the CSU Board of Trustees (CSU BoT), welcomed Jonathan Molina Moncio as CSU Student Trustee and various new university presidents, including Dr. Luke Wood, Dr. Sylvia Alva, Dr. Susan Borrego, and Dr. Leroy M. Morishita. These leaders were acknowledged for their dedication and commitment to the CSU system. Additionally, Chair Fong congratulated Dr. Vernon B. Harper Jr. on his appointment as interim president of CSU Bakersfield and noted the upcoming announcement of the new president for Cal State Los Angeles.

Chair Fong emphasized the significance of Hispanic National Heritage Month, highlighting the CSU's commitment to diversity and inclusion, as nearly 40% of CSU students are Latinx. She praised CSU's outstanding performance in social mobility rankings and its dedication to sustainability, recognizing the Excellence & Innovation Award for Sustainability.

Chair Fong introduced the second annual CSU Photo of the Year contest, which showcased the talent and creativity of CSU's communication and media professionals. She unveiled the top three submissions from Stanislaus State, Cal State Long Beach, and Chico State, with Chico State's entry winning first place.

Chair Fong touched on the ongoing commitment to Title IX and anti-discrimination programs in the CSU system, highlighting the recent hearing before the legislative audit committee and emphasizing the need for transparency and progress reporting in this crucial area.

Chair Fong expressed gratitude and admiration for Interim Chancellor Jolene Koester, who has steered the CSU during challenging times. She mentioned the recent recognition of Interim Chancellor Koester's leadership by the California State Senate and Assembly, praising her ethical and student-centric approach to leadership.

Chair Fong concluded by introducing a video spotlighting Cal Poly Pomona as part of the ongoing series highlighting the achievements and impact of CSU's 23 universities. The video showcased the transformative power of higher education at Cal Poly Pomona.

Adrian Harrell, CSU Alumni Council President-Elect, reported on the Council's activities and partnerships. She discussed the CSU's role in shaping the lives of alumni and the importance of alumni engagement and support in promoting the university's mission.

Beth Steffel, Chair of the Academic Senate CSU (ASCSU), presented an update on academic matters through resolutions from the previous week. She mentioned general education, faculty communication, and plans to improve structures and processes to benefit students and faculty. She then introduced other members of the ASCSU Executive and Extended Executive Committees.

Dominic Tressler, President of the California State Student Association (CSSA), discussed CSSA's priorities for the upcoming year. He highlighted concerns related to tuition, student debt, and total cost of attendance, emphasizing the importance of maintaining accessibility and affordability for CSU students.

Interim Chancellor (IC) Jolene Koester addressed the Board, focusing on the CSU system's critical issues. She mentioned compliance with the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (NAGPRA) and improving relations with Native American tribes. Additionally, IC Koester discussed CSU's response to recent state audits regarding Title IX compliance and shared her commitment to restoring trust with legislative partners and stakeholders.

Finally, IC Koester touched on the CSU's complex fiscal situation, including budgetary challenges, union negotiations, and multi-year tuition proposals. She emphasized the necessity of making tough financial decisions to ensure the system's sustainability while also considering the impact on students and faculty.

The Board meeting covered various topics, from COVID-19 response and campus planning to alumni engagement, academic matters, and critical financial decisions. These reports reflect the ongoing efforts and challenges the CSU system faces as it strives to provide quality education and support for its diverse student body.

11:45 a.m.
Committee on Committees
[Agenda, Video](#)

In the meeting of the Committee on Committees, Trustee Firstenberg called the committee to order then proceeded to the consent agenda. She inquired if any committee member wished to remove any item from the consent agenda, highlighting the importance of member input and participation. However, the committee members raised no requests for removal and she closed the meeting with unanimous approval for the consent agenda.

11:50 a.m.
Committee on Audit
[Agenda, Video](#)

The Committee on Audit convened to discuss various matters related to audits and compliance. Trustee Rodriguez opened the session by expressing gratitude to both Committee Chair Fong and Interim Chancellor Jolene Koester for their commitment to fulfilling and honoring the recommendations made by the California State Auditor (CSA) in two essential audits: one regarding NAGPRA (Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act) and the other concerning Title IX. This acknowledgment highlighted the Board's dedication to addressing and rectifying issues outlined in these audits.

The Committee on Audit then considered the consent agenda. It was noted that no committee member wished to remove any item from the consent agenda for separate discussion, indicating a consensus among the members. As a result, the consent agenda, comprising various audit-related items, was approved without objection.

The committee's efficient handling of the consent agenda marked the committee's commitment to addressing audit-related matters promptly and in compliance with recommendations from the CSA. This demonstrated the Board's dedication to ensuring transparency, accountability, and adherence to best practices in various CSU operations, as highlighted in the audits.

11:55 a.m.
Committee on Governmental Relations
[Agenda, Video](#)

The Committee on Governmental Relations was convened to discuss various legislative matters and updates. The session began with Vice Chair Clarke presiding over the committee. The consent agenda, which included the minutes of the May 2023 meeting, was presented and approved without any objections.

Following the approval of the consent agenda, the committee moved on to discuss a State Legislative update. Steve Relyea (Executive Vice Chancellor and Chief Financial Officer) and Nathan Dietrich (Assistant Vice Chancellor, Advocacy and State Relations) presented this information. Vice Chair Clarke requested that the presentation be limited to around 20 minutes, emphasizing the importance of maintaining the schedule.

AVC Dietrich provided an overview of the legislative session, which was set to end shortly. He highlighted two sponsored bills: AB 656, which aimed to grant CSU the authority to establish practical doctorate programs meeting workforce demands, and AB 840, an

alcohol sponsorship exemption proposal. Both bills had made substantial progress and awaited the Governor's consideration.

AVC Dietrich further discussed various bills they were working on, addressing amendments and bills deferred to the next session. He mentioned their active discussions regarding securing funding for capital projects through a potential education bond.

Additionally, AVC Dietrich mentioned the Iowa State travel ban, which had passed the Assembly, transforming the prohibition into a public awareness campaign to promote acceptance, and understanding.

During the discussion, several trustees, including Trustee McGrory, Trustee Yee-Melichar, and Trustee Gilbert-Lurie, supported specific bills and issues, including mental health services, SBX1-2 (Oil Price Gouging Penalty), repealing the state travel ban, and the student-Athlete Bill of Rights. AVC Dietrich emphasized advocating for legislation that benefit CSU students and campuses.

The report also touched on the CSU's involvement in various legislative hearings, including graduation rates, repatriation of ancestral remains, and Title IX compliance. The CSU's commitment to working collaboratively with legislators and stakeholders to address these issues was highlighted.

In closing, Chair Fong acknowledged the importance of Board engagement in legislative matters, suggesting that this topic be discussed at the upcoming Board retreat in November. The meeting concluded with Vice Chair Clark expressing appreciation for the engagement and participation of trustees in legislative advocacy efforts.

1:30 p.m.

Committee on Campus Planning, Buildings and Grounds

Agenda, Video

The presentation during the Campus Planning, Buildings, and Grounds Committee meeting featured discussions on several key projects and initiatives within the CSU system. The meeting began with Steve Relyea (Executive Vice Chancellor and Chief Financial Officer) providing an overview of the Five-Year Capital Plan. He emphasized investing in campus facilities to support student success, retention, and graduation rates. EVC Relyea outlined the comprehensive process used to prioritize projects, which included capacity and utilization analyses, facility condition assessments, critical infrastructure reports, and seismic studies.

Paul Gannoe (Assistant Vice Chancellor for Finance and Facilities) delved deeper into the specifics of the Five-Year Capital Plan, revealing that the universities had identified approximately \$3.7 billion in priority projects. The plan focuses on renovating and replacing existing facilities, making up about 84% of the projects, while approximately 16% is allocated for growth. AVC Gannoe discussed the funding strategy, which includes seeking state one-time funds, supporting higher education inclusion in a general obligation bond, seeking a base budget increase, designating reserves for significant repairs, and exploring public-private partnerships.

Trustee Adamson asked why the CSU system requested \$1.3 billion in state funds for capital projects when identified critical needs amounted to \$2.5 billion. EVC Relyea explained that finding a balance between a realistic request and demonstrating the

genuine needs of the CSU system was challenging. He hoped the state might provide additional funding if unexpected surpluses arose. Trustee Kimbell echoed Trustee Adamson's concern and emphasized the importance of asking for what the CSU system truly needed.

The discussion then shifted to the Student Services Building Project presentation at the CSU San Bernardino Palm Desert Center, introduced by President Tomás Morales of Cal State San Bernardino. President Morales highlighted the significance of this project as the first expansion of the Palm Desert campus in over two decades. The building aims to provide equitable student support services, amenities, and academic spaces, bridging the gap between the existing campus and future development.

AVC Gannoe, in his segment of the presentation, detailed the project's site design and features. He explained that the new building would serve multiple purposes: student support, health services, dining, and recreation. AVC Gannoe highlighted the building's sustainability goals, including being fully electric and achieving LEED Silver certification.

Trustee McGrory expressed concern about the project's cost, particularly given the challenging climate and the region's 20-30% productivity loss during extreme weather conditions. He suggested itemizing cost drivers to understand the high costs better. Trustee Kimbell echoed this concern and asked for clarification on assignable square feet versus gross square feet. President Morales shared his enthusiasm for the project and how it could become a flagship building for the CSU system in the Coachella Valley.

In summary, the CSU Board of Trustees meeting discussed crucial matters related to campus planning, building projects, and funding strategies. The trustees expressed concerns about project costs, emphasized the importance of requesting adequate funding from the state, and underscored the potential significance of the Student Services Building Project in Palm Desert. The meeting provided insights into the meticulous processes and considerations involved in the CSU's capital planning and prioritization.

2:30 p.m.

Committee on Educational Policy – Part 1

[Agenda, Video](#)

During the California State University (CSU) Board of Trustees meeting, a comprehensive presentation on the Black Student Success report was delivered, shedding light on the significant challenges faced by Black students within the CSU system and proposing a set of recommendations to address these issues. The presentation was made by Dilcie Perez (Deputy Vice Chancellor, Academic and Student Affairs) and President Thomas Parham, Co-Chair of the Black Student Success work group, and Nedrick Miller, a CSU student who shared his personal experiences as a Black student.

In his role as Co-Chair of the Black Student Success work group, President Parham (CSU Dominguez Hills) emphasized the importance of acknowledging and addressing the unique challenges Black students face within the CSU system. He began by highlighting the core belief that each student is a seed of divinely inspired possibility, and that the CSU's role is to nurture and support their growth. President Parham then introduced the central theme of the presentation. This Black Student Success report contains 13 bold and visionary recommendations to redefine Black Student Success and elevate Black Excellence within CSU.

Nedrick Miller, a courageous CSU student, shared his experiences and struggles as a Black student within the CSU system. He spoke about the unrealistic expectations placed on Black students, particularly regarding maintaining high grades while working and managing other responsibilities. Nedrick highlighted the challenges related to access to financial aid and student jobs, revealing that the requirements for specific programs like the Educational Opportunity Program (EOP) made it nearly impossible for students like him to succeed academically.

Several trustees also offered their comments and questions during the presentation. DVC Perez commended Nedrick Miller for his courage in sharing his story, emphasizing that his testimony would bring about significant changes for Black students in the future. DVC Perez also mentioned the need to regularly address accountability regarding Black student success within the CSU system.

Trustee Lopez recognized the importance of the presentation, especially at a time when discussions about race and equity are crucial. She acknowledged that it is not an advantage to be Black in America and applauded CSU for addressing these issues head-on. Trustee Yee-Melichar raised questions about the potential impact of tuition increases on Black students, urging careful consideration of their financial aid.

Trustee Leslie Gilbert-Lurie supported the presentation and emphasized the need to focus on Black students, recognizing that the data indicates disparities in educational outcomes. She also mentioned the importance of not equating different initiatives with the disaffirmation of other groups.

Trustee Jack Clark Jr. echoed the sentiments of his fellow trustees. He shared his experiences related to naming a high school after Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., highlighting the continued racial challenges in society.

In response to questions, President Parham clarified that focusing on Black students does not imply disaffirmation of other groups and that the goal is creating a genuinely integrated and equitable educational environment. He also mentioned the importance of assessing each campus's strengths and areas for growth and working in conjunction with existing services.

The presentation concluded with a call to move from advocacy to action, highlighting the pivotal role that students, faculty, staff, and the Board of Trustees will play in addressing and rectifying the challenges faced by Black students within the CSU system.

4:00 p.m.

Committee on Institutional Advancement

[Agenda, Video](#)

The proceedings began with the Committee on Institutional Advancement meeting, chaired by Trustee Faigin. The meeting commenced with the approval of the minutes of the May 2023 meeting without objections, followed by an informative presentation on the [2023-24 California State University Trustees Award for Outstanding Achievement](#). This prestigious award recognized exceptional students from various CSU campuses who demonstrated outstanding academic achievement, personal accomplishments, community service, and financial need.

The presentation described the significance of the awards and acknowledged the 23 honorees as representing the best of the CSU system. It also highlighted the dedicated efforts of the CSU Trustees Awards Selection Committee including CSU Trustee Emeritus Razi, CSU Trustee Emeritus Fong, Trustee Gilbert-Lurie, ASCSU Chair Steffel, CSSA VP Pompa, and CSU Alumni Councilmember Wong.

These awardees were recipients of various scholarships named after generous contributors. Chair Fong expressed gratitude to those who supported the scholarship program, including Foundation Board members like Ron and Misty Barhorst, Kristen and Bob Crellin, Michael Lizárraga, Michael Lucki, Henry Perea, Steven Stuck, and Gillian Wright, who all played significant roles in supporting and advancing the educational goals of CSU students.

Additionally, Chair Fong acknowledged and thanked the CSU trustees in attendance who had generously contributed to the scholarship program, showing their commitment to the educational success of CSU students. In particular, CSU Trustee Emeritus Razi was applauded for his steadfast dedication to the CSU Trustees Award since 1984, ensuring its continued operation and transformation of countless lives.

The presentation then shifted to the individual recognition of the awardees. Tania Parker was celebrated as the 2023 Trustee Emeritus Ali C. Razi Scholar, and commended for her outstanding academic achievements and indomitable spirit. Tanya's compelling story resonated with the audience, which included overcoming the odds as a former foster youth and formerly incarcerated student.

Trustee Faigan further highlighted the remarkable achievements of other awardees, each named after various contributors who supported the CSU scholarship program. Their fields of study ranged from early childhood, educational psychology to nursing, kinesiology, occupational therapy, mechanical engineering, journalism, and more. Their shared commitment to positively influencing their communities and beyond was evident in their inspiring stories of triumph over adversity and dedication to their academic pursuits.

The meeting concluded with a celebration of the CSU Trustees Award Class of 2023, emphasizing the common thread of perseverance, intelligence, and hard work among the awardees. Trustee Faigan thanked the families, friends, colleagues, professors, and staff who supported these exceptional students throughout their journeys.

Overall, this presentation underscored the significance of these awards in recognizing outstanding CSU students and the unwavering support and dedication of various individuals and organizations toward their educational success. The emotional and inspirational stories of the awardees highlighted the transformative power of education and the enduring commitment of the CSU community to foster academic excellence and create a brighter future for all.

Wednesday, September 13, 2023

8:00 a.m.

New CSU Presidents Announcements

[Video](#)

To begin the meeting, Chair Fong informed everyone that the search committee tasked with identifying the next president of California State University, Los Angeles has successfully completed its work. The next president of Cal State LA is Dr. Berenecea Johnson Eanes, who currently serves as the president of York College, City University of New York. Dr. Eanes has previously held the position of vice president for student affairs at Cal State Fullerton and boasts an impressive track record of fostering innovation and support services leading to student success. She is also known as a diversity and educational equity champion, and Chair Fong expresses confidence that Cal State LA is in capable hands.

Additionally, Chair Fong mentions another significant appointment: Dr. Vernon B. Harper Jr. has been appointed as the interim president of California State University, Bakersfield. Chair Fong indicates that further details about Dr. Eanes and Dr. Harper will be discussed in an upcoming Committee on University and Faculty Personnel.

Chair Fong then shifts focus to express gratitude on behalf of the Board. The Board thanks Dr. Leroy Morishita for delaying his retirement to serve as Cal State LA's interim president during this critical transition period. Dr. Morishita is recognized for providing steady and inclusive leadership during this period.

Finally, Chair Fong extends heartfelt thanks to the current president of CSU Bakersfield, Lynette Zelezny. President Zelezny is acknowledged for her compassionate, honorable, and collaborative leadership, as well as her unwavering dedication and exemplary service to the campus community and the CSU system. Chair Fong concludes by mentioning President Zelezny's service will be celebrated more extensively in the upcoming Board meeting. Overall, this meeting segment reflects the announcement of fundamental leadership changes and expressions of appreciation for the outgoing and incoming leaders.

Committee on University and Faculty Personnel **Agenda, Video**

During the University and Faculty Personnel Committee meeting, a substantial portion of the discussion revolved around addressing the findings and recommendations of the Cozen O'Connor report, which assessed the CSU system's response to Title IX issues. Several speakers provided insights and comments on this critical matter.

Leora Freedman (Vice Chancellor for Human Resources) began the discussion by presenting an overview of the Cozen O'Connor report's findings and recommendations. She emphasized the importance of addressing existing gaps in Title IX response and providing adequate resources for training, complaint intake, and prevention education. VC Freedman explained that the 87 additional positions being proposed were not merely for compliance but also for offering support and care to those involved in Title IX cases.

Lt. Governor Kounalakis raised concerns about the proposed plan, emphasizing the importance of maintaining the responsibility of CSU administrators in addressing complaints. She worried that creating additional positions might inadvertently lead to administrators abdicating their duties and outsourcing issues. Lt. Governor Kounalakis stressed the need for administrators to play a proactive role in handling complaints promptly.

While supporting the proposed positions, Trustee McGrory emphasized the importance of avoiding bureaucracy and ensuring that serious complaints are prioritized and investigated promptly. He referenced a case at Fresno State University where addressing a complaint took too long, creating an unsafe work environment. Trustee McGrory urged a culture shift toward immediate action and accountability as a central focus.

Trustee Gilbert-Lurie underscored the significance of providing adequate resources to the CSU system to fulfill its Title IX obligations. She commended the Board for initiating the Cozen O'Connor assessment and expressed hope that the CSU system could become a model for handling Title IX issues effectively.

In response to these concerns, VC Freedman clarified that the proposed positions aimed to support rather than replace administrators' responsibilities. She highlighted that administrators should still oversee complaints but would receive assistance from the new hires for intake, support, and prevention education. Additionally, training was identified as a crucial element, ensuring that all CSU staff and leaders understand their role in providing a safe and inclusive environment.

The discussion emphasized the need for a balanced approach to address Title IX concerns within the CSU system. While adding new positions was deemed necessary to fill critical gaps, it was underscored that administrators must retain their responsibility for promptly and effectively addressing complaints.

8:30 a.m.

[Committee on Education Policy - Part 2](#)
[Video](#)

The Committee on Educational Policy meeting, chaired by Chair Arambula, began with the call to convene the committee. They turn to the action item regarding academic planning, a topic of importance. Dr. Nathan Evans (Deputy Vice Chancellor, Academic and Student Affairs/Chief Academic Officer) and Dr. Laura Masa (interim AVC for Academic and Faculty Programs) are introduced as the presenters of this agenda item.

DVC Evans and AVC Masa discuss the importance of academic planning in fulfilling the mission of CSU, emphasizing the need for quality educational programs that serve diverse learners and regional workforce needs while ensuring financial sustainability. They state that a new summer program projection cycle has been introduced, providing 12 projections for new degree programs awaiting approval by the Board. They also stress the active role of the Chancellor's Office in system-wide academic program planning.

AVC Masa provides details on the degree program projection process, highlighting the criteria for approval, including a compelling rationale, alignment with the campus mission, student demand, workforce needs, and resource allocation commitment. They present 13 new proposals for degree program projections from six campuses, mentioning the removal of one program from CSU East Bay as per the campus's request. The approval of these projections allows universities to develop degree proposals subject to review.

AVC Masa explains the academic planning review and approval process, emphasizing that degree program projections are part of the campus academic plan, contributing to the CSU academic master plan (AMP). She also discusses the upcoming requests for credit-bearing credential programs and reviews of suspended and discontinued programs.

The meeting proceeds with trustee comments and questions. Trustee Lopez commends the effort to improve the approval process but requests a systematic way to review and report on the results of program reviews, emphasizing the need for meaningful analysis and communication. Trustee Yee-Melichar stated appreciation for the thoughtful academic innovation in the proposals, but raises concerns about the balance between system-level involvement and campus autonomy in academic program reviews indicating campus senate policies that are already in place for suspending and discontinuing programs. Trustee Yee-Melichar then inquired about the data and support provided to campuses by the Chancellor's Office and how that data might be used.

DVC Evans responds, explaining the Chancellor's office's role in supporting campus and system-wide planning, particularly the deeper review of low-enrolled programs. He emphasizes the opportunity for consortium-based programs and online offerings. This approach aligns with WASC accreditation standards.

Chair Arambula acknowledges the critical nature of academic planning and program reviews in light of financial challenges. Chair Arambula underscores the item's significance and highlights the connection between program offerings and economic sustainability.

The discussion concludes with a vote for approval of the resolution; Chair Arambula thanked everyone, and the meeting ended.

[Joint Committee on Educational Policy and Finance](#) **[Agenda, Video](#)**

In the joint committee meeting on Educational Policy and Finance, Trustee Arambula opened the session. With no objections, the consent agenda and minutes from the July 2023 meeting were approved. There was one item on the discussion agenda. Item two is an information item regarding the Chancellor's strategic work group on financial aid presented by DVC Nathan Evans (and Co-Chair for the Chancellor's strategic work group on financial assistance) along with Trustee Lopez (Co-Chair for the Chancellor's strategic work group on financial assistance). These two speakers provided insights and recommendations for financial aid, tuition, and campus-based fees within the CSU system.

Trustee Lopez expressed appreciation for the work of the financial aid work group and emphasized the importance of affordability and accessibility for CSU students. She highlighted that 86 percent of undergraduate students from households with incomes under \$75,000 fully cover their tuition, with an additional 9 percent receiving partial grants. This demonstrates a commitment to affordable CSU education for low and middle-income students.

Trustee Lopez also discussed the significance of keeping the financial aid process simple and transparent for students, particularly when understanding the total cost of attendance, including housing, transportation, and food expenses. She emphasized the need to provide students with clear information about the implications of taking out loans to cover their educational costs. Additionally, Trustee Lopez stressed the importance of using financial aid as an enrollment strategy, starting outreach efforts early to inform potential students about available aid.

Trustee Vargas and Trustee Aguilar Cruz raised a question regarding undocumented students and their eligibility for financial aid; expressly those who no longer qualify for

DACA (Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals). They pointed out that the CSU should continue leading in making education affordable for undocumented students, who often face unique challenges in accessing financial assistance. They suggested that outreach efforts should extend to this population to ensure they know the available support.

Trustee Molina Mancio expressed concern about campus-based fees and the autonomy of campus presidents to determine and implement these fees. He highlighted the importance of understanding the impact of campus-based costs on students. He suggested that the CSU must communicate more effectively with undocumented and international student populations. Trustee McGrory stressed that providing culturally relevant information in multiple languages is crucial for effective communication.

Trustee Yee-Melichar thanked Trustee Lopez and DVC Evans for their work on financial aid. In the July board meeting, she brought up inquiries about the funding and distribution of funds associated with the State University Grant (SUG) as an indispensable resource. She further inquired whether the allocation of SUG funding to the 23 campuses considers the cost of living expense based on geographic location and how SUG could be utilized for campus/system marketing and student recruitment. DVC Evans responded that the current allocation of SUG funding is based upon currently enrolled students who meet the existing priority criteria for SUG. He mentions that the Strategic work group has discussed variations in the cost of living reflected in each campus and how it may influence or vary the new policy they are developing. He addressed her second question by discussing how the Strategic work group can communicate using SUG and Cal Grant as a tool for student recruitment and retention.

Trustee Molina Mancio and Trustee Fagan pointed out the issue of campus-based fees and mentioned the controversy surrounding "success fees" in the past. They highlighted that specific fees may have been classified differently to bypass regulations. They emphasized the need to review CSU policies and laws related to these fees to ensure transparency and compliance.

Trustee Rodriguez discussed the importance of being culturally relevant in communication strategies to make financial aid information accessible to all communities. She also stressed the need to address the issue of student loan debt, especially among Black and African-American students, as data showed that a significant portion of them carry student loan burdens.

In summary, the joint committee meeting highlighted the CSU's commitment to affordability, transparency, and access to financial aid for its diverse student population. It also raised important questions regarding undocumented student support, campus-based fees, and the impact of student loan debt on specific communities, underscoring the ongoing efforts to improve financial aid policies and practices within the CSU system.

9:00 a.m.

Committee on Finance - Part 1

[Agenda, Video](#)

During the Committee on Finance meeting, several speakers discussed the proposed multi-year tuition increase and the 2024-2025 operating budget plan. Ryan Storm (Assistant Vice Chancellor for Budget) began the discussion by presenting an overview of the budget plan and the need for additional funding. He highlighted that the CSU faced a substantial financial gap, and while the state's multi-year compact commitment helped,

it would only partially meet the funding needs. Storm emphasized that adopting the multi-year tuition proposal was crucial to addressing this gap, generating much-needed revenue to support the university's various priorities.

Steve Relyea (Executive Vice Chancellor and Chief Financial Officer) continued the presentation by underlining the importance of closing the funding gap to ensure that CSU could provide a high-quality education and support services for its students. He acknowledged that while the multi-year tuition proposal would help mitigate the challenges, it would only partially eliminate the gap. EVC Relyea also discussed various cost-saving initiatives and collaborations that the CSU was exploring to reduce expenses and maintain affordability.

During the presentation, the speakers highlighted modifications made to the proposal based on feedback from CSU students, including a commitment to increase funding for the State University Grant (SUG) program, including students in the assessment process, and establishing a financial aid advisory committee. They also stressed the need for timely approval, as prospective students needed to know the tuition costs for their applications, and university presidents required budget certainty for decision-making.

In summary, the CSU leaders explained the necessity of the multi-year tuition proposal and the 2024-2025 operating budget plan to address the funding gap, maintain affordability, and ensure the quality of education for CSU students. They outlined the changes in response to student feedback and emphasized the importance of timely approval to provide prospective students with financial clarity and support university budgeting decisions.

The Board of Trustees meeting moved to address the proposal regarding tuition increases. The speakers discussed the proposal's implications, the CSU system's financial challenges, and the impact on students.

Trustee Faigin started by expressing his concerns about the proposal but acknowledged the CSU system's financial challenges. He emphasized the need for a philanthropic approach to support the institution long-term.

Trustee Molina Mancio, representing student perspectives, described the ominous atmosphere in the room and the problematic decision trustees had to make. He spoke passionately about the struggles of CSU students and the unique nature of the CSU system, emphasizing the need for better state advocacy to secure funding. Trustee Aguilar-Cruz commended the students' efforts and thanked them for sharing their stories.

Trustee Firstenberg discussed her fiduciary responsibility as a trustee to save the institution and highlighted the potential financial impact of various tuition increase options. She urged against reducing the proposal to three years, citing the significant financial loss it would entail and the importance of financial stability and predictability for the institution. She emphasized the responsibility of trustees to make difficult decisions.

The discussion highlighted the complex decision-making process facing the CSU Board of Trustees, with trustees weighing the need for financial stability against the impact on students and the institution. The proposal's passage signaled a significant decision in addressing the economic challenges within the CSU system.

An amendment was proposed to reduce the tuition increase period from five years to three years. Trustee Lopez explained that this change would result in a substantial revenue loss for the CSU system. Some trustees, including Trustees Gilbert Lurie and Clark, expressed concerns about the amendment and advocated for considering either a four- or five-year timeline instead. Ultimately, the motion to amend the proposal to three years did not pass. Trustees expressed worries about the financial implications and instability of a shorter timeline.

The main motion, which aimed to accept the interim chancellor's proposal as submitted passed. This decision signified a significant step toward addressing the CSU system's financial challenges, with a focus on economic sustainability and its impact on students.

Committee on Finance - Part 2

Video

In the Committee on Finance meeting, several meaningful discussions and decisions were made regarding the 2024-2025 budget proposal. Trustee Lopez began by introducing the motion to approve the budget proposal. Trustee Adamson asked whether the budget included one-time capital funding, to which she received clarification that it did.

However, the meeting took an unexpected turn when Trustee Adamson proposed an amendment to increase the one-time capital outlay budget from \$1.3 billion to \$2.4 billion. He argued that the increased funding would align with the emergency outline projects submitted to the board. Trustee McGrory expressed concern about the political feasibility of such a substantial increase, while AVC Nathan Dietrich, from the Chancellor's office, suggested that it might surpass the state's ability to fund. Trustee Lopez supported the amendment, emphasizing the importance of requesting what CSU truly needs, even if the state doesn't grant the total amount.

After a vote, the amendment passed, increasing the capital outlay budget to \$2.4 billion. However, Lt. Governor Kounalakis expressed reservations about the rapid increase without a thorough prior conversation. Despite this, the committee voted on the amended budget, which passed unanimously.

Ultimately, the discussion revolved around the critical need for funding to address CSU's aging infrastructure and evolving student population. The committee acknowledged that while requesting such a substantial amount might be ambitious, it reflected the urgent needs of CSU campuses. The meeting concluded with a sense of responsibility to provide the best educational environment for CSU students.

12:45 p.m.

SJSU Video

Video

During the California State University (CSU) Board of Trustees meeting, a video highlighting San Jose State University (SJSU) was presented. The footage showcased SJSU as a transformative institution at the forefront of understanding and preparing for climate change. It highlighted the university's research efforts in various fields, including ocean health, wildfire prediction, and sustainable urban development. SJSU's location in Silicon Valley was emphasized as a hub of innovation and change, where big ideas can shape the world.

The video also acknowledged SJSU's rich history, dating back to 1857, making it the oldest public higher education institution in California. It celebrated notable SJSU alums who have significantly contributed to various fields, from environmentalism to technology, sports, literature, and the arts. The video portrayed SJSU as a vibrant urban campus that offers diverse opportunities for students to engage in meaningful hands-on learning, research, and entrepreneurship.

SJSU's strong commitment to diversity and inclusion was highlighted, emphasizing how its diverse mix of students, faculty, and staff contribute to its vibrancy. The video showcased SJSU's partnerships with international companies like Adobe and its dedication to providing students with transformative educational experiences inside and outside the classroom. It invited viewers to discover the "Spartan life" at SJSU, where students are prepared to become global citizens and drive societal change.

The presentation of the SJSU video allowed the Board of Trustees and meeting attendees to gain insights into the university's mission, achievements, and contributions to Silicon Valley and beyond. It served as an introduction to the upcoming discussions and decisions related to the CSU system.

Plenary Session - Day 2

[Agenda, Video](#)

The Board of Trustees of the California State University (CSU) reconvened for its September 2023 meeting, where several necessary actions were taken. The meeting began with Chair Wenda Fong presiding and IC Jolene Koester presenting an overview. The proceedings included discussions and decisions on various crucial matters, including the CSU's multi-year tuition proposal and the 2024-2025 operating budget plan.

One significant highlight was the multi-year tuition proposal presented by IC Koester—this proposal aimed to address CSU's financial challenges by increasing tuition over five years. Trustee Molina Mancio passionately emphasized the importance of CSU avoiding financial crises in the future, citing the need to communicate the system's unique qualities to the state. The proposal faced significant debate and ultimately passed with 15 votes in favor and five against.

Following the tuition proposal, the Board focused on the 2024-2025 operating budget plan. IC Koester presented the plan which was approved; this budget plan plays a critical role in ensuring the financial sustainability of the CSU system.

The meeting also featured a series of commendations and acknowledgments for esteemed members of the CSU community. Dr. Sylvia A. Alva, Executive Vice Chancellor for Academic and Student Affairs, was commended for her dedication to student success and advocacy for underrepresented students. Dr. Alva, who now serves as the Interim President of Cal State Fullerton, expressed her gratitude for the recognition and commitment to the CSU mission.

Additionally, Dr. Romy Sabalius, was honored as Faculty Trustee Emeritus for his six years of dedicated service representing faculty on the Board. Dr. Sabalius expressed the importance of shared purpose in governance, emphasizing the need for constructive criticism and dissent within the Board.

Finally, IC Jolene Koester was honored as Chancellor Emerita for her exceptional leadership during a challenging period. Chair Fong praised her for her dedication and leadership during her 17 months as interim chancellor. Chancellor Koester expressed her deep gratitude in her heartfelt remarks and highlighted the privilege of serving the CSU system.

In conclusion, the September 2023 meeting of the CSU Board of Trustees addressed critical financial matters, honored exemplary members of the CSU community, and bid farewell to Interim Chancellor Koester with deep appreciation for her leadership. The decisions made during this meeting will have a lasting impact on the future of the CSU system, ensuring its continued commitment to providing quality education to the people of California.

Brief Queries or Requests for Feedback

Based on what I have shared with you above (links to the specific meeting materials and videos; brief summaries using ChatGPT with technical assistance provided by [SF State Academic Technology](#) and in concurrence with my personal meeting notes), I would like to pose some brief queries or requests for feedback. I invite and look forward to any comments and/or questions that you may wish to share with me on the following items. Please email me at dyee@calstate.edu; thank you for your kind consideration.

1, I have just been appointed to four [Board of Trustees Standing Committees](#); these include Audit; Campus Planning, Buildings, Grounds; Educational Policy; and Finance. *Do you, your ASCSU standing committee and/or your campus senate have any concerns/items that you would like to bring to my attention at this time? I would especially like to hear about your campus feedback on the above Board meeting items.*

2, the ASCSU has weighed in on state legislative bills through prior resolutions including:

- [2023 LEGISLATIVE ADVOCACY POSITIONS OF THE ACADEMIC SENATE OF THE CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY \(ASCSU\)](#)
- [2022 LEGISLATIVE ADVOCACY POSITIONS OF THE ACADEMIC SENATE OF THE CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY \(ASCSU\)](#)

Do you, your ASCSU standing committee and/or your campus senate have any feedback regarding the [CSU State Legislative Update](#)? Do you have additional legislative bills that are of concern and/or of interest to you?

3, during the past month, the GI 2025 Symposium sponsored at San Diego State University and the Social Mobility Symposium sponsored at CSU San Marcos have highlighted the critical need to serve our students by facilitating graduation, closing the opportunity gap as well as enhancing economic and social mobility for student success.

What are you, your ASCSU standing committee and/or your campuses doing to address the Academic Planning and Black Student Success items discussed at the above Board meeting?

4, The next regular meeting of the CSU Board of Trustees will be on [11/7-8/2023](#). Some Board items that you, your ASCSU standing committee and/or your campus senate may wish to consider include the following:

Note: in parentheses, I merely suggest ASCSU committee(s) that may be interested in considering the Board information or action item given its committee charge.

Committee on Educational Policy

Implementation of AB 928 (AA, APEP?)

GI 2025 and Student Success (AA, JEDI?)

Joint Committee on Educational Policy and Finance

Chancellor's Strategic Workgroup on Financial Aid (AA, APEP, FA, FGA, JEDI?)

Committee on University and Faculty Personnel

Update on Civil Rights (Title IX and other Nondiscrimination) Programs and Services (FA, JEDI?)

Committee on Governmental Relations

State Legislative Update (FGA?)

Committee on Finance

Annual Systemwide Report on Hate Incidents on Campus (FA, JEDI?)

5, the ASCSU has expressed its appreciation/recognition of individuals for their leadership/service contributions to the ASCSU and/or CSU through prior commendation resolutions.

At the GI 2025 Symposium, we learned that one of our long-time MPPs will be retiring from the CSU. Perhaps the ASCSU may wish to offer him a resolution commending his contributions and service?

6, as I promised during my interview for CSU Faculty Trustee, I want to get to know each of you through your standing committees, during meal breaks, through campus visits, during system events, and much more.

Please consider the **Listen and Learn schedule** (see my earlier email with the attached excel sheet) and indicate one or more ways we might meet. I look forward to learning from you and your campus constituents. **Thank you** for your commitment to higher education and the CSU!

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