



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **More LBUSD Grads Pursue College With Help from LBCC, CSULB**

*Report shows improvement, though deep cuts in state funding may reverse progress.*

A progress report released today on a four-year-old, local initiative to prepare more youngsters for college success revealed encouraging results, though education officials cautioned that California's budget cuts threaten to curtail and reverse these gains.

Four years ago, leaders from the Long Beach Unified School District, Long Beach City College and California State University, Long Beach signed The Long Beach College Promise, committing the three institutions to providing local students with greater opportunities to complete their higher education.

“Against difficult odds, including hundreds of millions of dollars in state funding cuts to our three institutions, we see encouraging signs of success,” states the report signed by LBUSD Superintendent Christopher J. Steinhauser, LBCC Superintendent-President Eloy Ortiz Oakley and CSULB President F. King Alexander. “More high school graduates here are enrolling in college, and more of those students are prepared for rigorous college-level classes. As we have stated with increasing urgency in prior reports like these, however, California must find a way to stabilize its volatile funding for K-12 and higher education. Without such a basic commitment of resources from our state, the College Promise is in greater peril than ever. In fact, state cuts already are impacting students in significant ways, and yet further cuts to education loom.”

The progress report highlights key steps that the three institutions are taking to prepare more students for success in college and in high-demand, high-paying jobs. Included in these efforts is a commitment to cover the cost of first-semester fees for every local high school graduate who enrolls directly at LBCC after graduation. The LBCC Foundation has now established an endowment of more than \$6.5 million to pay the enrollment fees, and thousands of students already have taken advantage of this tuition-free first semester.

The College Promise also guarantees LBUSD graduates admission to CSULB with minimum requirements. Today's report shows that 729 LBUSD students entered CSULB as freshmen in 2011 – more students than ever before and a 40 percent increase from 2008 when the College Promise began.

(more)



Today's report from the three institutions also shows:

- Nearly three of four LBUSD graduates (74 percent) are pursuing post-secondary education within one year of graduation. Half of those students are enrolled at CSULB or LBCC.
- LBCC fall 2011 enrollment of LBUSD graduates increased to 1,675 despite state funding cuts that have curtailed course offerings at LBCC.
- LBUSD students' college readiness in English and math proficiency, as measured by the Early Assessment Program (EAP), improved even as participation rates increased significantly.
- While the number and proportion of CSULB freshmen from LBUSD has grown, the percentage requiring math and English remediation has decreased.
- LBCC students from LBUSD continue to be much more likely to persist in college. LBUSD students' persistence dramatically outpaces the persistence rate of students entering from other high schools.
- Since the establishment of the College Promise, CSULB transfer students from LBCC are retaining at a higher rate than nonlocal community college transfers admitted with more rigorous criteria.

Education leaders released the report during a news conference at Cabrillo High School in Long Beach. Officials at today's news conference also awarded 27 scholarships ranging from \$50 to \$250 to LBUSD eighth graders who have shown academic improvement.

The College Promise is an extension of the Long Beach Educational Partnership, which was created in 1994 and became a national model for its efforts to provide seamless education for Long Beach students from preschool to graduate school. The partnership also aligned academic standards, teaching methods and student assessment across institutions to improve student achievement and teacher quality.

View the full report on the College Promise at [www.longbeachcollegepromise.org](http://www.longbeachcollegepromise.org) .

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