

COVID-19 RECOVERY BLOCK GRANT

2023-24 Spending Guidelines Update

The 2023 enacted budget includes provisions to allow community college districts more flexibility in the use of COVID-19 recovery block grant, physical plant and instructional support, and retention and enrollment outreach funds. Each of these funding sources can now be used for any of the allowable purposes for all three programs.

If a district determines that funds originally provided for the COVID-19 recovery block grant, physical plant and instructional support, or retention and enrollment outreach are to be expended for one of the other programs, a transfer between program funds should be made in the total amount of previous or intended spending, beginning with expenditures made on or after July 1, 2022. In this way, expenditures can be recorded and attributed to the program with which they most align. For example, if a district has block grant funds remaining, they can transfer those funds for use for retention and enrollment efforts or for costs related to physical plant and instructional support.

2022-23 Total Allocation

\$650,000,000 (2022-23 one-time funds)

No changes have been made to the amount or allocations provided in 2022-23.

Revenue Recognition

Restricted; 8690 – Other State Revenue.

2022-23 Funding Formula

Allocation to districts were based on actual reported FTES in the second principal apportionment for the 2021-22 fiscal year.

Purpose of Funds

The block grant funds are intended to be used on activities that directly support community college students and mitigate learning losses related to the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic. Additional flexibility was added by the 2023 Budget Act so that COVID-19 recovery block grant funds may also be used for purposes of the physical plant and instructional support and retention and enrollment outreach programs.

Spending Guidelines

There is no legislative deadline to expend the block grant funds. The COVID-19 recovery block grant, and for any expenditures on or after July 1, 2022, from physical plant and instructional support and retention and enrollment outreach funds, can be expended for any of the following purposes:

- Support access to basic needs and mental health services for students impacted by COVID-19.

- Reengagement strategies for students who received an incomplete or failing grade in the spring 2022 due to COVID-19.
- Engagement strategies with high schools and local communities to restore broader access.
- Grants to faculty for development of online, accelerated learning modules to allow students who received an incomplete or failing grade in the spring 2022 term due to COVID-19 to make progress toward their degrees instead of retaking courses in the fall 2022 term.
- Professional development opportunities for faculty and student services professionals to continue educational instruction due to COVID-19, including supporting students impacted by learning loss and preparing and supporting faculty to develop online instructional capabilities in response to COVID-19.
- Investments in information technology infrastructure, facilitating students' access to technology to be able to access online coursework, and technology, software or other electronic instruments and materials for faculty to support courses that are difficult to teach online.
- Cleaning supplies and personal protective equipment.
- Discharge unpaid fees due or owed by a student to a community college in the district.

Other Considerations and Potential Uses

Districts have many options to use block grant funds on strategies that directly support community college students and mitigate disruptions to persistence. Below are other allowable uses that districts can also consider.

- **Increase online student service hours to evenings and weekends.** Increased availability and access to student supports on evenings and weekends, without the need to drive to campus, has been an effective strategy deployed by many districts in the last two years. Block grant funds can be used to maintain and expanded access to academic support services, including student counseling, tutoring and mental health services.
- **Help meet students' financial and basic needs.** The pandemic-era has reinforced the urgency to connect students to financial aid and basic needs supports. For students who have not completed the FAFSA or California Dream Act application (CADAA), these resources provide flexibility to directly support and connect student to all available resources. Further, expand eligibility criteria for CalFresh food assistance benefits enables more community college students to qualify. Colleges can align FAFSA/CADAA assistance with efforts to help more students apply for CalFresh. Coupled with campus

basic needs centers, these strategies provide yet another tool for holistically supporting students.

- **Professional development focused on culturally responsive campuses and classrooms.** The block grant allows colleges to invest in professional development to enhance teaching and student supports. Colleges can invest in practices that explore strategies and initiatives for incorporating students' cultural backgrounds and experiences, providing inclusive environments.
- **Provide direct emergency grants to students in need.** Like federal stimulus funds, block grant dollars may be used to provide emergency grants or learning tools (such as laptops) to students.

Reporting Requirements

Reports on Part-Time Faculty Health Insurance

As a condition of receiving these funds, districts are required to report to the Chancellor's Office metrics on their employer-sponsored health insurance for part-time faculty in 2024-25 (by March 1, 2026).

Report on Use of Funds

Districts will also be required to provide information on the expenditures of the allocated COVID-19 Recovery Block Grant funds to the Chancellor's Office by December 2023. However, there is no legislative deadline to expend the funds. The report will include a description of how funds were used for each of the allowable purposes, a description of how expenditures prioritized services for underrepresented students, and an explanation of the effectiveness of services or supports provided by the funds. Additional information on specific reporting requirements will be provided closer to the December 2023 due date.

Contact

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Additional Resources



[FS 22-10 – California Community College Covid-19 Recovery Block Grant](#)