

CIO/CSSO INVITATION LETTER

Dear Colleagues:

We are proud and excited to introduce a new statewide program, the Basic Skills Initiative (BSI), a partnership of the Academic Senate, Chief Instructional Officers, Chief Student Services Officers, and the System Office. Evolving from shared interests and concerns centered on the challenges of student success, BSI will work through professional organizations and the colleges to identify the unmet needs of students unprepared for college-level work and to coordinate and facilitate basic skills training and program development needs of colleges through research, peer consulting, and professional development. The goal of BSI is to transform developmental education across the curriculum to ensure that students possess the basic skills required for success in college and beyond. The BSI is funded largely through a one-time allocation of (re-directed) basic skills (FTES) funds for the current fiscal year, and the success of BSI may well determine whether or not the community colleges receive ongoing funding for basic skills.

As CIO's and CSSO's, we are charged with leading and supporting faculty and staff who face the challenge of students who desire success but lack the competency in basic skills to achieve it. In our leadership roles, we encourage and take actions that position our colleges to respond to the basic skills challenge with the best knowledge and tools available, using all resources available to us. Participation in the BSI is the best course of action for ensuring that we have the appropriate knowledge and tools and possibly the only course of action that ensures ongoing funding for basic skills. The program begins this spring with the roll out of a comprehensive review of the literature on effective practices in basic skills and a self-assessment tool, based on the review of the literature, which colleges will use to develop college-wide plans for basic skills. The plans will become one prerequisite to accessing future basic skills funding. The BSI is organizing a series of meetings to introduce the initiative and the activities and services offered through the initiative. We encourage you to participate in the meetings, sending teams of faculty and administrators who will learn about the research, review of the literature, and self-assessment protocol, as well as professional development opportunities organized through the BSI, and we look forward to working with you on this exciting initiative.



Randy Lawson, President
Chief Instructional Officers



Linda Lacy, President
Chief Student Services Officers