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Library Services Platform (LSP) Project

Background

The Library Services Platform (LSP) project is a statewide initiative that implements a unified resource management system across 110 participating California Community Colleges (CCC) libraries.

The platform promotes more equitable access to library resources, which furthers the California Community Colleges' *Vision for Success*. It has already provided substantially more equitable access to resources and materials for all 110 participating colleges—from the small, rural colleges like Barstow College, Lassen College and the College of the Siskiyous, to the larger more urban colleges such as East Los Angeles College and Pasadena City College.

Kicked-off in February 2019 with an unprecedented single-year cohort of 110 colleges that opted-in to the project, the colleges successfully transitioned all library operations to the shared platform in January 2020.

The LSP project has garnered widespread support throughout the community college system and was recently the recipient of the California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office's Technology Focus Award, which highlights projects that "solve significant problems to the benefit of students, staff and/or faculty."

The Importance of Centralized Support and Ongoing Funding for LSP

Prior to LSP's launch, colleges spent a combined $9 million on 14 disparate and decentralized library systems.

LSP's centralized funding model covers an ongoing governance structure to review and recommend policy, as well as:

- Vendor support
- Subscription costs
- System maintenance

Centralized support is critical for expanding resource sharing, streamlining workflows and sustaining collaboration amongst the institutions—all of which contribute to improving student success.

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The centralized model has been very successful within the California State University (CSU) and University of California (UC) systems. The CCC system should prioritize the same level of resources and support to ensure student success.

The Council of Chief Librarians, the LSP Governance Committee and stakeholder partners strongly advocate funding the project from the new budget category, "Streamlining Support and Technical Assistance for Community Colleges," as outlined in the 2020–21 Legislative Budget Trailer Bill.

LSP's centralized funding is also a much more effective and efficient use of state funds.

Furthermore, local funds that were previously budgeted for library platforms may now be utilized for a variety of support methodologies, that include:

- Additional database collections to support high-impact certificate programs
- The purchase of physical and electronic book collections to increase equitable student access to resources
- An increase of library operating hours to provide working students with easier access to tutoring and other student support programs

LSP's implementation costs (including training and support) and the first year's subscription for the library platform (Ex Libris Alma/Primo VE) were funded by a one-time apportionment.

The California Community Colleges Board of Governors supported ongoing funding for $4 million annually in each of their 2018–19 and 2019–20 budget requests, but ongoing funding for the platform has yet to be secured.

The ongoing annual cost for the systemwide LSP is $4 million. If funding is not secured, the project and platform oversight will cease to exist on June 30, 2020, which will force each college to contract individually with their LSP vendor.

Many colleges will be unable to afford the ongoing subscription and maintenance costs of the platform on their own and may revert to older, antiquated options, losing all of the valuable progress made by the project.

Additional impacts will include:

- Loss of economies of scale
- Creation of systemwide deficiencies
- Potential loss of greater resource sharing

Project Timeline and Milestones

- Kicked-off in 2019 with a cohort of 110 colleges
- All 110 colleges went live on the LSP in January 2020
- Ongoing funding must be in the 2020–21 budget
- Current LSP ongoing funding expires June 30, 2020

Key Project Benefits and Features

- Promotes more equitable access to library resources
- Furthers the California Community Colleges' *Vision for Success*
- Reduces direct costs to colleges
- Supports textbook affordability and distance education
- Increases library system efficiency and management
- Reduces local campus staff and IT department support requirements
- Supports new functionality of traditional library services tasks
- Improves delivery of professional development and training opportunities
- Improves workflow and reduces duplication amongst college collections
- Provides data and analytics that support program improvement
- Expanded technical assistance from colleagues and a central office