



Member, Board of Supervisors
District 6

City and County of San Francisco

JANE KIM

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*****PRESS RELEASE*****

Supervisor Kim Introduces “Free City” Proposal to Reclaim the Promise of Free Public Higher Education in San Francisco

San Francisco, CA – Supervisor Kim, working in strong partnership with a broad coalition of college stakeholders, union members, students, and community groups, introduced a proposal to make City College of San Francisco free by eliminating tuition fees for students who are San Francisco residents or who work at least half-time in San Francisco and by supporting the educational costs for enrolled low-income students who receive federal or state financial aid but cannot pay education-related expenses such as transportation and textbooks.

“San Francisco is one of the most expensive cities in the world – the cost of living has increased exponentially. When students have to make the choice between paying rent or paying tuition, buying groceries or buying textbooks, we have to act. Higher education isn’t a luxury – it’s a fundamental necessity if we want San Franciscans to be able to compete in the 21st century workplace and we have a plan that can fully fund this proposal to help over 20,000 students from all walks of life, of all ages, to pursue their dreams,” stated Supervisor Kim.

Current CCSF enrollment fees (“tuition”) for credit course are \$46/unit; students attending full-time for a year (2 semesters at 12 units per semester) pay \$1104 annually. But additional costs, not including room and board or childcare, can amount to over \$3000 a year: \$1700 for textbooks and supplies, \$1300 for transportation alone. For low-income students who can rely on little to no family contribution, those attendant costs can make higher educational opportunity an impossible dream.

“People talk about inequality in San Francisco, and a big part of it is educational inequality. This would be the most powerful tool in making strides toward greater opportunity for all,” said Vivek Narayan, a CCSF student serving on the college's Participatory Governance Council. Besides residents, he noted that workers displaced from San Francisco could benefit. “It's important for people who work in the city but no longer can afford to live here. They can come back and benefit from the education and training that City College offers.”

“Our students are the lifeblood of San Francisco, and yet the city is going through an affordability crisis that pushes out those who need City College the most,” said Tim Killikelly, AFT 2121 president and CCSF instructor. We want to make it easier for those who live and work in the city to get access to affordable, quality education. This proposal gives San Francisco the City College it deserves.”



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Supervisor Norman Yee explained, "When I attended City College, it was free. When I taught at City College, it was affordable. However, over the past decades, the College has become less accessible to those who need it most. City College opens the door to economic stability and I want to ensure that all students are afforded the same opportunity to pursue an education, including working adults and parents."

Frequently Asked Questions

What is the Free City College Proposal?

Reclaiming the promise of free public higher education and making it a reality in San Francisco.

How would this proposal operate?

For all students who live or work at least half-time in the city and county of San Francisco:

- Eliminate enrollment fees for all San Francisco residents and workers who work at least half-time in SF &
- For students whose fees are already covered by financial aid, they will be eligible for up to \$1,000 in grants for educational expenses such as textbooks, transportation, and childcare.
- *International students (such as those on F-1 Visas) and out-of-state students living at SF zip codes pay Non-California Resident Fees (\$211/unit) and would not qualify for the Free City program.*

What are the enrollment fees currently?

Current CA Community College enrollment fees ("tuition") for Credit courses are \$46/unit; students attending full-time for a year (two semesters at 12 units per semester) pay \$1104 annually.

CCSF enrollment currently also includes a \$17 Health Fee (\$34 per year) and an optional Student Activities Fee (\$5/semester, \$10/year). These fees could be covered in this proposal as eligible uses for the up to \$1000 in educational support funds for low-income students whose enrollment fees are covered by alternative federal and/or state financial aid.

Who goes to City College?

In academic year 2014-2015, CCSF had a student body that was comprised of 15.5% Latino, 11.1% Asian, 10.5% African American, 10.5% Pacific Islander, 7.6% Filipino, 4.4% American Indian/Alaskan Native, 3.3% White, with 4.7% being veterans and majority identifying as female; and diverse range of ages from new high school graduates at 17-19 and individuals over 50 being two of the highest demographic groups.

CCSF serves a diverse range of students, including but not limited to workers in need of training and re-training, low-income and immigrant communities, veterans and the disabled, lifelong learners, first-generational college attendees, full-and part-time students in need of second and third chances, as well as students transferring to four-year institutions. About 80% of CCSF students (including noncredit students) have San Francisco zip codes.



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Why should we support students that are already receiving federal or state financial aid? Why should we help non-resident, half-time San Francisco workers?

Some proposed plans in other states and cities pay only for tuition and fees that federal and state grant aid fails to cover. These programs help middle-income families but neglect additional support for low-income students who often have zero family contribution and are working part-time to pay for tuition and do not have the ability to pay any additional education-related costs such as transportation, childcare, purchasing textbooks and supplies.

CCSF's 2015-16 Student Expense Budget or Cost of Attendance report found that students spend approximately \$3,033 per year for education-related costs, not including childcare or room and board: \$1700 for books and supplies, \$1300 for transportation, TBD for childcare. For these low-income students, educational support up to \$1000 per year would eliminate the need for them to choose between buying food and buying textbooks, between paying rent and paying transit and childcare costs to allow them to physically reach and attend classes.

Many of our low-income communities have been decimated by the exploding cost of living and housing in San Francisco – they have been displaced out of San Francisco but they still commute to work here and attend CCSF as one of the last affordable opportunities to attain higher education or finish a degree or obtain needed certification for upwards job mobility and opportunities.

When would this proposal be effective?

The resolution would ideally be implemented no later than Fall 2017 enrollment but we are contemplating a phased-in pilot program to be implemented for Fall 2016 enrollment.

How much would this proposal cost? How would we pay for it?

It is contingent upon new General Fund dollars being generated at a level sufficient to cover the estimated \$12.8 million cost, with sources such as the City's transfer tax being priority sources of funding.

Supervisor Kim is proposing placing on the November ballot a measure entitled the "Mansion Tax" that will increase the transfer tax in San Francisco by one-quarter of one percent for all property sales, commercial or residential, valued at \$5M+ and creating an entirely new bracket of 3% for property sales valued at \$25M+. This is projected to generate approximately \$29 million annually in new General Fund dollars.