April 25, 2019

Chancellor Eloy Oakley
California Community Colleges
1102 Q Street
Sacramento, CA 95811

Subject: Concerns regarding CCCCQ planning and reporting requirements

Dear Chancellor Oakley:

On behalf of community college professionals in research, planning, and institutional effectiveness, we write to express a concern regarding the reporting and goal-setting requirements related to the Student Equity and Achievement Plan and the Vision for Success. While colleges throughout the state are making good faith efforts to meet all the reporting requirements, the inability to locally validate CCCCQ data and the ongoing iterations of new data releases is threatening to undermine the integrity of college planning.

We applaud and support the intent of both state initiatives and see the potential in these policies to improve outcomes for all community college students. The responsiveness to questions from the field by CCCCQ staff has been helpful and provided much needed clarity on specific aspects of these planning and reporting mandates. Colleges would be experiencing deeper struggles absent this assistance provided by the CCCCQ staff.

The challenge lies in the state requirement to use newly provided data tools to complete these plans. The data in these tools does not always align with the data colleges have relied on for years to support their planning initiatives. Understandably, college leaders are asking researchers and planners which data tell the true story. With little time to reconcile the data variances and the ongoing updates of the CCCCQ data, there is growing confusion at many colleges. That confusion is impeding planning processes and threatening to turn a meaningful and thoughtful practice into a perfunctory exercise.

We would like to acknowledge the resolution recently adopted by the State Academic Senate, Improve Quality and Integrity of California Community Colleges System Data (Resolution 7.01 S19), which articulates concerns regarding data integrity. Likewise, the Open Letter from the Chief Student Services Officers Association distributed on March 27, 2019 identifies challenges with the quality of equity data and methodologies provided by the CCCCQ. Concerns have also been raised about data integrity and the need for more analysis regarding the implementation of the Student Centered Funding Formula, which now incorporates data on student equity and outcomes in the funding
calculations. The RP Group shares all these concerns and welcomes opportunities to partner with ASCCC, the Chancellor's Office, and other organizations to find solutions.

The primary commitment of the RP Group - indeed our very mission - is to support all California Community Colleges in implementing evidence-based practices that support ongoing and equitable student success. We fulfill this mission by providing faculty, staff, and administrators with accurate and actionable evidence that allow them to identify practices and policies to better serve our students. When the accuracy of data required for use in college planning is brought into question, we feel we have an implicit obligation to voice those concerns and an obligation to offer our assistance to help resolve them.

We ask that the state Chancellor's Office extend an invitation to the RP Group to appoint research and planning representatives to serve in an advisory capacity in future efforts related to improving the accuracy and appropriate use of the data being used in these very critical initiatives, namely:

- The Vision for Success
- The Student Equity and Achievement Program
- The Student-Centered Funding Formula
- The Student Success Metrics

We thank you for your consideration of this request.

Respectfully,

The RP Group Board
Gregory M. Stoup, President