

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

GOVERNOR PHIL MURPHY

GOVERNOR MURPHY DETAILS PLANS FOR TUITION-FREE COMMUNITY COLLEGE IN NEW JERSEY

Investment Will Make Higher Education More Attainable and Affordable

Trenton- Recognizing that building a world-class education system is a critical investment in New Jersey's future, Governor Phil Murphy today further outlined his plan for tuition-free community college during a roundtable discussion at Mercer County Community College. The proposed \$50 million in the Fiscal Year 2019 budget is the first year of a multi-year phase-in of tuition-free community college, an initiative the Governor has championed to better support the aspirations of New Jersey's students and the demands of the Garden State economy.

"For too long, the goal of attending college and getting a good job has been out of reach for many of our state's young people and families," Governor Murphy said. "All too often, those that do attend are saddled with debt that affects their ability to prosper after graduation, or prospective students leave the state to pursue a less expensive education elsewhere. This plan will help make college a reality for many in our state, a change that will help our best and brightest stay in New Jersey, get a good education, and continue to contribute to our economic future."

Overall, Governor Murphy's proposed Fiscal Year 2019 allocates \$2.4 billion in total appropriations for higher education, including funding for facilities and capital and represents an overall increase of \$69.9 million over last year's budget. Direct aid to all colleges and universities, including community colleges, is up by just over \$28 million.

Governor Murphy's plan to make community college more attainable includes:

\$45 Million – Community College Opportunity Grants (CCOGs):

CCOGs will be "last-dollar" grants that will be used to cover any community college tuition and fees that are not already paid for by Pell Grants, Tuition Aid Grant (TAG) Awards, or other funding sources as determined by The Office of the Secretary of Higher Education (OSHE) and the Higher Education Student Assistance Authority (HESAA).

During the first year, grants will be limited to those whose average family income is below \$45,000, including students graduating high-school and adults with some college credit but no degree.

Both part-time and full-time students will be eligible for CCOGs. HESAA estimates that an additional 15,000 students will be able to attend tuition-free starting in January 2019.

Community college in New Jersey is already tuition- and fee-free for 29,600 students, or 20% of New Jersey's 150,000 county college students, principally due to Pell grants and TAG.

\$5 Million – Planning Grants:

Planning Grants funding will assist all 19 community colleges with building capacity and improving completion rates as they adapt for increased enrollments.

By responsibly phasing-in Tuition Free Community College, OSHE and HESAA will have an opportunity to determine the best approach for implementing the program in future years to best support the needs of students, colleges, and the State.

\$8.5 Million -TAG and EOF Funding Expansion:

Additionally, Governor Murphy's Fiscal Year 2019 budget increases funding to strengthen student assistance for Tuition Aid Grants (TAG) and the Educational Opportunity Fund (EOF) by \$7 million and \$1.5 million, respectively.

TAG assists more than 64,000 New Jersey students annually. Currently, 41 colleges and universities participate in EOF, with the program awarding 18,000 opportunity grants. The additional funding for both programs will provide for approximately 3,500 new TAG awards and better enable EOF to support low-income students at New Jersey schools.

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