

**The CSU's MANDATORY EARLY START PROGRAM
AND WHAT YOU CAN DO ABOUT IT**
September 2010

What is the Mandatory Early Start Program (ESP)?

In March 2010, The CSU Board of Trustees voted that all 23 campuses must create and implement new programs in remedial English and Math and that high school students admitted to the CSU who test non-proficient in these subjects will be required to enroll in these new programs in the summer prior to entering in the fall. Since almost 60% of Cal State students system wide test remedial in one or both subjects (on some campuses 89% of entering students) this new requirement will affect the majority of incoming Cal State students. The Mandatory Early Start Program will be launched in summer 2012, with full implementation in summer 2014.

We oppose an unproven mandatory summer Early Start Program replacing proven remedial/developmental programs that have helped thousands of students progress and prosper in the CSU. Some of the pilot programs and models for Early Start emphasize low cost methods such as online instruction and routing the students to community college. But the evidence is already in that the majority of students routed to community colleges do not ever make it back to the CSU and that online remedial math courses result in reduced passage rates. Here's how Forbes describes what happened at CSU Bakersfield last year:

Faced with a drastic decline in state funding, administrators at the California State University's Bakersfield campus decided to cut costs by replacing all the sections of the remedial mathematics course in the fall of 2009 with an online computer program overseen by a single instructor. Unfortunately substituting the Internet for personal contact with a classroom teacher proved disastrous, especially for the 700-plus ill-prepared undergraduates who needed intensive work to bring their math skills to a college level. When these students took their final exams only about 40% passed, compared with a 75% success rate the prior year. (Forbes 8-11-10)

As concerned faculty and staff, we cannot allow this kind of treatment of our students.

What you can do:

1. Contact faculty and staff at your campus who are involved in existing remedial/development programs. Set up email exchanges and organize face-to-face meetings on your campus.
2. Find out who the administrators, faculty, and staff are on your campus Early Start planning group, and request information from them about their plans for designing an Early Start Program. Discuss the Access and Equity Group's Guidelines with them (see other side), and ask for their response to each one.
3. Join the statewide "access and equity" Google group listserv. The purpose of this Google group listserv is for concerned faculty, staff, and students to share information about the impact on access and equity of the CSU administration's mandated Early Start Program. The names of the people on the listserv are not made public except to the list manager, Blanca Castañeda. To join, contact Blanca at bcastaneda@calfac.org. On the listserv, you can share your information about campus plans, and your ideas about the best kind of advocacy campaign to protect our students. Or you can send information directly to Dr. Kimberly King at Cal State LA (profkimberly@yahoo.com).

**SEE THE OTHER SIDE OF THIS FACT SHEET FOR OUR PROPOSED GUIDELINES AND MORE
INFORMATION ABOUT MANDATORY EARLY START**

GUIDELINES FOR MANDATORY EARLY START PROGRAM CAMPUS PLANS

The CSU Chancellor's Executive Order 1048 requires each campus to design a plan for the Mandatory Early Start Program (MESP) and submit that plan to the Chancellor's Office by November 19, 2010. As the campuses begin to develop these plans, the Access & Equity Group, with over two hundred CSU faculty and staff representing all twenty-three campuses, has developed a set of guidelines for campus Early Start plans.

GUIDELINES FOR EARLY START PROGRAMS

1. Exemptions must be made broadly available to students who have work or family responsibilities during the summer or have health or transportation difficulties.
2. Early Start Programs, including textbooks, should be provided at no cost to the students.
3. Any Early Start programs should be designed and implemented primarily by CSU faculty and staff knowledgeable about remedial education and educationally disadvantaged students.
4. Any Early Start programs must be designed and structured not to interfere with existing successful developmental programs in the CSU, such as Summer Bridge and stretch courses.
5. Students with need for developmental courses benefit from one-on-one and small group interaction with well-trained and experienced faculty and staff. Any online component must be supplemental to significant instruction and support by faculty and staff.
6. Becoming integrated and familiar with a college campus community and its resources is a significant factor in the success of matriculating students; therefore the best practice is that the ESP take place on a Cal State campus with that campus's staff and faculty, particularly those who have expertise and experience in remedial education.
7. Campuses with higher rates of remedial students must receive commensurate funding so that the cost of early start programs is not a financial burden that drains their resources.

Background:

The Access and Equity Group opposes the CSU's new "Mandatory Early Start Program" for the following reasons:

- * The CSU already has successful remediation programs that are supported by experts in the field. There is no evidence that a mandatory summer program will be effective in bringing students to proficiency, whereas current academic year programs result in an 85% student success rate.
- * Mandatory Early Start poses a barrier to thousands of students who have earned a place at the CSU through their academic achievements by barring these students from enrollment if they are unable to attend the mandatory summer program.
- * This barrier to educational opportunity will disproportionately affect students from economically disadvantaged communities, who are most likely to test remedial, especially impacting many communities of color. These students have already been cheated by the state's underfunding of their K-12 education; yet, against the odds, they earned a place at the university—only to face this additional requirement. As such, it poses a threat to important civil rights.

While the Access and Equity Group continues to oppose mandatory early start, and we urge that the decision be reversed, we submit the guidelines for the design and implementation of Early Start Programs in order to minimize the negative effects on educational access, quality, and equity.

SEE OVER FOR MORE INFORMATION ABOUT MANDATORY EARLY START