

DAN LEAHY
FOR STATE ASSEMBLY

"A new voice, a better choice."

Higher Education

OVERVIEW

Ensure Affordability of a College Education

The jobs of today and tomorrow require that we have a highly skilled and educated workforce. We must ensure that we provide young people with the opportunity to seek a college education.

THE PROBLEM

College Costs Are Out of Control

Tuition has risen by nearly double digits every year since the early 90's and outpacing inflation at alarming rates. Textbooks now account for almost a third of costs to get a college education. Students at the CSU and UC systems now pay more in "mandatory fees" than actual tuition.

Responding to the Needs of the Workforce

We need to allow our college better flexibility to change curriculum to meet the changing needs of our workforce. By consistently updating our programs graduates will be better prepared to enter the workforce and succeed.

MY PLAN

Affordable Higher Education

Tuition and fees at the CSU and UC's have increased to the breaking point for many students. I would introduce legislation that would lower tuition and fees immediately by 15%, tie increases in tuition and fees to changes in personal income, and any increase in student fess would have to be approved by the student body.

Cal Grant Flexibility

I would expand the amount of Cal Grants offered to students. By offering more need and merit based awards we can increase the amount of students that can attend college. I would also allow Cal-Grants to be used in lieu of tuition waivers, which would ease the burden of expenses which occur early in the semester.

Everyone Can Go to College Plan

I believe everyone who wants to go to college should be able to, regardless of financial circumstance. Every student without a college degree would qualify for a loan to pay their full tuition and instructional material costs. That loan would be forgiven if they earn an Associates degree or certificate or transfer to a four-year institution within six-years.

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Statewide Textbook Strategy

Students need relief from high textbook prices. I would ask the UC, CSU and CCC systems coordinate and develop a strategy to lower textbook costs to students. The State should take a strong position against unfair practices that increase expenses for students unnecessarily.

Recruiting Quality Teachers for Our Students

Recruiting and retaining quality teachers is a must if we want to remain competitive. I would increase the number of students that can qualify for Cal Grant T, which provides financial aid to future teachers. I would also expand the Assumption Program for Loans for Education (APLE) which would allow more teachers to pay off their student loans while teach in an underserved school. I would also create a program that would award grants to students in teaching programs to help pay for living expenses while in school and serving as a student teacher. It is often impossible to do both and work at the same time, this would allow more students to finish the program.

Expanding Career Technical Education

Funding for Career Technical Education (CTE) has lagged behind in the past 20 years. To give students more opportunities in the job market we need to increase the amount of programs offered in High School and Community Colleges. Students who participate in CTE programs graduate with better job prospects than student with just a high school diploma. We should increase funding to schools so they can offer more programs to students.