

To: ASI Board of Directors
From: **Caroline Tah-Espens, CSSA Liaison**
Subject: Advisor Reports

Spring 2025 Office Hours:

Monday: 10 am -3 pm

Tuesday: 1:30pm – 4:30 pm

Wednesday: 10 am – 11:30 am

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California State Student Association (CSSA) Plenary

November CSSA Plenary

The November CSSA Plenary was held virtually on November 8, 2025. The attendees were our ASI President Aranjoy Kaur and Executive Vice Presidents Richard Angulo and myself as CSSA Liaison. It was a one-day event that consisted of five committee meeting and Board of Directors.

Systemwide Affairs Committee

The consent agenda, including the previous minutes, was approved. Reports were presented by Vice President of Systemwide Affairs Katie Karroum and Assistant Director of Systemwide Affairs Genesis Jara-Gutierrez. The committee provided feedback on the CSU AI initiative white paper where they outline CSU students concerns about the rollout of the CSU Artificial Intelligence Initiative, emphasizing the access to AI tools like ChatGPT Edu has outpaced student awareness, training, and equitable implementation. Students call for consistent academic policies, stronger privacy and data-governance protections, environmental accountability, and clearer ethical safeguards related to mental health and misuse. The urge the CSU to adopt transparent student-centered governance to ensure the initiative advances equity, trust and responsible innovation.

Legislative Affairs Committee

The consent agenda was approved. Reports were presented by Vice President of Legislative Affairs Derrick Herrera and Director of Government and Advocacy Mary Washington. The committee reviewed an informational item concerning the CSSA Campus Advocacy Walkthrough, a preparatory guide for the upcoming California Higher Education Student Summit (CHESS). The presentation outlined steps for effective campus advocacy and identified legislators that campuses are encouraged to engage with to discuss both campus-specific and CSSA-wide priorities. Emphasis was placed on the importance of campuses proactively building relationships with their respective legislators. An update was also provided on Civic Points, highlighting the current standings across campuses.

Board of Directors

The consent agenda was approved, and reports were presented by both executive officers and staff. The board approved an action item regarding and CSSA white paper guiding themes on the CSU AI initiative. The White Paper, states that students across the CSU system believe the rollout of the AI initiative lacks equity, consistency, adequate student input, leading to confusion, mistrust and uneven access. They express major concerns about academic integrity polices data privacy environmental impacts, mental-health risk, and unclear governance structures surrounding AI adoption. Overall, students urge the CSU to prioritize transparency, ethical safeguards,

sustainability and genuine shared governance to ensure AI enhances rather than harms the educational experience.

The board discussed their desired qualities and skills of the 2026-2028 Student Trustee nominees. The concludes the November plenary. The following with take place on January 24-25, 2026 in-person at Sonoma State.

January CSSA Plenary

The January CSSA Plenary was held in person at Sonoma State on January 24-25, 2026. The attendees were our ASI President Aranjot Kaur and Executive Vice Presidents Richard Angulo and myself as CSSA Liaison. It was a two-day event that consisted of five committees and the Board of Directors meeting

Systemwide Affairs Committee

The consent agenda, including the previous minutes, was approved. Reports were presented by Vice President of Systemwide Affairs Katie Karroum and Assistant Director of Systemwide Affairs Genesis Jara-Gutierrez.

The committee discussed a resolution advocating for reforms to non-residential tuition fees, proposed by Member Danielle Vu from Fresno State. The resolution focuses on making tuition increases for international students more sustainable and examines how such changes could help increase enrollment of international and out-of-state students. It was also noted that, over the past few years, there has been a decline in international student enrollment across the CSU system.

Legislative Affairs Committee

The consent agenda was approved. Reports were presented by Vice President of Legislative Affairs Nikki Majidi and Director of Government and Advocacy Mary Washington.

The Chancellor's Office presented an overview of the CSU state budget, led by Mark Martin, Assistant Vice Chancellor for Budget Planning and Advocacy. The proposed 2026–27 budget includes \$5.6 billion in General Fund support for the CSU, reflecting nearly a 53% increase since 2018–19. This funding fully meets the final year of the multi-year compact and provides partial funding for a previously scheduled compact payment. The budget also maintains deferrals of certain compact payments and extends repayment timelines for prior funding reductions, supported by cash flow loan authority.

While the proposal increases funding for higher education and health services, it reduces allocations for housing and homelessness programs. Additionally, Cal Grant costs have grown significantly due to rising tuition across campuses and are expected to be a major topic of discussion this year. Budget advocacy efforts will focus on preserving the proposed funding levels and preventing legislative cuts to the CSU budget.

The committee reviewed an informational item concerning the CSSA Campus Advocacy Walkthrough, a preparatory guide for the upcoming California Higher Education Student Summit (CHESS). The presentation outlined steps for effective campus advocacy and identified legislators that campuses are encouraged to engage with to discuss both campus-specific and CSSA-wide priorities.

Board of Directors

The consent agenda was approved, and reports were presented by both executive officers and staff.

The Deputy Vice Chancellor Perez and Vice Chancellor Saks presented to the Board the CSU Strategic Plan, CSU Forward. This is the first systemwide strategic plan in over a decade, adopted in 225 to guide the system through rapid change in higher education, workforce demands and technology. This was developed through an extensive and collaborative process involving nearly 10,000 stakeholder the plan outlines a three-year vision focused on access, affordability innovation and statewide impact.

The plan is built around four key objectives: strengthening the CSU's role as an engine of economic mobility, ensuring sustainable affordability for students, becoming an employer of choice in public higher education, and maximizing the CSU's statewide impact. CSU Forward aligns with other major system initiatives to ensure coordinated progress toward improving student success, workforce readiness, and California's economic vitality.

In New Business Chair Villarreal will introduce to the Board the Internal Affairs Committee Vice Chair, Katelyn Gambarin to provide a brief overview of the completed Elected Officer Review. And there was a brief overview of CSSA Plenary Hosting information changes. This concludes the January Plenary. The following will take place virtually On February 21, 2026.

Lobby Corps

Lobby Corps recently hosted Isa Jimenez, a former ASI SSIS Director who currently serves as a Legislative Assistant at the Capitol. She presented on the dos and don'ts of advocacy and shared guidance on how Lobby Corps members will be approaching advocacy at the Capitol as CHESS in the near future.

The next Lobby Corps meeting will be held on February 10, 2025, during which we will be discussing legislation.

City Ambassadors

City Ambassadors are dedicated to advocating on behalf of students, raising awareness about issues affecting higher education, and supporting voter registration efforts at a local level.

Last semester, City Ambassadors hosted several guest speakers, including city council members, and conducted trainings on topics such as immigration rights and local government advocacy. This semester city ambassadors will be focused on voter registration and prop 50.

Office of Governmental Affairs (OGA)

My duties in the OGA office have been daily task that continue to support and supplement the work for the ASI Board of Directors. My task includes attending CSSA plenary, creating and distributing CSSA plenary reports as well as attending Lobby Corps and City Ambassadors.

Events and Calendar Items

- October 12-Working Board
- October 14-Lobby Corps
- October 16-City Ambassadors
- October 22- Meeting with Peak Adventures
- October 22- Board Meeting
- October 29- Working Meeting
- **November 5- OGA presentation**
- **November 6- City Ambassadors**
- **November 11-15 National Student Vote Summit**
- **November 19 Board Meeting**
- **December 3- CHESS meeting**
- **December 10- End of the Year Lunch**
- **January 24-25- CSSA Plenary**
- **January 26- Spring Semester Starts**
- **January 27- Lobby Corps**
- **January 28- Working Board**
- **January 29- City Ambassadors**

Announcements

- Lobby Corps will be meeting Tuesday February 10, 2026 from 4:30pm -5:30pm
- City Ambassadors will be meeting Thursday February 12, 2026 from 4:30pm -5:30pm
- CHESS application is OPEN, the deadline to apply is February 20, 2026.

If there are any questions, comments or concerns, please reach out to the CSSA Liaison, Caroline Tah-Espens at asicssarep@csus.edu and I will get back to you with the appropriate response as soon as possible. Thank you.