

To: ASI Board of Directors
From: Caroline Tah-Espens
Subject: January 2026 CSSA Plenary Notes

Fall 2025 Office Hours:
Monday: 10 am – 3 pm,
Tuesday: 1:30pm -4:30pm
Wednesdays: 12pm-2pm

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January California State Student Association

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 2025 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 stakeholders. 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.

If there are any questions regarding any of the items in which I discussed in my report please reach out to the CSSA Liaison, Caroline Tah-Espens at asicssarep@csus.edu and I will get back to you as soon as possible. Thank you.