California Community Colleges

TO: Chief Executive Officers
Chief Instructional Officers
Chief Business Officers
Career Technical Education Deans
Regional Consortia Chairs
Regional Consortia Fiscal Agents

FROM: Anthony Cordova, Vice Chancellor of Workforce and Economic Development

RE: Strong Workforce Program Local and Regional Plan Closure Requirements

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This memo serves as notification about the Chancellor's Office requirement for Strong Workforce Program (SWP) local and regional project plans to be closed in the NOVA system beginning with the 2021-22 funding year. It is important plans are closed in a timely manner to ensure the available funding to invest in projects is accurate. Timely closure of plans supports improved fiscal management and accountability of SWP funding at all levels: local, regional, and statewide. For certified plans, the NOVA Close Plan feature must be used to indicate to the Chancellor's Office the project has completed or will no longer be executed. NOVA users are reminded about the importance of keeping those with the Certifying Authority role accurate in the system. If a college, district, or region's Certifying Authority contact changes, the NOVA Helpdesk and Chancellor's Office Regional Monitor need to be notified.

Districts and regions should also use the Close Plan feature in the following scenarios:

1. The project has completed, and the budget is fully spent.

2. The project was executed for the planned expenditure timeline but will end with an unspent balance.

3. The plan was certified, but the project was never started, and the college, district, or region desires to free up the allocated funds for use in another project.

4. The plan was started and executed for a period of time. However, the college, district, or region wishes to end the plan early, neither completing the planned duration nor expending all funds.

In all cases, the close plan process includes these steps:

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Step 1: Navigate to the preview for the certified plan and click on the [Close Plan] button to the right of the [Decertify] button.

Step 2: Read the guidance and complete the Close Plan modal required questions.

Closure Type: For projects that did not start or did not achieve their goals, select "Plan Not Completed." For those that achieved their goals, choose "Plan Completed."

Funds Expended: If all the money has been spent, choose "Funds have been fully expended". If money remains, or was never spent at all, choose "Funds have not been fully expended" .

Funds Remaining: (only required if budget remains): If budget remains, explain what will be done with the unspent funds.

Outcome Summary: Provide a summary of the outcomes of the project or enter "Project not started" if the project was not started and there were no expenditures.

Actual Plan End Date: Select the actual end date of the project. The date you select will dictate how many quarters of fiscal reporting will be required. The NOVA system calculates valid dates based on the starting year of the plan and any fiscal reporting that may have already been completed.

If the project was never started and it is being closed to free up funds, select the earliest date NOVA suggests. This will require the least amount of $0 fiscal reporting to be completed. At the very minimum, one year of fiscal reporting will be required to close your project since reporting is cumulative.

Step 3: Submit your Close Plan request

Upon submit, NOVA will notify the certifying authority and display to you a detailed summary of the project at the time of closure submission. The system will alert you to any outstanding reporting that is required for the closure request to be approved and show expenditures and any remaining budget. If reporting is incomplete, you must first complete and certify the reports before the certifying authority can approve your closure request.

Step 4: Approval

Once fiscal reporting is complete, the certifying authority will be able to approve your closure request. Once approved, one of the following will happen:

1. If you spent all of your budget, the project status will be set to Closed.

2. If you spent some of your budget, but not all, the allocation total will be adjusted to equal your certified expenditures total, and any remaining funds will be unencumbered and available for other projects. The project status will be set to Closed.

3. If you spent none of your budget and reported $0 expenditures, the allocation will be adjusted to $0 and all of the remaining funds will be unencumbered and available for other projects. The project status will be set to Closed.

If your closure request is rejected, NOVA will send an e-mail from the certifying authority that explains why. Your plan will be returned to Certified status and any budget you intended to free up will remain encumbered. You may resubmit your closure request after addressing any recommendations from the certifying authority and the process will begin again.

If the certifying authority has not addressed your request as quickly as you would like, you may send them a reminder through NOVA by clicking the Send Reminder button on the preview page. This will generate an email and in-app notification to the certifying authority, but if the original request was missed, you may want to contact them another way to ensure your request is addressed.

It is very important that plans are closed to ensure the available funds to invest in projects are accurate. Always close plans when appropriate and follow up with certifying authorities if they have not addressed plan closure requests promptly. Plans that should be closed and remain in a certified state could be encumbering much needed funds.

Encumbered Funds Examples

Example 1 - Project Closure for Fully Spent Funds

Plan Status	Budgeted Funds	NOVA Encumbered Funds
Closure Requested	$150	$150
Closed (example 1)	$150 (entire budget expended)	$150 ($0 released)
Closed (example 2)	$150 (only $100 expended)	$100 ($50 released)

Example 2 - Increased Budget

Plan Status	Budgeted Funds	NOVA Encumbered Funds
Draft	$100	$0
Submitted	$100	$0
Certified	$100	$100
Edited	$150	$100
Edits Submitted	$150	$100
Certified (second)	$150	$150

Example 3 - Decreased Budget

Plan Status	Budgeted Funds	NOVA Encumbered Funds
Draft	$100	$0
Submitted	$100	$0
Certified	$100	$100
Edited	$50	$100
Edits Submitted	$50	$100
Certified (second)	$50	$50 ($50 released)

cc: LaCandice Ochoa, Dean of Workforce and Economic Development

Sonya Christian, Chancellor

Chris Ferguson, Executive Vice Chancellor of Finance and Strategic Initiatives