These are schizophrenic times for Californians who toil in the educational vineyards and even more so for our students and their families. On the one hand, the future of the state -- economically, politically, and socially -- depends on our educational system to prepare more students and at more proficient levels for higher education and the workforce. On the other hand, the state’s fiscal constraints have the potential to deter the hopes, aspirations, and dreams of our students from being admitted to, and affording to enroll in, our higher educational institutions. And…you -- the counselors, teachers, and administrators in our secondary schools -- function every day at that nexus between these hopes and dreams of your students and the realities of the current situation in California with respect to higher education. As such, you hold the key to both the future of your students and the state. How’s that for pressure?

Let me take a moment to explain my comments: In 2005, the Public Policy Institute of California published a report entitled California 2025: It’s Your Choice. This report documented the gap between the future needs of the state for an educated workforce and the projections of the educational attainment levels of that future workforce based on current outcomes of our educational system.

In summarizing this disconnect, the Institute stated:

…employment projections suggest that the share of workers with a college degree would need to increase from 30 percent in 2000 to 39 percent in 2020…However, the share of the population that is likely to earn a Bachelor’s Degree will increase from 28 percent in 2000 to 33 percent in 2020. That will be far from enough to meet the projected employment demand for college education of 39 percent in 2020.
And that gap is only going to grow wider by 2025 -- a time that is only 14 years away. Put in different terms, the students who entered second grade this year ought to be in the college graduation class of 2025 and entering the workforce that year.

Recently, PPIC quantified and simplified its projections. Put concisely, California will need one million more workers who have earned at least a Bachelor’s Degree in order to sustain our economy in 2025. Let me repeat: one million MORE Californians with the skills, knowledge, and competencies that result from earning a baccalaureate-degree than we have today in just 14 years. I should note that other estimates suggest that two million is probably a better number if needs for workers with specialized occupational licenses, certificates, and degrees are included.

The other side of this public policy schizophrenia in California is that -- despite this compelling state and individual need -- access to higher educational opportunities has been jeopardized. While California has a Master Plan for Higher Education that is the envy of, and model for, the world, the State has not provided sufficient resources for several years to honor its commitments with regard to our higher educational systems. This year alone, each of the conveners of this conference -- the California State University and the University of California -- is absorbing a 650 million dollar reduction in state appropriations to its budgets that may only grow larger in January if state revenues do not meet projections. And, this year’s reductions are on top of significant decreases over the last several years. This lack of resources from the State to support higher education has resulted in:

- over-enrollment of all three public higher education systems in terms of the State resources provided for each full-time student;
• enrollments reductions over the last couple of years in our public universities;
• increases in enrollment pressures on the community colleges because of the reduction in enrollment in the public universities – an example of the interconnectedness between the systems. And, the community colleges are already the most severely over-enrolled system in the state but they are open-access institutions that, by law, must enroll any student who is 18 years old; and,
• large and continuous increases in student fees at the public universities.

Clearly, we are currently in a counter-intuitive situation: In effect, the State and its educational system as a whole are sending contradictory and confusing messages to students -- our future workforce -- and to their families. On the one hand, you, as elementary and secondary school educators, are supporting more students to prepare for college; on the other hand, fewer college applicants are being offered admissions in our public universities, the number of community colleges courses are being reduced, and less State funds are available to finance higher education.

However dysfunctional the public policy situation is in this state, strong rays of sunshine do exist, particularly to assist you who operate at this critical junction between secondary and higher education. Let me cite a few examples:

• Considerably more students are taking deliberate steps to realize their higher educational goals. Both ACT and the College Board report that increasing numbers of Californians are taking the requisite college admissions tests. Moreover, in comparison to 1997 when far fewer students took these tests, the aggregate scores for California students have remained constant. Surveys conducted in conjunction with these tests indicate that increasing numbers of our students are seeking to obtain
Bachelor’s and advanced degrees that are crucial for their futures as well as our state’s.

- Unprecedented collaboration is occurring among our higher educational systems in this state, including the independent colleges and universities:
  - In fact, your attendance today at a joint counselor conference hosted by the California State University and the University of California bears witness to that collaboration -- a collaboration in which higher education is acknowledging that the precious time that you spend away from your school should be expended as efficiently and effectively as possible.
  - Another example of collaboration among our higher education systems is the passage and implementation of Senate Bill 1440. This legislation is designed to enhance pathways for students who begin their post-high school education in community colleges and then transfer to the California State University -- a route that, if efficiently traveled, can be cost-effective.

- More assistance is available to support you in preparing students for higher education:
  - In myriad ways, higher education is committed to providing solid, understandable, and clear information, materials, and resources to you so that you are able to communicate to your students in as efficient and effective manner as possible about the multiplicity of college opportunities available in this state. In this regard, all the educational systems in the state are invested in CaliforniaColleges.edu, the common electronic portal to higher education in California. This increasingly advanced website is positioned to assist you and
your students in exploring career and college options so please visit CaliforniaColleges.edu. that will be discussed later today in other sessions.

- The Early Assessment Program, or EAP, that began as a joint initiative between the State Board of Education, the California Department of Education, and the California State University but now includes the California Community Colleges, is an early warning tool to apprise students of their readiness for college-level courses in English/Language Arts and Mathematics while they are still in high school. In assessing students about their level of college preparation in the eleventh grade, students not yet proficient have an opportunity to become so during their senior year and, therefore, reduce the number of remedial courses that they take in college and accelerate their time-to-degree.

- The Transcript Evaluation Service, or TES, developed by the University of California assists counselors to ascertain the extent to which students are on track to meet the course requirements for both public university systems in the state. This computer-based system eliminates the labor-intensive calculations that counselors need to make in order to determine the progress of individual and groups of students in meeting this aspect of university admissions requirements.

While our public policy schizophrenia complicates your counseling task, your students and the state are depending upon us collaboratively and in significant and profound ways to reach the goal of increasing by one million the number of Californians that are needed to impact positively the state’s economy and its continued capacity to be a leader in the global marketplace of the future. So…let’s get on with this task NOW!

I am pleased to introduce the panelists for this plenary session:
• Nathan Evans
• Judy Sakaki

Introductory Message from each panelist

• Given the budget context, what do you think high school counselors need to know?
• And who do they need to know about admissions for this coming cycle?

• To Judy: There has been considerable discussion about the enrollment of non-resident students at the University of California. Would you talk to us about that?

• To Nathan: I know that, at the California State University, you designate service areas and then differential admissions processes are followed for students in and outside of these areas. Can you tell us about the effect of service areas on admissions?

• Is there any additional information that you want to share with the audience?

Although there was no Question-Answer portion in this Plenary session, both systemwide update sessions later this morning will include time for Questions-and-Answers. We encourage you to attend those sessions. Additionally, index cards are available in this session to submit your questions and the answers will be posted on a Question-and-Answer website after the conference.