



CALIFORNIA CONNECTS MOBILE INTERNET PROGRAM

FOCUS ON EFFICIENCY

The Foundation for California Community Colleges has launched the California Connects Mobile Internet program, which provides students and faculty affordable internet access. California Connects is available to the institutions within the California Community Colleges, Association of Independent California Colleges and Universities, the University of California and the California State University system.

The California Connects Mobile Internet program provides a low-cost internet alternative for higher education students and faculty in California. For \$20 a month, one more barrier is removed that prevents students from accessing class registrations and online research tools required for coursework and keeps the most transient populations connected.

Home internet access is a privilege that not all California Community College students enjoy. The program’s goal is to offer an affordable internet access option for the population of students who cannot connect to the internet during conventional school hours due to work and family obligations. Ultimately, California Connects is a step toward increasing course completion and system transfers.

California Connects was designed through a public-private industry partnership between the Foundation for California Community Colleges and ThinkEDU. This partnership created a cost-savings portal for a point of sales system and provides a student verification mechanism. Operations, management and marketing of the program are housed in the Foundation for California Community Colleges. The mobility service is powered by Sprint, one of the nation’s largest mobile providers, and an online platform allows 24/7 ordering through www.CollegeBuys.org.

QUANTIFICATIONS AND RESULTS

1,000-plus students and faculty in higher education participate in California Connects.

Each user saves an estimated \$50 per month on comparable internet rates, leading to an individual user savings of more than \$600 annually. As the average cost of one credit hour at a California Community College is \$46, the cost savings allows a student to defer the cost equal to an entire semester at a California Community College. Over the entire system, families are saving more than \$360,000 annually.

MILESTONES

2016

- Mobile internet agreement is formed and powered by the Sprint network.

2017

- The 500-member milestone is reached. California Connects is also extended to the 79 member institutions of the Association of Independent California College and Universities.

2018

- Nearly 700 California Community College members are impacted by California Connects cost-saving efforts.

2019

- Deployed over the spring and fall semesters, the project will serve 900 foster youth in the California Community Colleges with internet access for an entire year. The equity program will bring the user base to more than 1,400.

IMPACT AND BENEFITS

- Home internet access is a privilege that not all California Community College students enjoy. California Connects reduces the barriers of entry and increases the outcomes of success for students with affordable internet access.
- California Connects is a simple solution providing access to 4G LTE internet through a portable cellular enabled Wi-Fi streaming hotspot. Any student, faculty or staff member within any of the 114 California Community College campuses and 97 member institutions of the Association of Independent California Colleges and Universities, the University of California or the California State University system are eligible for this program.
- Operated by the Foundation for California Community Colleges, California Connects has established an online platform to allow 24/7 ordering through www.CollegeBuys.org.

LESSONS LEARNED

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This infrastructure is propagating practices that improve academic outcomes and achieve greater efficiencies. And, exciting developments are emerging that leverage this infrastructure into targeted student organizations that are serving veterans in higher education and the California Community Colleges student leadership.



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FURTHER REFERENCES

FOUNDATION FOR CALIFORNIA COMMUNITY COLLEGES

Foundation for California
Community Colleges
California Connects
websites:

[https://foundationccc.org/
What-We-Do/Student-Success/
California-Connects](https://foundationccc.org/What-We-Do/Student-Success/California-Connects)

www.CollegeBuys.org