CAL POLY HUMBOLDT · URPC

Budget Open Forum

Fall 2026

Building a more resilient budget, together

University Resources and Planning Committee | 10/27/26

START HERE

This is a year of strategy and long-range budget planning

THE REALITY

Risk

Projected deficits and budget vulnerabilities, on a budget where little is truly flexible.

THE GOAL

Bridge

Our goal is no university-wide cuts in 2027-28, with the option to use one-time funding set aside in 2023-24 to bridge the projected budget gap.

THE WORK

Build

Bridging is not balancing. Future reductions are projected, so divisions will use this year to build budgets that can absorb volatility, with multi-year plans where needed.

TODAY'S PATH

Where we're headed in the next hour

Our purpose today: help campus understand our budget, where it stands and the work ahead.

01

Who we are

URPC and how to get involved

02

Where we stand

How last year closed, reserves and this year's budget

03

Enrollment

How students connect to our funding

04

How flexible is our budget?

Fixed costs, restricted funds and one-time money

05

Risks and strengths

Pressures to plan for, momentum to build on

06

The path forward

CSU budget request, 2027-28 scenarios and next steps

01

Who we are

URPC and how to get involved



URPC and the President's charge

University Resources and Planning Committee

- A standing University Senate committee
- Faculty, staff, students and administrators
- Meets every other week during the academic year
- Open meetings, built on shared governance

Educate	Keep the campus informed on state, CSU and campus finances
Recommend	Set budget principles and recommend a balanced, strategic budget
Partner	Support multi-year planning, savings and new revenue ideas
Review	Recommend updates to budget policies, including reserves and roll forward

How to get involved in the budget

Come to a URPC meeting

Open to everyone, in person in the CCR or on Zoom. Meeting dates and agendas at humboldt.edu/budget/urpc

Explore budget resources

Budget updates at humboldt.edu/budget.
Division and department budgets in OpenBook.

Engage your division

Talk with your VP or your area's budget analyst to learn more. Listen in when your division presents to URPC this fall and spring.

Co-chairs
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02

Where we stand

How last year closed, reserves and this year’s budget



02 · WHERE WE STAND

Since our spring forum

June
Closed 2025-26 fiscal year

July
Finalized 2026-27 budget

September
CSU 2027-28 budget request approved

October
Campus budget scenario planning kicks off

At today’s fall forum, we’ll walk through each step, starting with how we closed last year.

2025–26 Year-End Financial Summary

BUDGET: THE PLAN

Original Budget

Balanced recurring revenue and expenses at the start of the year.

Revenue $175.3M

Expenses $175.3M

CHANGE IN FUND BALANCE

$0

Current Budget

Added $9.9M in new revenue with matching expenses, plus authority to spend $27.0M rolled forward from 2024-25.

- **$9.9M** new revenue and expenses
- **$27.0M** roll forward, expenses only

Revenue $185.2M

Expenses $212.3M

CHANGE IN FUND BALANCE

($27.0M)

ACTUAL: WHAT HAPPENED

Actual Results

Divisions spent less of their funding than planned, so revenue exceeded expenses by $4.1M.

Revenue $185.4M

Expenses $181.3M

CHANGE IN FUND BALANCE

+$4.1M

KEY TERM

Roll forward

The unspent balance left in the operating budget at the end of the fiscal year, which carries into the next year as one-time funding.

02 · WHERE WE STAND

2025–26 Roll Forward

2024-25 Ending Fund Balance & Roll Forward	→	2025-26 Net Increase	→	2025-26 Ending Fund Balance	→	Less Encumbrances	→	2025-26 Roll Forward
$27.0M		$4.1M		$31.1M		($3.5M)		$27.6M

$13.5M **Restricted / dedicated · 49%**
Tied to specific programs, earmarks and set-asides

$14.1M **Unrestricted · 51%**
Available for divisional allocations

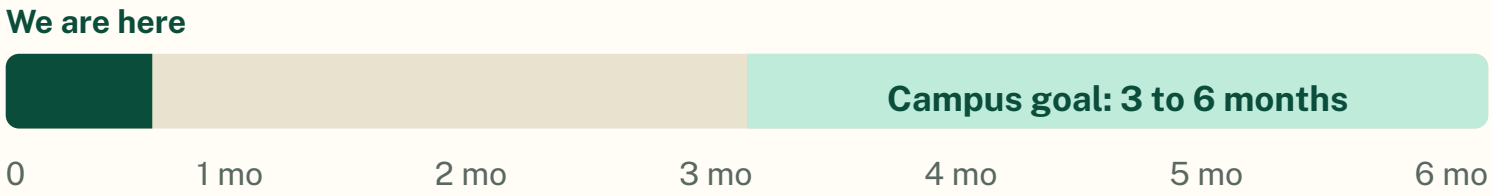
All $27.6M was allocated to divisions per the University Roll Forward Guidelines, including $514K added to reserves.

2025–26 Year-End Reserves

$514K added to reserves at year-end from 2025-26 roll forward

Operating Reserve $9.3M

At the CSU 5% minimum, about 18 days of operations



KEY TERM

Operating Reserve

Unrestricted funds set aside for economic uncertainty and unexpected expenses.

Other reserves, for specific purposes

$6.3M Capital Reserve
To acquire, build or renovate facilities

$1.9M Maintenance Reserve
For unforeseen facility and infrastructure needs

$495K Equipment Reserve
For future equipment purchases

2026–27 Final Budget

We began the 2026-27 fiscal year with a balanced $184.3M operating budget.

What came in	
New CSU allocation	+$5.4M
Polytechnic funding, final installment	+$3.7M
Tuition: enrollment growth and summer	+$3.3M
Enrollment recalibration	($3.4M)
Net revenue increase	**$9.0M**

Where it went	
CSU-designated costs	$5.4M
Polytechnic program buildout	$3.7M
Campus costs and priorities	$1.9M
Ongoing division reductions (1.9%)	($2.6M)
Unallocated, held for URPC input	$0.6M
Net expenditure increase	**$9.0M**

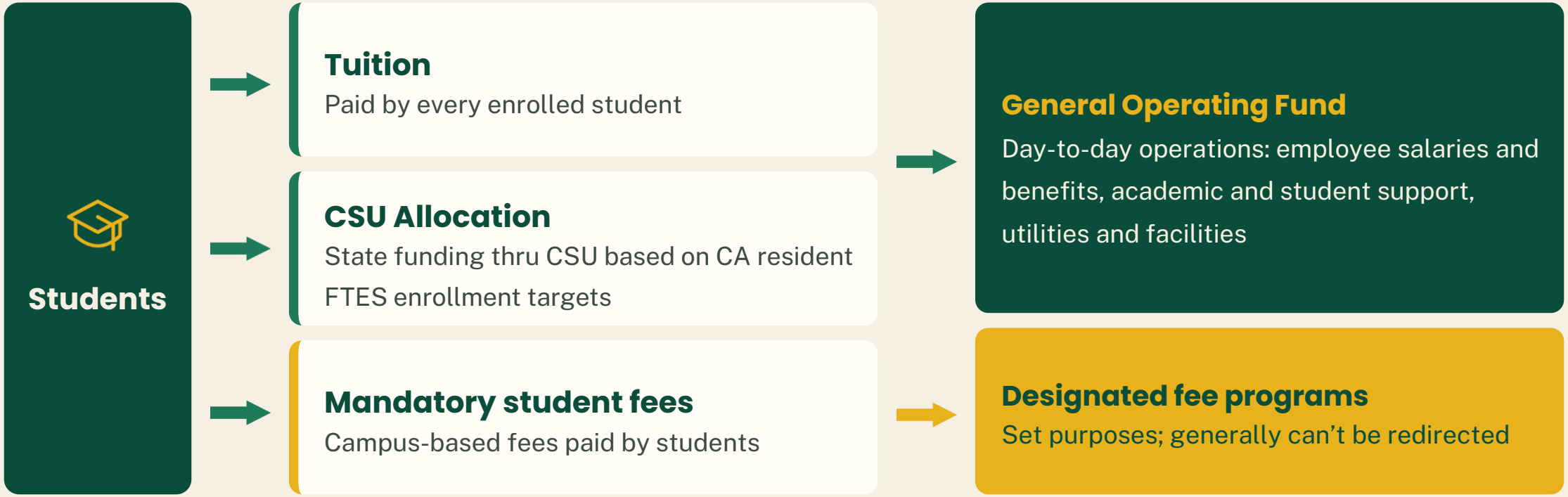
03

Enrollment and the budget

Where enrollment stands and how it connects to our funding



How enrollment connects to our budget



WHY BOTH MATTER · HEADCOUNT AND FTES

Headcount drives tuition and student fees, like those funding Associated Students. Resident FTES drives CSU funding.

KEY TERM · FTES

Full-Time Equivalent Students. 1 FTES = 15 units for an undergraduate, 12 units for a graduate student.

Fall 2026 Enrollment Update

Headcount

FALL CENSUS
6,228

→

ANNUALIZED *(projected)*
6,586

vs.

BUDGET
6,860
−274, 4.0% below

Resident FTES

FALL CENSUS
5,345

→

ANNUALIZED *(projected)*
5,364

vs.

BUDGET
5,595
−231, 4.1% below

PROJECTED % TO CSU FUNDED TARGET

79%

5,364 of 6,796 annualized resident FTES

KEY TERM

Annualized Headcount

(**Fall + Spring + Summer) ÷ 2**. It's the measure we use for budgeting. The annualized amounts here are projections, with spring and summer estimated from fall census using historical trends.

What's behind the fall numbers

WHERE WE DIPPED

−110

Fewer new freshmen than last fall, as high school graduates decline, especially in our region.

ONE-YEAR RETENTION

74.7%

Share of last fall's new freshmen who came back this fall. Our goal is at least 80% by the Fall 2027 class.

ADMITS WHO ENROLLED

13%

Same as last year. Our goal is 15 to 20%.

WHERE WE GREW

+102

More continuing and returning students, plus a third straight year of transfer growth.

Looking ahead: up to 375 new students targeted for Spring 2027, with Fall 2027 recruitment already underway.

What fall census means for this year’s budget

WHERE WE STARTED

The 2026–27 budget was balanced

Built on 3% enrollment growth over the prior year’s budget.

WHAT HAPPENED

($2.1M)

Estimated revenue shortfall based on fall census, which came in 4.0% below budget.

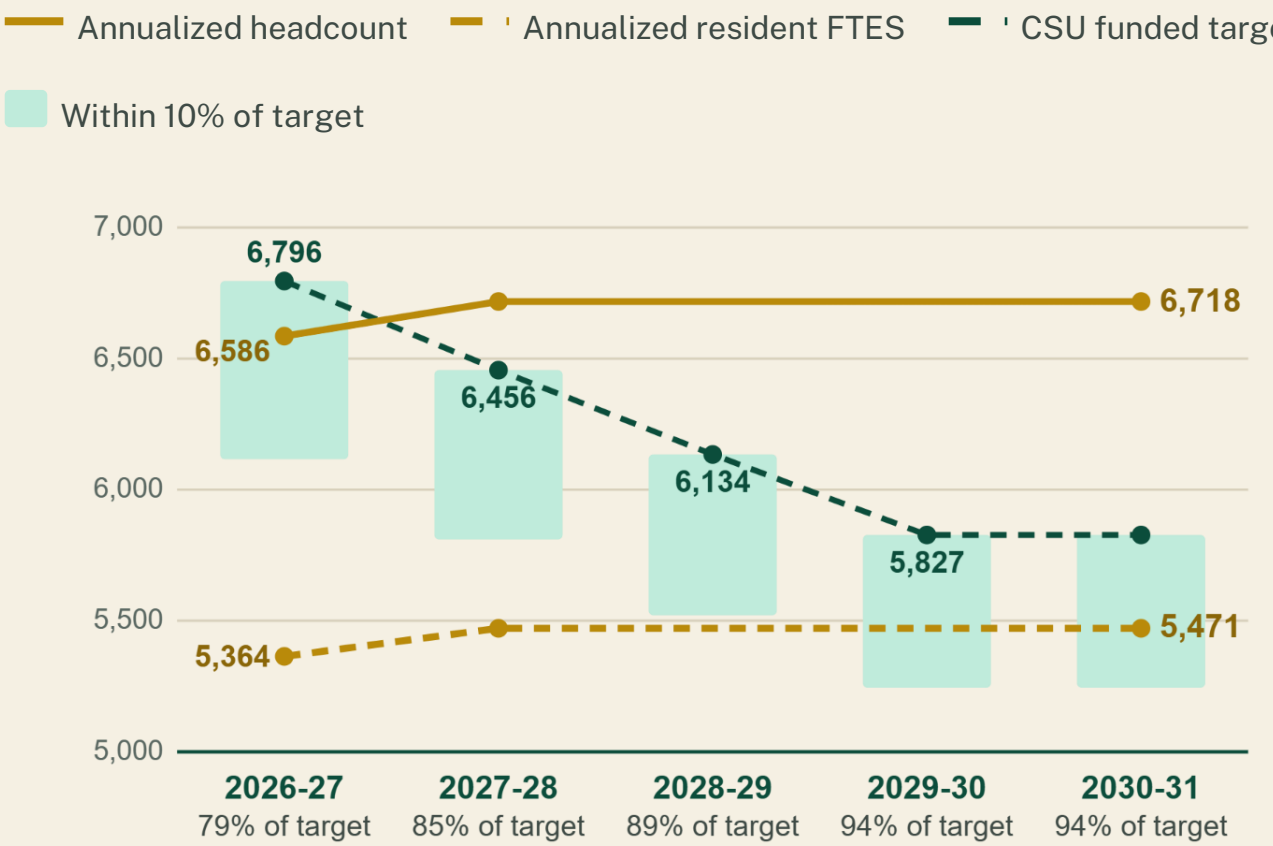
ROOM TO RECOVER

- Spring enrollment still to come
- Enrollment contingency set aside in the budget
- Unallocated funding at URPC’s recommendation

Our 2026-27 budget was built with resiliency to absorb most of this shortfall.

A closer look at the CSU allocation

We expect to be within 10% of target by 2029-30, ending recalibration.



KEY TERM

CSU enrollment target

Number of students that the CSU system provides state appropriation funding to support instruction and operations. CA resident FTES only.

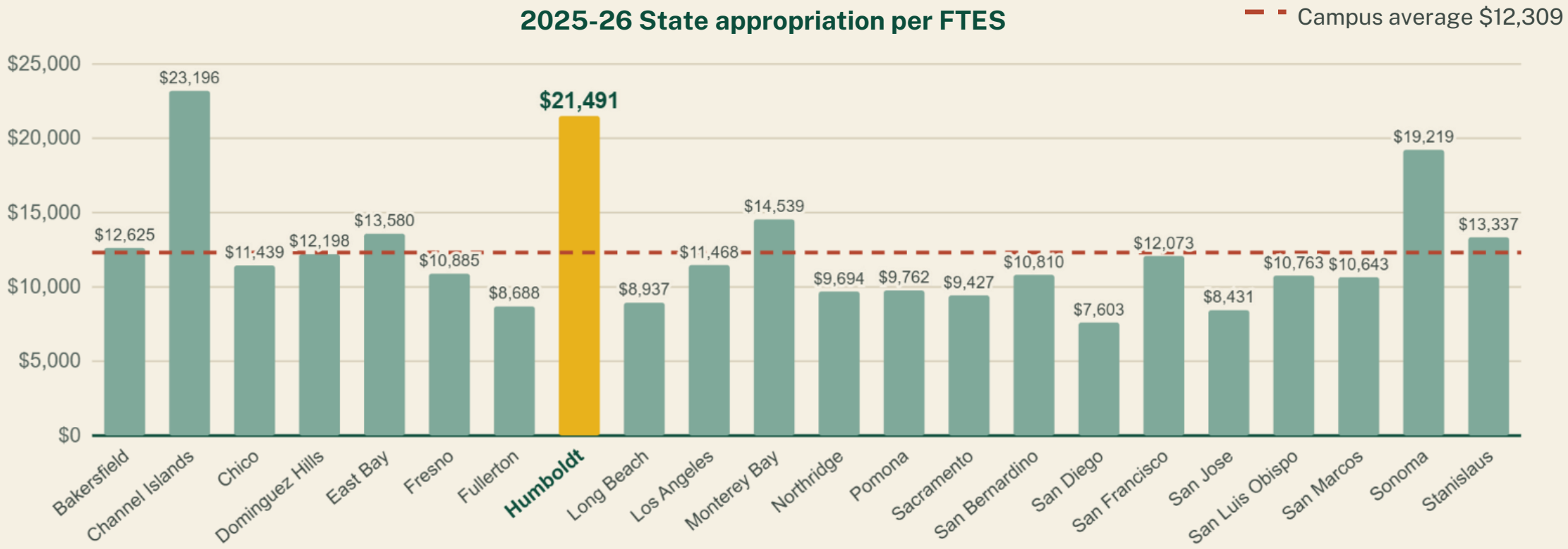
KEY TERM

Enrollment recalibration

When a campus is more than 10% below its target, the CSU lowers the target by 5% and moves that funding to other campuses, each year until the gap is within 10%.

Why the CSU is recalibrating our target

We receive about 1.7 times the CSU campus average in state funding per student.



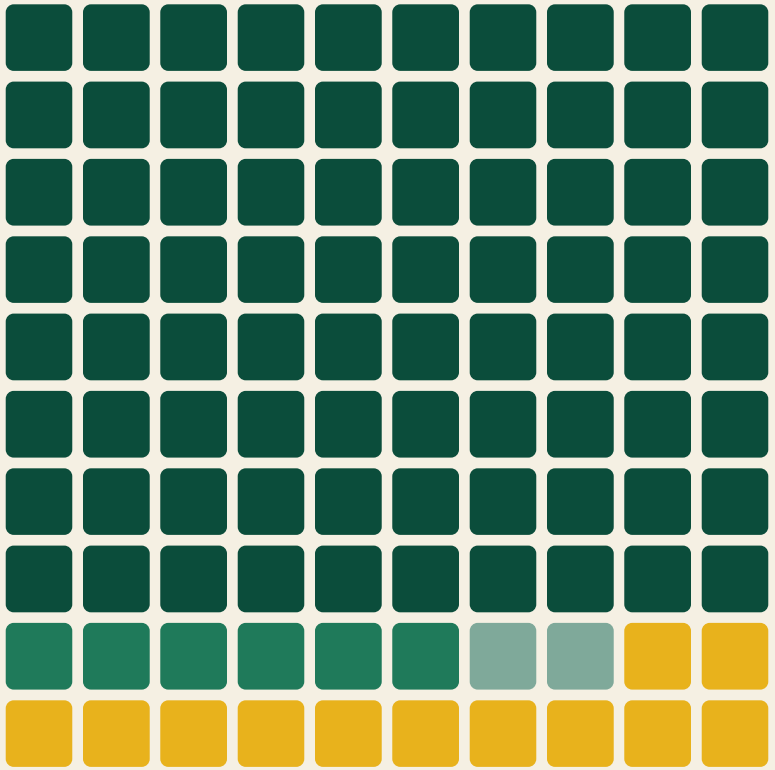
04

How flexible is our budget?

Three reasons our budget is less flexible than it looks



About 80 cents of every dollar pays for people



- **80%** Salaries, wages and benefits · $138.9M
- **6%** Financial aid · $10.7M
- **2%** Utilities · $4.2M
- **12%** Operating, IT and other · $21.5M

KEY TERM

Discretionary spending

Spending we can change in the short term without changing positions or contracts. Only the gold squares come close, and much of that is software, insurance and contracts.

Most of our one-time and new funding is already committed

2025-26 ROLL FORWARD · $27.6M

$13.5M
49% restricted

$14.1M
51% unrestricted

Nearly half of last year's leftover money was already tied to specific programs, fees or set-asides.

2026-27 NEW CSU ALLOCATION · $5.4M

$5.4M
100% CSU-designated

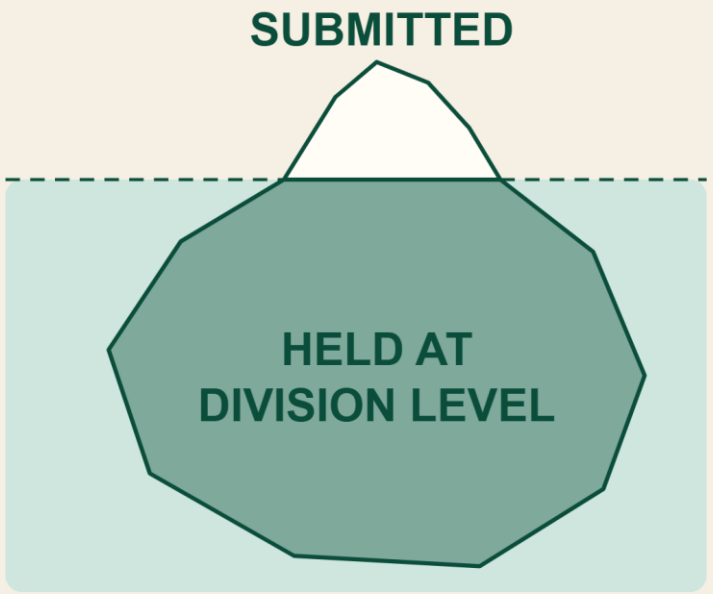
All of it went to costs the CSU designated: retirement, health, student grants, utilities, insurance and new facilities.

KEY TERM

Restricted vs. unrestricted

Restricted money can only be used for a set purpose, defined by law, a fee, a donor or an agreement. Unrestricted money can support general operations, and it is the only place real flexibility exists.

One-time money is often covering ongoing costs



ABOVE THE SURFACE: DIVISION REQUESTS

Divisions requested $9.2M for central funding, and all of it was funded with one-time roll forward. $4.2M of that covers ongoing costs.

BELOW THE SURFACE: WITHIN DIVISIONS

Ongoing costs divisions may be covering with their own roll forward or other one-time funds.

KEY TERM

One-time vs. ongoing

One-time funding is spent once. Ongoing costs return every year.

05

Risks and strengths

Pressures to plan for, momentum to build on



05 · RISKS TO PLAN FOR

Four risks we need to plan around

Structural deficits

Some funds and programs spend more each year than they bring in and lean on reserves or one-time funding to bridge the difference.

One-time funding

Recurring activities across campus are paid with one-time money that should not be relied on.

Enrollment recalibration

The CSU keeps lowering our enrollment target, and the funding tied to it, until we are within 10%.

Enrollment growth

Our funding depends on growth. We fell short of this year's budgeted growth, so even a flat 2027-28 plan needs real growth next year.

BY THE NUMBERS

$4.2M
Ongoing costs on central one-time funds

($3.2M)
2027-28 enrollment recalibration

4.2%
Growth needed to reach 2026-27 budget

05 · STRENGTHS TO BUILD ON

Momentum we can build on

8-year reaccreditation

WSCUC reaffirmed us through 2034 with minimal follow-up and commended our data-informed decision making.

17 new polytechnic programs

Launched since 2023, including five this fall, with two more coming online by 2029.

3 draft strategic goals

Campus strategic planning is building our roadmap from a collective vision for the future. The draft vision and goals are out for campus feedback.

101,000 square feet of new space

From the new Engineering & Technology Building to Hinarr Hu Moulik, with more projects on the way.

Aligning our priorities

We have launched a Strategic Planning Council and a Student Success Framework Implementation Team, bringing students, faculty, staff and administrators together to align our priorities with the CSU Forward strategic plan.

06

The path forward

The CSU budget request, 2027-28 scenarios and next steps



How we build our campus 2027–28 planning scenarios

Signals from the CSU request

- Compensation and health premium changes
- Rising insurance and inflation costs
- Changes in new State funding

+

Campus factors

- Enrollment and recalibration
- Campus fixed and rising costs
- Strategic priorities

→

2027–28 planning scenarios

- Three enrollment scenarios
- Will be updated after the Governor’s January budget proposal

2027–28 CSU Budget Request

A systemwide budget plan with **$618M** in new ongoing funding, a **6.6%** increase.

Where it would come from

State General Fund increase — **$396M · 64%**



Tuition: 6% rate increase — **$192M · 31%**



Tuition: 1% enrollment growth — **$30M · 5%**



What it would pay for

Baseline commitments — **$234M**

Health premiums, insurance, inflation and other required costs. The CSU must cover these even without new State funding.

Essential priorities — **$384M**

4% compensation pool, enrollment growth, facilities debt service and academic programs. These become at risk if the State is unable to fund its $396M share.

⚠ Nearly two-thirds depends on the State. The compact has ended, and a new governor takes office in January.

2027–28 planning scenarios

Only enrollment changes, compared with 2026-27 projected actuals.

Scenario 1

Flat to 2026-27 budget

2027-28 BUDGET GAP

($3.7M)

2.0% of total budget

+4.2% enrollment growth

6,860 headcount, annualized

$0 tuition and fee revenue

Scenario 2

Current planning scenario

2027-28 BUDGET GAP

($4.7M)

2.6% of total budget

+2% enrollment growth

6,718 headcount, annualized

($1.0M) tuition and fee revenue

Scenario 3

2027-28 BUDGET GAP

($5.1M)

2.8% of total budget

0% growth, flat enrollment

6,586 headcount, annualized

($2.1M) tuition and fee revenue

+$0.75M enrollment contingency released

IN EVERY SCENARIO

($3.2M)
Enrollment recalibration

($0.5M)
Campus mandatory costs and allocations

$0, net
+$2.6M new CSU allocation, all to CSU-designated costs

Bridging 2027–28 gives us time to plan

Scenario 2, our current planning scenario, over three years. Assumes 2% growth in 2027-28, flat thereafter.

One-time bridge

2027–28

PROJECTED GAP

($4.7M)

Goal to cover with one-time funding to bridge the gap.

Recalibration **($3.2M)**

+

2028–29

PROJECTED GAP

($3.5M)

Recalibration continues and mandatory cost increases.

Recalibration **($3.1M)**

+

2029–30

PROJECTED GAP

($3.4M)

The final year of recalibration, plus mandatory cost increases.

Recalibration **($3.0M)**

=

3-year total

PROJECTED GAP

($11.6M)

2027-28 through 2029-30

PREPARE

Use this year's runway to prepare for future reductions and any volatility ahead, with multi-year plans in place where needed.

REINVEST

New discretionary funding is unlikely in the next few years. Growing our priorities will depend on how we realign the resources we already have.

What happens next

October

Fall forum. 2027-28 planning begins.

November

Divisions present to URPC

January

Governor’s budget proposal from a new administration

Spring

Divisions share 2027-28 plans. New strategic plan. Spring forum.

May to June

May Revision and final State budget

In November, each division will share

- Its final 2026-27 budget
- How its 2026-27 reductions were taken
- Its risks and opportunities, including any structural deficits, one-time funding reliance or other budget vulnerabilities

START HERE

This is a year of strategy and long-range budget planning

THE REALITY

Risk

Projected deficits and budget vulnerabilities, on a budget where little is truly flexible.

THE GOAL

Bridge

Our goal is no university-wide cuts in 2027-28, with the option to use one-time funding set aside in 2023-24 to bridge the projected budget gap.

THE WORK

Build

Bridging is not balancing. Future reductions are projected, so divisions will use this year to build budgets that can absorb volatility, with multi-year plans where needed.

Questions?

Want to learn more after today? Reach out to any URPC member or your area's budget analyst, and find meeting dates and materials at **humboldt.edu/budget/urpc**

