



View this newsletter online as a PDF

# Union News

Vol. 4, Issue 20 | September 25, 2014

## Town Halls on Transform CSCU 2020

\* Please note that the Town Hall on Transform CSCU 2020 at SCSU was rescheduled to Monday, Sept. 29 at 1 p.m. in the Adanti Student Center Ballroom

Three of the four CSU campuses have hosted Dr. Gray as he presents information on Transform CSCU 2020. The three CSU presentations have been similar with Dr. Gray along with System Office staff or Board of Regents members walking the audience through a PowerPoint presentation for approximately one hour followed by an hour of questions. An update on Transform (9/12/14) on the BOR website provides an overview of some of the issues raised during the first few Town Halls.

There are currently 36 initiatives that are part of Transform CSCU 2020 with vague titles such as “Academic Program Optimization, Strengthen liberal arts core, and Faculty Skill and Development.” There was little to no detail on many of initiatives because they haven’t been flushed out yet, so Dr. Gray encouraged the audience to get involved in the development and refinement of the initiatives.

One major concern is that Dr. Gray aims to have the Transform Report drafted by the end of the year with Board approval targeted for January to March 2015, yet there was no mention of approval of the report by the Senates. In addition, since many of the initiatives at this point have only a title but no substance, the Town Halls cannot be considered faculty input on the plan. Therefore, final approval of Transform CSCU 2020 by the Board by January or March 2015 seems like an optimistic and aggressive timeline.

## Governor Malloy Proposes to Make Higher Education More Affordable

On September 9, Governor Malloy visited several college campuses, including CCSU and WSCU, and proposed a three-point plan to help families afford a higher education:

1. Create a state student loan tax credit to allow residents to take up to a \$2500 tax credit on student loan interest.
2. Allow students to refinance student loans at lower rates
3. Bolstering the Governor’s Scholarship program to reward high achieving students.

For more information, visit [here](#).

## **CSU-AAUP in Coalition Addressing Issues of Student Debt**

Higher Ed, Not Debt CT is a coalition of advocacy organizations pushing for justice in the higher education system. The coalition is focused on reversing state disinvestment in higher education, making higher education accessible to all students, addressing the rising costs of higher education, and solving the growing student debt crisis.

The Coalition was launched on September 18 along with the release of a report, *A Mountain of Debt: Connecticut's students and alumni tell their stories of how skyrocketing college tuition has burdened them with high debt.*

## **Retiree Health Fund Contribution**

Full-time employees that had more than nine years of service with the State of Connecticut as of July 2014 may have noticed a change in the amount of deductions in their paychecks as of July 1, 2014. As a reminder, the SEBAC 2011 Agreement extended the requirement to contribute to the Retiree Health Fund to all employees and called for all employees to make contributions for 10 years or until date of retirement, whichever comes first. Under the agreement, contributions for longer-tenured employees were phased in over a three-year period, with a 0.5% contribution rate beginning July 2013, a 2% contribution rate beginning July 2014, and a 3% contribution rate beginning July 2015.

Under SEBAC 2009, employees with less than five years of service as of July 2010 began contributing to the Retiree Health Fund at a rate of 3%. The 3% rate will continue for these employees until they reach ten years of service.