

HISTORY OF EOPS

THE HISTORY OF THE CALIFORNIA COMMUNITY COLLEGE EXTENDED OPPORTUNITY PROGRAMS AND SERVICES ESTABLISHED 1969

In 1969, SB 164 (urgency legislation), authored by Senator Alquist, was enacted into law. It expressed intent to encourage California Community Colleges to establish programs and services directed to the identification, recruitment, retention and intellectual and vocational stimulation of students affected by language, social or economic disadvantages. Funding for 1960-70 was \$2,870,000. Legally effective in November, EOPS was partly implemented in the spring of 1970 with 46 institutions participating. A review of important social events and issues of the sixties may facilitate an understanding of the political climate in which SB 164 was born.



A landmark United States Supreme Court decision was handed down in 1954 (Brown vs. Board of Education of Topeka, Kansas). By ruling that separate educational institutions are inherently unequal, integration was given a great thrust. At that time, however, there was not much reaction in California since educational segregation "de jure" (by lawful title) did not exist. Higher education was also smug because public institutions did not appear to discriminate.

With the advent of Civil Rights Act of 1964, both overt and covert discrimination came under the law. This was the most comprehensive attempt to equalize human rights since post-Civil War activities.

In 1965, the Watts riots stunned the State of California. Many people could not believe that Blacks outside the South and Eastern slums would resort to violence and destruction. Insightful decision-makers, however somewhat reluctantly, began seeking root causes. Early conclusions indicated that **EVEN IN CALIFORNIA, THE PUBLIC EDUCATION SYSTEM WAS NOT REALLY OPEN. For many, TRUE EQUALITY OF OPPORTUNITY DID NOT EXIST.**

In 1968, our nation's capital was the scene of the massive, emotional and effective "Poor People March". Poverty in the affluent country was dramatized. More and more citizens became aware of the uneven distribution of wealth. Also, 1968, tens of thousands of Chicano students waked out of their schools, protesting **INFERIOR EDUCATION** in "blowouts" all over the South West. Astute observers began thinking of ways to **EQUALIZE OPPORTUNITIES.**

Beginning in the mid-sixties, there were many student-led disturbances on college campuses. Although UC Berkeley and San Francisco State receive the most notoriety in California, many community colleges experienced unrest as well. Targets were: The Vietnam War, student power, racism and student aid. An effort to meet the responsibility to integrate more people into the dominant culture was indicated.

Some felt EOPS was an attempt to quell student rebellions and reduce campus tensions.

