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Funding and Who Pays

The age-old question of "Who pays" applies here. In California, the State, and campuses pay. In other states, DR pays for some or all auxiliary aids. The increasing attempts by DR to put the responsibility on the campuses seems to be a trend that will continue. Many campuses pay for auxiliary aids for those students who do not qualify for DR support. It is clear that the campuses will continue to bear an increased financial responsibility for the provision of auxiliary aids.

What all campuses need is a consistent and adequate funding base which could be depended upon annually when campuses are going through their budget preparations. It is extremely difficult to predict the amount of money needed each year for auxiliary aids before the number of students enrolled is known and the coordinator has had the chance to evaluate the level of services needed. Since the needs of one student can greatly affect the amount of money needed, there can be large budgetary fluctuations from one year to another. A baseline amount of money allocated to the campus each year would give the coordinator security to begin providing auxiliary services while trying to identify other sources of funding to meet the fluctuations.

Currently, community colleges across the country have access to some monies under the Perkins Act for vocational education programs. Several of the model postsecondary programs for deaf/hearing-impaired persons receive federal funds. The State of California provides partial funding for services to students with disabilities in its three public, post-secondary segments. State colleges in Colorado can apply annually for "enrichment funds" to be used for auxiliary aids, although the money may or may not be forthcoming each year. The State of Florida has an annual allocation in the appropriations act which is channeled through the Department of Education. All public community college and four-year schools submit a projected budget for auxiliary aids. The expenditure is approved, and the campuses are reimbursed quarterly. The Florida system is on a 20% - 80% share of program cost. These are the only consistent sources of funding that I know about which support auxiliary services to some extent.