

Colorado Community College System

Don't tell me the sky is the limit, when there are footsteps on the moon. -Paul Brandt



Strategic Plan

Opportunity for a lifetime
 Colorado Community College System www.cccs.edu

A Community College of Denver design project
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Welcome to the State Board for Community Colleges and Occupational Education's Strategic Plan for the Colorado Community College System (CCCS).

CCCS is Colorado's largest higher education provider with 13 colleges throughout the state and more than 117,000 students. In creating this plan, we balanced the uniqueness of each of our colleges with the over-arching goals we all share. Our vision is that Colorado community colleges are unsurpassed at providing quality educational opportunities for all who aspire to enrich their lives.

In order to achieve this vision, we are focusing our efforts in three key areas:

Student Access

Student Success

Operational Excellence

We looked at the challenges we face, the opportunities we have, and the solutions community colleges provide. The challenges are largely related to funding. Adequate funding is key to maintaining our high quality services and to providing access to higher education for all individuals desiring to improve and enrich their lives.

The opportunities we have are endless. The Colorado Community College System's ability to adapt to the needs of businesses is remarkable. Higher education in the future will be transformed by dramatic changes in the workforce. Colorado's community colleges will play a critical role in training our citizens so they can compete in the 21st century global economy. This is vital at a time when the workforce is aging and change is accelerating at an ever-increasing pace. Because of technology and increased globalization, we will be training workers for jobs that do not exist today.

We believe that the solutions we provide are solid and long term. Our students are taught by high quality faculty, many of whom work in the fields in which they are teaching, thus enabling students to gain real-world knowledge. Our students leave our colleges with the confidence they have an education that will carry them through life. Our colleges' diverse and non-traditional student population, connections to industry, multiple locations and learning environments, flexible schedules, and affordable tuition signify that we strive to meet students on their terms.

We are excited to present this plan to you. It represents our best efforts to improve and enhance the community college experience. In closing, I leave you with a quote that we hope our students embrace as they embark upon their journey with community colleges: "Don't tell me the sky is the limit, when there are footsteps on the moon." – Paul Brandt.

Sincerely,

Nancy J. McCallin, Ph.D.
President
Colorado Community College System

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VISION STATEMENT

Colorado community colleges are unsurpassed at providing quality educational opportunities for all who aspire to enrich their lives.

MISSION STATEMENT

To provide an accessible, responsive learning environment that facilitates the achievement of educational, professional and personal goals by our students and other members of our communities in an atmosphere that embraces academic excellence, diversity and innovation.

"A strong community college system acts as a magnet for all kinds of lucrative industries because they depend on them for training, retraining and helping develop skilled employees."
Editorial, Aurora Sentinel, October 5, 2008

*"Everyone here understands that diversity is our greatest asset. The lessons taught outside the classroom are nearly as important as those taught inside. A truly diverse population enriches the quality of everyone's education and teaches us lessons that are too invaluable for a textbook."
Rob Kardokus, student, Community College of Denver*



About the Colorado Community College System

The Colorado Community College System (CCCS) is the largest higher education provider in the State of Colorado, serving more than 117,000 students each year.

CCCS trains more than half the nurses in the state and more than 90% of the first responders.

Community colleges serve 45% of all minority undergraduate students in higher education in Colorado and 38% of all undergraduates in the state.

27% of our students are minorities.

59% of our students are female.

55% of our students are under 25 years old.

92% of our students are Colorado residents.

*"...the community colleges provide many Coloradans an opportunity."
Editorial, The Pueblo Chieftain, September 18, 2008*



Challenges

Funding for community colleges has dropped to the 1993 level. The Colorado Community College System will continue to work with policy makers to improve funding.

Changing workforce needs demand that community colleges become increasingly innovative in programs to meet business and industry needs.

Campus infrastructure needs additional investment. We will continue to work on creative ways through partnerships and grants to keep our buildings safe and to provide the optimum learning environment.



Opportunities

Business partnerships are the lifeblood of community colleges' ability to continue to provide access to high quality community college education. In turn, our colleges contribute to the success of the industries by providing highly skilled workers.

Collaboration with workforce development centers and the Colorado Department of Labor and Employment provide an excellent opportunity to meet the workforce demands of our state's businesses, help our economy grow, and help the students get quality and good paying jobs.

Gaming dollars from the successful passage of Amendment 50, with 59% voter approval in 2008, will provide an additional funding stream for community colleges, through the increase in betting limits, games, and hours. This new revenue stream will offset the significant decrease in state funding, so colleges can continue to provide the services they currently offer.

"In my role at ACED, I work specifically with primary businesses on a daily basis. I believe that community colleges are the best suited institutions to fill critical training needs for business by doing a terrific job with standard and customized training programs. These contributions to our state's economic well-being are why I am so proud to serve on the advisory council for Front Range Community College." Bill Becker, President/CEO of the Adams County Economic Development (ACED)



"In the coming years, jobs requiring at least an associate's degree are projected to grow twice as fast as jobs requiring no college experience. We will not fill those jobs, or keep them on our shores, without the training provided by community colleges." President Barack Obama, The New York Times, July 15, 2009

Solutions



Affordable tuition allows many Coloradans the chance to earn a quality education that will enrich their lives.

Flexibility is the hallmark of community colleges. Community colleges can quickly adapt to an industry's needs by creating programs for specific skill sets. The way our community colleges stepped up to the plate to meet the needs of Vestas, a manufacturer of wind turbines, is a good example of the flexibility we provide. For our students, we have locations throughout the state and flexible class schedules to meet their demanding lifestyles.

Open access allows anyone who is college ready an opportunity to attend one of our 13 colleges throughout the state.

Colorado Community Colleges Online provides distance learners the ability to study at their convenience from anywhere in the state or the world. Increasingly, students growing up in the digital age will demand colleges without walls.

The ability to transfer community college credits to four-year institutions is a smart way for students and taxpayers to save money. Through agreements with community colleges and four-year institutions, students can complete the first two years of college at community colleges before transferring to a more specialized program for the final two years of a student's education.

Concurrent enrollment is an excellent solution to providing affordable higher education. Colorado is the first state to pass legislation streamlining a student's ability to take community college courses toward an associate's degree or certificate while completing their high school education at the same time. This innovative program provides an opportunity for all students to reach their academic potential.



"Colorado's far-flung community college system offers the best 'bang-for-the-buck' in state higher education system for students and taxpayers alike."

Editorial, The Denver Post, September 17, 2006

Goals

Student Access Goal: All Coloradans shall have access to comprehensive community college educational programs.

Student Success Goal: The demands of Colorado businesses and communities shall be met through the development of a highly skilled workforce.

Student Success Goal: Colorado students shall have seamless opportunities to transition from high school into college and from two-year institutions into four-year institutions.

Student Success Goal: Colorado students shall have the opportunity to succeed through high quality, cutting-edge instruction and educational services.

Operational Excellence Goal: The financial stability of the system's institutions and the physical safety of its students shall be ensured.

"Community colleges are the way of the future."

Dr. Jill Biden, The Denver Post, May 27, 2009



"Community colleges are the state's best bargain in higher education, whether judged by the standpoint of students or taxpayers."
Editorial, The Denver Post, December 9, 2007



Student Access Goal

All Coloradans shall have access to comprehensive community college educational programs

Individuals with an associate's degree earn up to one-third more than someone with only a high school diploma. Access to a higher education opportunity will enhance our students' standards of living.



"The community colleges will, even more than in the past, be the conduit for the key training to equip this country for the future." Bill Gates

Key Strategies:

- Increase total enrollment at Colorado community colleges to the extent feasible given funding constraints.
- Keep tuition and fees affordable for resident students.
- Increase enrollment among growing population groups emerging from current demographic trends.
- Expand online and hybrid program and class options.
- Advocate for state financial aid policies to ensure equitable distribution of state dollars to qualified community college students.

Key Performance Measures:

- Percent increase in CCCS resident student FTE enrollment compared to the overall statewide percent increase in population from the ages of 14 to 64.
- Share of CCCS resident students relative to the Colorado population aged 14 to 64.
- Increase in minority enrollment FTE compared to the increase in the state's minority population aged 14 to 64.
- Share of minority resident student enrollment compared to the overall population of minorities aged 14 to 64 in our respective college service areas and statewide.
- Level of resident tuition and fees compared to peers and compared to family income.
- Up-time percentage of the Banner information technology system for applications during high registration periods.

***"I chose Pikes Peak Community College because it is a full service college - accredited, convenient, and affordable. The academics are excellent."** Katrina Hall, former student, Pikes Peak Community College*



"I have a BS in Agriculture from Ohio State University. I am challenged daily as a single parent of three teenage boys, and I support the family working as a surgical technologist at the Memorial Hospital. I have been blessed with support from CNCC staff, classmates, co-workers, and a community that cares about its youth. I have obtained a marketable career to better my own life and the rural community I will serve in Craig." Kim Welder, 2008 Colorado Northwestern Community College Nursing Graduate

"The long standing partnership between the hospital and Northeastern Junior College (NJC) has greatly enhanced the hospital's ability to achieve our mission of making a difference in people's lives through excellent patient care. We are extremely fortunate to have NJC located in our community."
Michelle Joy, CEO, Sterling Regional MedCenter



"We prefer an associate's or technical degree for consideration of employment, so the opportunity to partner with Red Rocks Community College is a viable, proactive strategy to recruit and train highly skilled process workers."

Ken Losasso, Training Supervisor, Suncor USA



Student Success Goal:

The demands of Colorado businesses and communities shall be met through the development of a highly skilled work force.

Technology and the economy are quickly changing the way we live and work. Community colleges will find that they will be training people for jobs in the future that do not exist today. Community colleges will use their hallmark flexibility and many business partnerships to achieve this goal.

Key Strategies:

- Support initiatives to develop state partnerships with the Colorado Department of Labor and Employment, economic development organizations, workforce development agencies and industry sectors.
- Engage in the creation of federal policies that promote postsecondary education enrollment and completion.
- Expand Career and Technical Education (CTE) programs into areas of emerging industries.
- Ensure programs are aligned and coordinated with state and local community economic and workforce needs.

Key Performance Measures:

- Percentage of CCCS resident CTE student enrollment compared to the overall state population aged 14 to 64.
- Number and type of new programs developed in high demand, high wage industries, as well as program development for emerging industries.
- Increase in the number of partnership initiatives with public and private entities.
- Results of business and industry surveys on meeting employer demand.
- Number of workers trained through the Colorado First and Existing Industries programs.

Student Success Goal:

Colorado students shall have seamless opportunities to transition from high school into college and from two-year institutions into four-year institutions.

Reducing barriers to students so they can transition from high school to community colleges to four year institutions is critical to increasing the number of college graduates and the state's education level – both important goals of policy makers. Colorado community colleges provide high quality education. Students and taxpayers should expect that courses taken at community colleges should transfer to four-year institutions and apply to their bachelor's degrees. This saves money and time for Colorado citizens and students. Community colleges will work toward consensus on core curriculum for transfer in high demand fields.

Key Strategies:

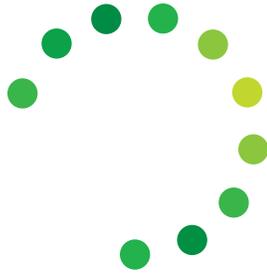
- Provide leadership in the alignment of K-12 and community college program standards, curriculum and assessment processes.
- Partner with four-year institutions to design and implement additional state-wide transfer agreements that meet the needs of students and the state.
- Increase concurrent enrollment opportunities for students at Colorado high schools.
- Increase investment in remediation and student support services for students in their first year of college.
- Assess and implement successful strategies for remediation.

Key Performance Measures:

- Increase in CCCS concurrent enrollment compared to overall increase in high school enrollment.
- Increase in number of resident transfers compared to the increase in statewide, four-year institution resident enrollment growth.
- Increase in success rates of students in the developmental sequence, both through the developmental sequence and in completion of college level work.
- Evaluate and increase opportunities for comprehensive diagnostic placement assessment.



"In the five years that Pioneer has operated in the Raton Basin, our relationship with the management and instructors at TSJC has grown stronger and stronger to the point that our futures are critically linked and we are now both positioned well to move successfully ahead together."
Dave Holmes, Regional Operations Manager, Pioneer Natural Resources



Student Success Goal:

Colorado students shall have the opportunity to succeed through high quality, cutting-edge instruction and educational services.

Community college courses are small in size and taught by highly qualified instructors who have master's and doctorate degrees. This allows for the students to get one-on-one attention from the instructors. That attention provides a solid foundation for the student whether they are going into the workforce or transferring to a four-year institution.



Key Strategies:

- Increase full-time faculty ratios at commuter colleges.
- Increase full-time faculty ratios in strategic subject areas that are important statewide priorities.
- Increase full-time/part-time faculty professional development programs around new instructional strategies.
- CCCS shall be nationally recognized in leading education innovation and reform.
- Continue to improve the delivery and effectiveness of student support services, including online support service for online students.
- Increase the use of productive educational technology.

Key Performance Measures:

- Percentage of full-time faculty compared to the previous fiscal year, normalized by student enrollment growth.
- Retention rates of resident students.
- Graduation/transfer success rates of resident students, where available.
- Results of student surveys on instructional and service performance.
- Develop additional measures of success as we move forward with the data system, including development of measures that identify students' educational goals and their progress toward completion of these goals.
- Collect and review professional development plans from all colleges annually to assure the plans address strategic initiatives.
- Assess the critical skills that will be necessary for students to succeed in an ever changing economy and incorporate these skills into our learning environment.
- Maintain accreditation for all colleges.

“The community college atmosphere - smaller classes, knowing your instructors and them knowing you by name, and caring faculty and staff - insure student success.”

Evelyn Kral, Developmental Math Faculty, Morgan Community College



“Spend your first two years concentrating on math and science classes, as well as other areas, and with more attention from your professors. When you do transfer to a larger school for a specific program in engineering or architecture, you will have a solid foundation for the education that will follow.” Connie Ryan, Principal Architect with HGF Architects Inc., from Pueblo, and a 1984 graduate of Otero Junior College in the Architectural Drafting program



Operational Excellence Goal:

The financial stability of the system's institutions and the physical safety of its students shall be ensured.

Appropriate funding is critical to the success of any endeavor and for the success of the students. Community colleges are integral to Colorado's economic health through the workforce training they provide in communities across the state. Without appropriate funding, our colleges cannot sustain their mission.



Key Strategies:

- Assure fiscal stability by:
 - Advocating for additional state funding in statewide funding formulas and General Assembly resource allocation decision-making;
 - Advocating for additional federal funding;
 - Diversifying and balancing various revenue streams in order to minimize the impact of interruptions in any one stream; and,
 - Effectively managing expenses and assuring adequate reserves for rainy days.
- Advocate for changing statutes and regulation that simplify administration.
- Continue to develop and refine comprehensive emergency management planning efforts.
- Maintain functional and adequate facilities and technology infrastructure.
- Maximize the use and value of capital assets and plan for future space and technology needs.

Key Performance Measures:

- Percentage of the CCCS appropriation change compared to overall higher education appropriation change.
- Ensure that reserve levels meet or exceed Board policy and that expense levels compare favorably to state and national benchmarks.
- Percentage of CCCS capital and controlled maintenance funding relative to statewide higher education capital funding.
- Develop plans for use of the Amendment 50 money that are aligned with the unique needs of each college, its students, and its community.
- Completion of emergency preparedness plans and campus mapping activities.
- Ensure that financial aid is maximized for our students, including the successful implementation of direct lending.
- Work with colleges to assure they annually evaluate their physical space needs and have plans to make progress toward space priorities.

