



Year Plan

strategic initiatives
and objectives

2013
2018



UPDATED JUNE 2014 WITH 2013 PERFORMANCE DATA

Community College District No. 508 Cook County State of Illinois

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Mayor

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From Mayor Rahm Emanuel

As Mayor, I am committed to ensuring that every Chicagoan has the opportunity to realize their potential and find a career that allows them to provide for their family. Education is the key to that success.

We are dealing with a skills gap in Chicago. At any given time, there are tens of thousands of unfilled job openings while city residents are still searching for employment. A skills-based education provides students with the knowledge they need for today's careers and the fast-growing fields of tomorrow.

As Chicago's community college system, City Colleges of Chicago provides high-quality, affordable higher education to tens of thousands of Chicagoans each year and serves as a critical bridge from our high school system to further college and careers.

With the groundbreaking College to Careers program that Chancellor Hyman and I launched at the end of 2011, Chicago has become an international model for innovative, quality education. This year, the World Bank came to Chicago to determine how to adapt this program across the globe. Over 100 companies and organizations are partnering with City Colleges to ensure their programs in fast-growing fields meet marketplace demand. Hundreds of students have since launched careers in College to Careers fields. The number of degrees our students are earning is up and the system has proposed a balanced budget that holds the line on property taxes and tuition increases while undertaking an ambitious plan to ensure its facilities prepare students for 21st century careers.

I am proud to see the strides we are making. City Colleges is increasingly becoming a key resource for employers looking to hire new talent and for four year colleges recruiting transfer students prepared to pursue a bachelor's degree.

The plan outlined in these pages provides a roadmap and benchmarks for City Colleges' continued growth. We will continue to reinvent and reinvest in education at every level in order to provide our students with the opportunity they deserve. A thriving City Colleges means a stronger City where every Chicagoan has a clear path to college and career success.

Rahm Emanuel
Mayor

From the Chancellor

In the first half of 2010, the City Colleges of Chicago (CCC) embarked upon a sweeping reform effort called Reinvention.

At its core, Reinvention is about creating a culture of student success. Every day we endeavor to become ever more relevant to the lives and economic well-being of Chicagoans, ensuring that our programs are relevant to the demands of the marketplace looking to fill jobs now and relevant to the rigor of the four-year institutions where we send our students.

In line with our mission statement, and like many other community colleges across the country, City Colleges had traditionally focused on providing access: making college options available for all students. However, Reinvention emphasizes focusing more sharply on success while continuing our steadfast dedication to broad access to educational opportunities for all. We must ensure that students not only get a chance to attend City Colleges, but that we truly deliver on the promise of education by ensuring more students complete their courses of study and that the degrees and certificates we confer are relevant to the real world.

Our focus on success has been guided by the following performance goals:

- Increase the number of students earning college credentials of economic value
- Increase the rate of transfer to bachelor's degree programs following City Colleges graduation
- Drastically improve outcomes for students requiring remediation
- Increase the number and share of ABE/GED/ESL students who advance to and succeed in college-level courses

These goals are designed to empower all of our students, whether they are looking for immediate employment, looking to transfer to a four-year institution, or looking to build their skills in developmental education or adult education to prepare themselves to succeed.

We also have been guided by the following organizational health goals:

- Improve the quality and effectiveness of student services and support
- Increase access to City Colleges, as measured by enrollment in programs that put students on the path to earning credentials of economic value
- Promote and reward effective teaching
- Improve operational discipline with a focus on high performance standards, including excellent financial management
- Ensure safe and secure teaching and learning environments

These goals challenge us to dramatically boost student support services and operate with the highest level of organizational discipline.

The areas most in need of reinvention have been identified by teams of faculty, students and staff who have proceeded to develop strategies to improve academic and student outcomes. One hundred of our faculty, students, and staff have worked full-time over the past two years, totaling more than 65,000 hours, to develop a set of student-focused, data-driven, and research-based initiatives. This model, unprecedented in community colleges nationwide, allows us to ensure that our entire organization is grounded and guided by the needs of our existing and prospective students.

Reinvention is bearing fruit. As documented here, City Colleges of Chicago is seeing strong growth in retention and completion, along with enrollment in credit-bearing courses. Our College to Careers initiative is creating new economic opportunity for Chicagoans by connecting them to high-growth, high-wage jobs while keeping tuition low. There will no doubt be setbacks, but we know we are on the right track.

We are building on these early encouraging results through the next stage of Reinvention - Reinvention⁷ - in which faculty and staff at every college are empowered to create a system of clear, structured pathways and comprehensive supports so that our students make the best choices and use their time and resources with us wisely and efficiently.

This document, completed using an in-house team over the last 18 months, outlines the core strategies and clear targets through 2018 that will allow us and all Chicagoans to gauge whether we continue to deliver on our educational promise.

Cheryl L. Hyman
Chancellor



From the Board Chair

Three years ago, City Colleges of Chicago (CCC) began a reinvention of its programs and services to better serve our students. That Reinvention effort took on many challenges. Above all, it set as its chief goal providing an education that creates a meaningful pathway to further education and careers.

While reading like a self-evident truth, this goal represented a radical refocusing of the entire institution on a mission centered around student success.

CCC has made enormous gains toward providing students with the supports they need to succeed academically by adding tutoring programs, Wellness Centers, and Veterans Services Centers that have helped thousands of students overcome the obstacles on their path toward completion. The student-to-adviser ratio was cut in half and students receive more notifications about registration, required classes and support services to help them stay on the right track.

When Mayor Emanuel and Chancellor Cheryl Hyman launched the College to Careers initiative, they enlisted the expertise of industry partners to review curriculum and ensure it aligned with available jobs in growing fields.

In operations, City Colleges strives every day to ensure resources are used as efficiently as possible to best serve students and ensure that each taxpayer dollar is spent responsibly.

We measure success one student at a time. But we also believe that each individual success is our collective success, strengthening our workforce and our economy here in Chicago.

As we look to the future, I am honored to be chair of the board and excited by the opportunities we have to continue improving both the educational and career options for our students.

This plan will allow us to rigorously measure City Colleges' performance – both academic and operational – over the next five years. It establishes quantifiable targets for degree completion, transfer, and career placement, to name a few, and outlines key strategies City Colleges will employ to reach these goals.

This comprehensive plan reflects City Colleges' effort to become a best-in-class community college system, the kind of system that our students and taxpayers deserve and our city needs. I hope you will join me in supporting this effort.

Paula Wolff
Board Chair

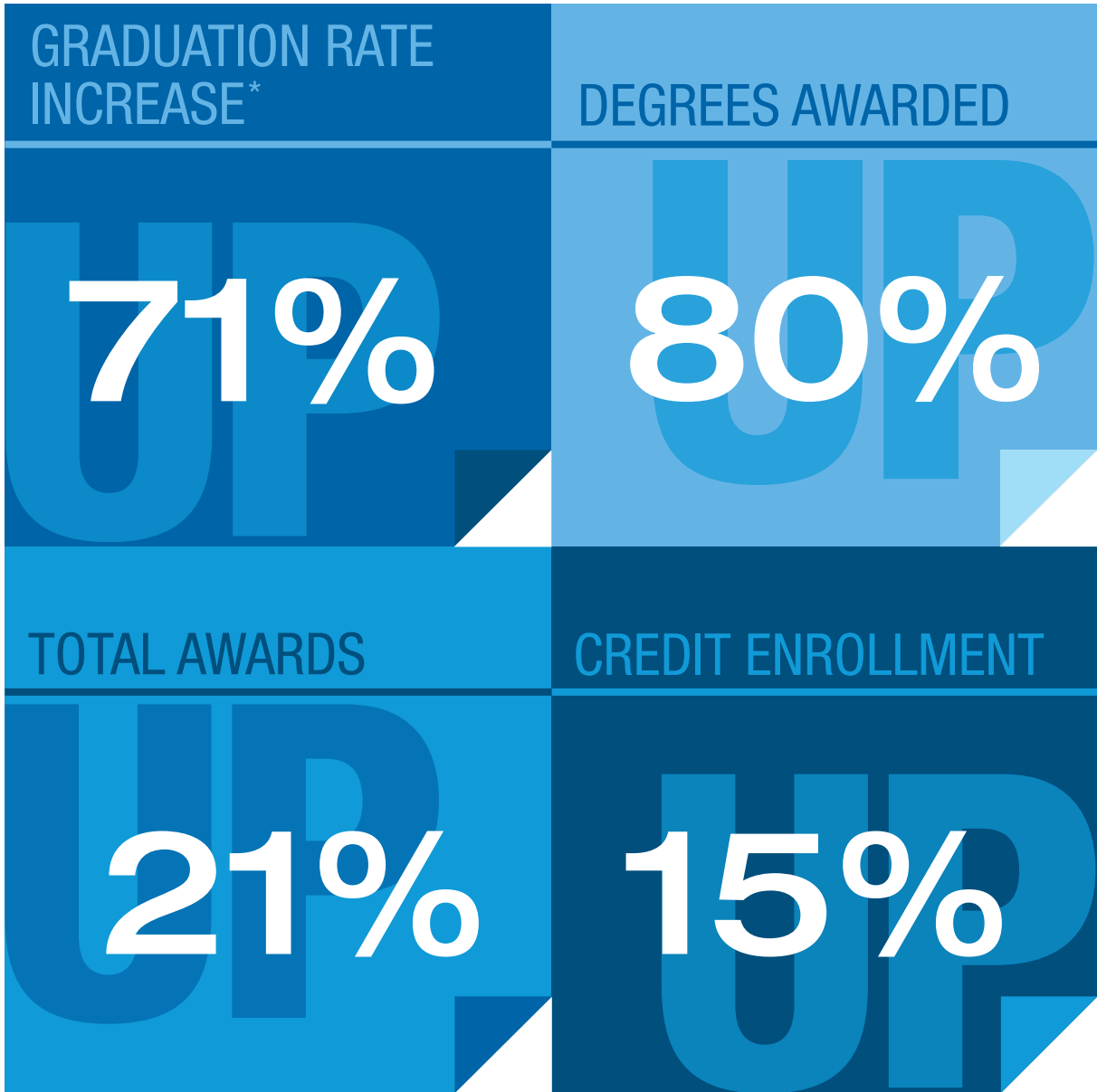


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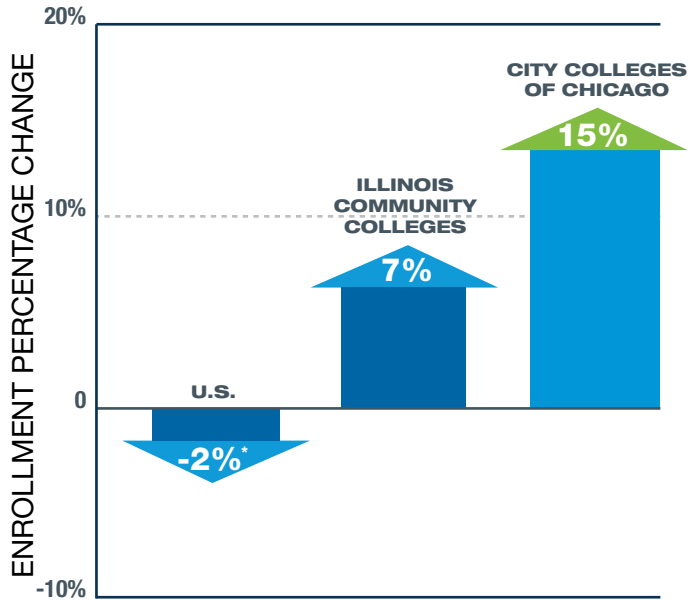
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SINCE REINVENTION BEGAN



* Integrated Post Secondary Data System (IPEDS) is the official federally reported graduation rate, which incorporates first-time, full-time students only.



*Source: U.S. data IPEDS 2009-2011 (best data available)

**2010-2013
CREDIT ENROLLMENT
TRENDS ACROSS
ILLINOIS AND
THE NATION**

Reinvention at Year Three

For City Colleges, success means that our students will get the guidance, support and instruction they need to use their time and resources efficiently and leave with a credential of economic value that prepares them for a career, whether their goal is to enter the workforce immediately or seek further education first. This renewed focus on student outcomes introduced by Chancellor Hyman, known as Reinvention, represented a paradigm shift for City Colleges. For Illinois' largest community college system, the numbers that mattered were no longer just enrollment, but rather a more robust set of outcomes, including completion, retention, and the value we deliver to students, their communities, employers and four-year colleges alike.

Since the launch of Reinvention in 2010, we have made decisive progress toward creating a true student-centered culture of success.

Completion

- When Chancellor Hyman arrived, the graduation rate was 7 percent, and by 2012, it had jumped to 11 percent, the highest in more than a decade. We project the 2013 graduation rate will be 12%.
- The number of degrees awarded since the launch of Reinvention is up by a total of 80% in 2013, the highest on record in City Colleges history.

Credit Enrollment

- Overall credit enrollment is up by nearly 9,000 students or 15 percent since the launch of Reinvention. New credit student enrollment has increased by 14 percent since Reinvention began.
- Robust, system-wide articulation agreements are newly in place with the Illinois Institute of Technology, the University of Illinois at Chicago and Urbana-Champaign, DePaul University and Lewis University, among other schools, making it easier for students to transfer credits.

College to Careers

- Under Mayor Rahm Emanuel's leadership, City Colleges launched College to Careers (C2C), a program that partners City Colleges faculty and staff with industry experts to better prepare students for careers in growing fields.
- More than 700 City Colleges students secured employment in C2C fields in between May 2012 and June 2013. To date, more than 100 companies and organizations are partners focusing on the areas of health sciences at Malcolm X College; transportation, distribution and logistics at Olive-Harvey College; business, entrepreneurship, and professional services at Harold Washington College; advanced manufacturing at Richard J. Daley College; information technology at Wilbur Wright College, and culinary arts and hospitality at Kennedy-King College. We are studying a C2C focus for Truman College.

Adult Education

- City Colleges has realigned its adult education off-site locations with the communities of greatest need in terms of adults lacking a high school diploma or English fluency as measured by the 2010 census, addressing what were true adult education deserts in Chicago.
- Between Fall 2012 and early 2013, City Colleges opened 30 new adult education sites, with more on the way.
- Enrollment increased by 5 percent from FY2012 to FY2013.



Operational Achievements Over the last three fiscal years, City Colleges has saved \$51 million dollars in administrative costs that are being redirected to the classroom. Improved processes are maximizing City Colleges' ability to attract talent.

- A new full-time faculty hiring program allows faculty to be sourced at least one year in advance and hired months before their actual start date, bringing City Colleges on par with our peers in higher education and positioning us to compete for the best academic talent.
- Key operations have been centralized at our District Office, management budgets have been cut, and overall, efficiencies boosted.
- The revenue stream has been improved by streamlining business enterprise operations – including our television and radio stations, food catering services, daycare centers and bookstores – in an effort to enhance revenue to generate improvement in financial results.
- New business and accounting standards have been implemented, including zero-based budgeting and monthly accruals.

New Capital Plan These savings and ongoing fiscal discipline resulted in the ability to supplement our investment in student programs and support services with brick-and-mortar projects to address years of neglected maintenance and reflect the latest changes in pedagogy and technology to ensure our students are job-ready and four-year-ready when they walk out of the classroom.

- City Colleges has launched a five-year, \$524 million capital plan, including \$77 million in system-wide academic and student-facing technology enhancements (i.e., smart classrooms, science classrooms, libraries, labs, and student support centers.)
- City Colleges will build a new Malcolm X College campus, including a new Allied Health Academy to support College to Careers near the heart of the Illinois Medical District.
- In addition, a new Transportation, Distribution and Logistics Center at Olive-Harvey College will be built with some funding from the State of Illinois.

Financial Stability

- The City Colleges budget of more than \$650 million is balanced with no increase to tuition or property taxes, for the second year in a row.
- City Colleges' fiscal year 2014 budget invests in our core mission by increasing funding for academic affairs by 8 percent, while decreasing overall operating funds by 2.3 percent.
- Our healthy financial profile will enable us to maximize internal and external resources and fund the capital plan using taxpayer dollars most efficiently.

Reducing Benefits Liability As part of a comprehensive review to bring benefits more in line with the market, we reduced our benefits liability by more than \$1 million a year.

- Reforms have included ending sick-day payouts for new non-union hires.
- Increasing health insurance co-pays and deductibles.
- Ending premium-free healthcare for senior leaders.
- Rescinding free lifetime retiree healthcare for those same leaders.
- Renegotiating contracts with some of the largest unions – which make up more than 60 percent of our unionized workforce – that have ended sick-day payouts for new hires, frozen sick-day banks in place for current employees, and eliminated step pay increases for new hires.

Union Contracts Our collaborative efforts with the unions that represent our employees illustrate a shared commitment by administrators and faculty to the success of all of our students.

- Full-time faculty, training specialists and professional staff agreed 10 months early to a five-year contract that begins in July 2013 and for the first time adds student outcome measures to the calculation of the overall compensation structure.
- An estimated 459 part-time adult educators agreed for the first time to create financial incentives to help improve student outcomes. This replaces retention pay – an automatic pay increase of up to three percent for remaining at City Colleges from one year to the next – with performance pay tied to progress toward State of Illinois targets for student outcomes.
- Renegotiated full-time and adult education faculty, clerical staff, and TV station electricians union contracts will save taxpayers more than \$15 million over terms of previous contracts.

Our work does not end here: we continue to build on our successes, and ensure that more City Colleges graduates will be connected with the education and employment they seek.

Executive Summary: CCC in 2018

At the end of this plan's term in 2018, five years from today, we aim to have transformed City Colleges into a best-in-class large, urban community college system where:

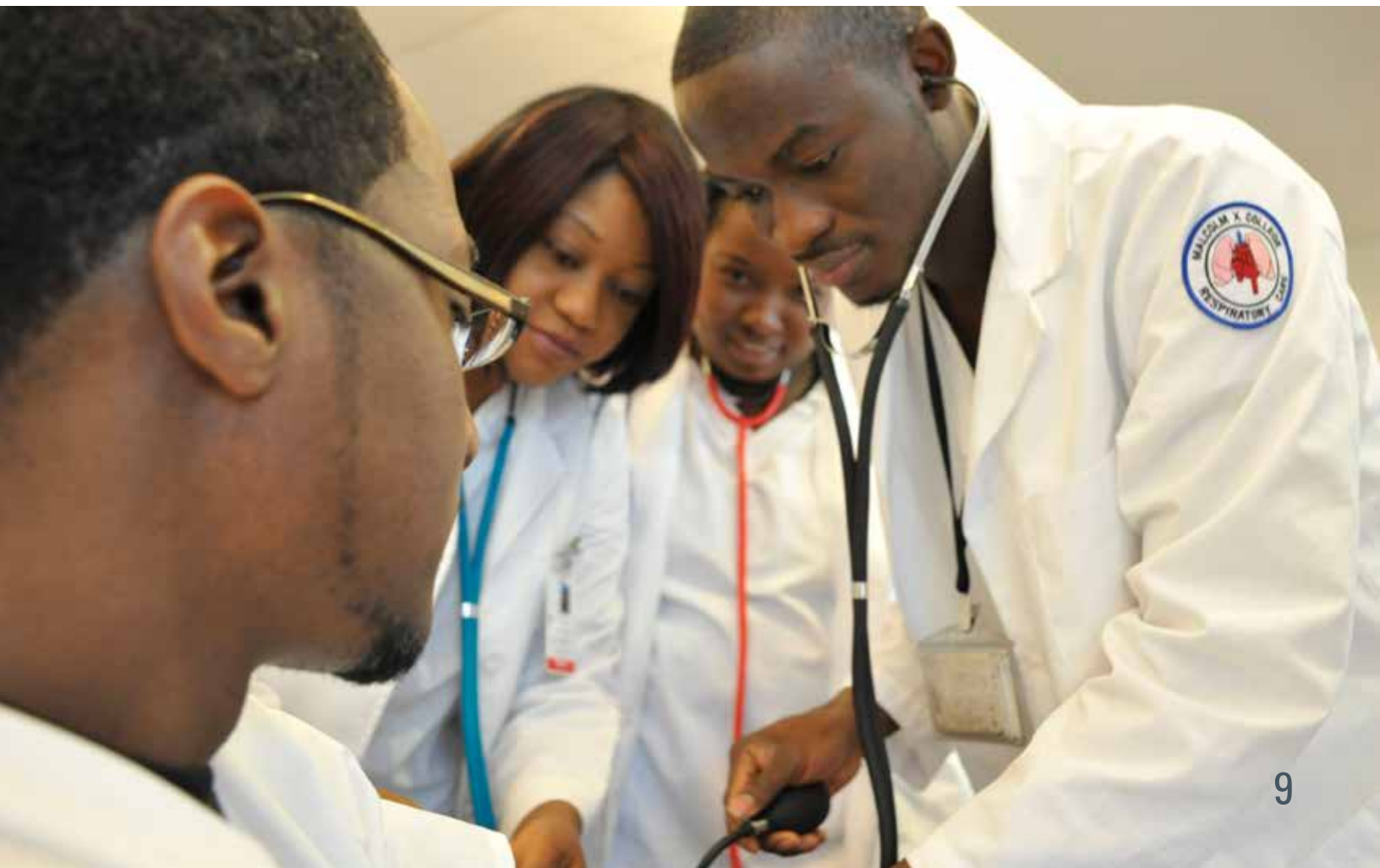
- The number of degrees awarded annually has increased by 37 percent to **5,414**.*
- The number of degrees and credentials of economic value awarded annually has jumped nearly 25 percent to **11,895**.*
- More than half (**55%**) of students transfer to four-year institutions following graduation from City Colleges and nearly double the percentage of students graduate (**20%+**) than today
- More than two-thirds (**71%**) of occupational completers are employed in their area of training
- A third (**33.1%**) of new remedial students advance to college-level work within one year, up 12 percent
- Four times (**2,424**) as many adult education students are transitioning into a credit-level course after one semester in GED or ESL programs

We also expect to be a healthy, strong institution that has:

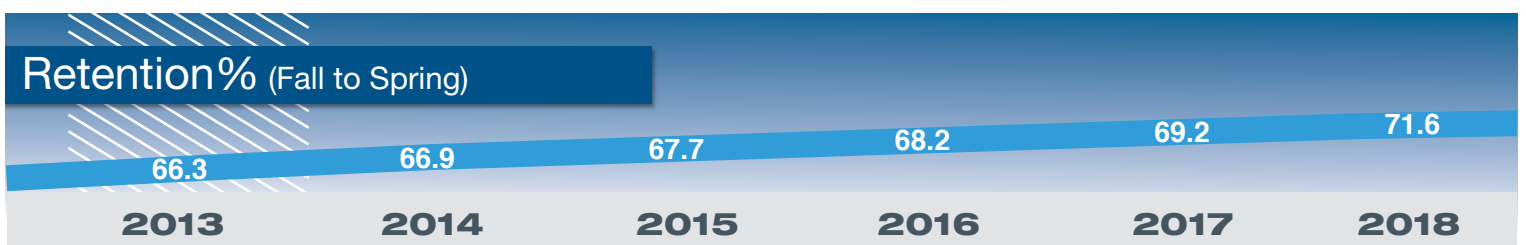
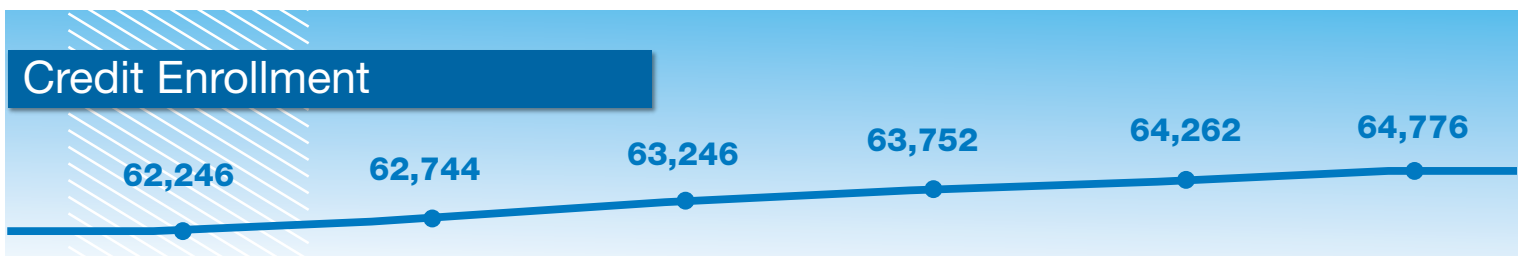
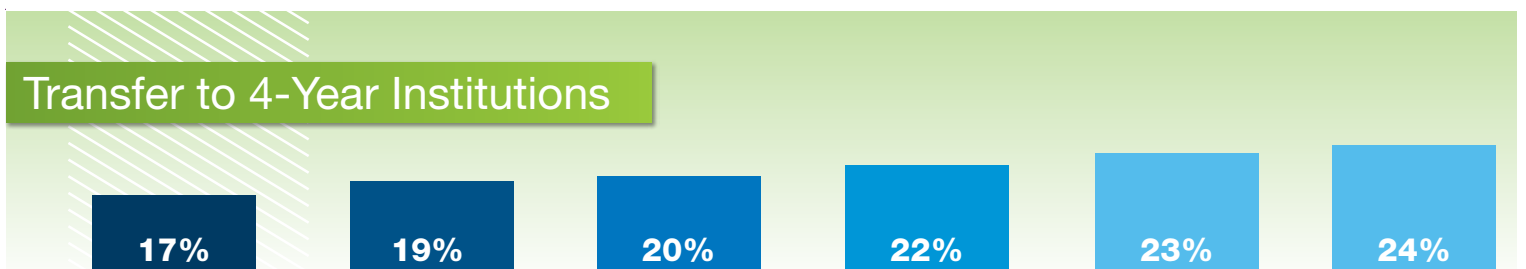
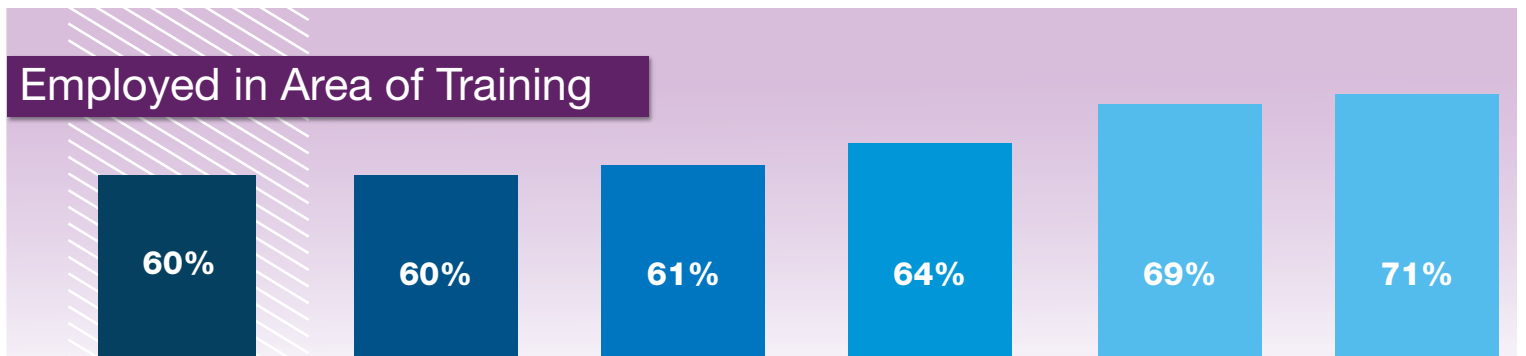
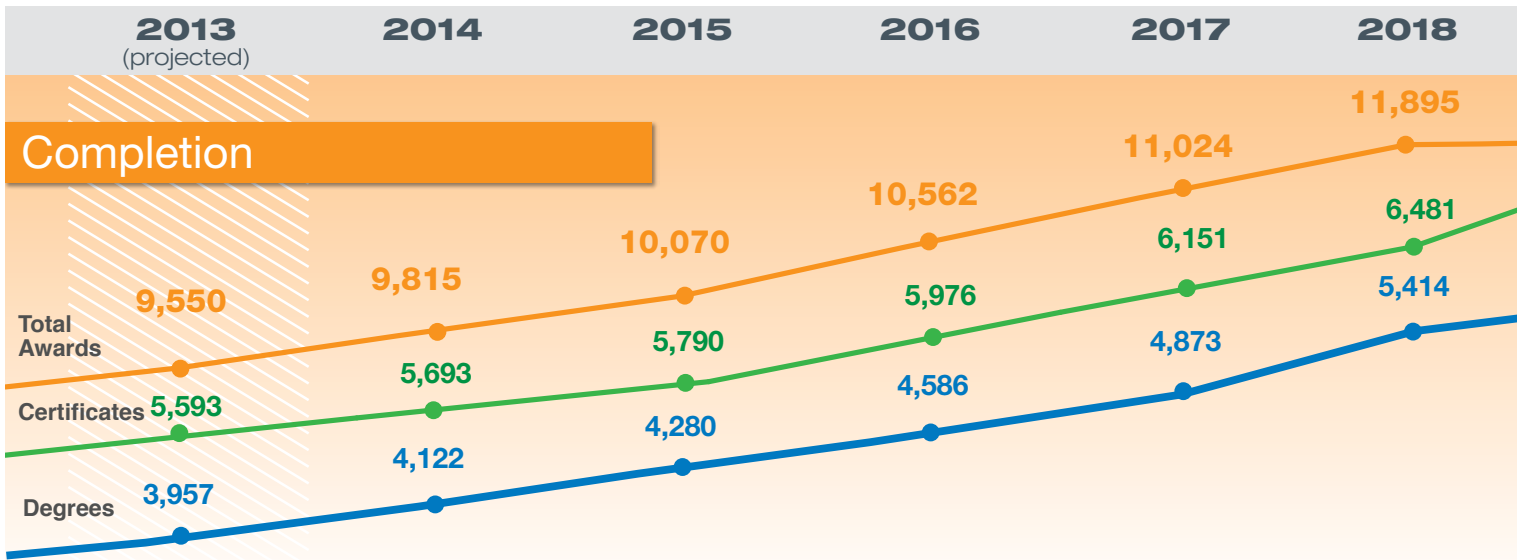
- Established itself on sound financial footing, with a prudent level of operating reserves (**3% of annual operating expenses**), in accordance with industry benchmarks and management goals, and enhanced financial monitoring.
- Increased our funds raised annually from grants and contracts by one-third (**\$40 million**)
- Cut in half the time to hire to **120 days** as a measure of an institution that develops itself the means to continue to drive student success
- Reduced reported crimes, including against persons and property, by **5%** in the plan's first year

This is an ambitious plan. While others have tackled a challenge like this in part or at a smaller scale, we believe it is imperative that we make good on this significant promise for the benefit of all Chicagoans.

* Degrees and credentials awarded targets compare FY2013 to FY2018. The remainder of the targets in this section compare the latest available data (FY2012 to FY2018).



CITY COLLEGES OF CHICAGO LOOKING FORWARD: 2013 - 2018 GOALS



Four Strategies

To reach these ambitious but necessary targets, City Colleges is pursuing four key strategies: increasing relevance, reducing time, increasing student supports and strengthening operations in order to boost retention and in turn completion. Taken together these strategies will establish a culture of student success at City Colleges that will improve the lives of our students, their communities and our city. These strategies will be furthered through Reinvention⁷ and the creation of a Student GPS (Guided Pathway to Success) that will ensure every student has a clear path to further college and careers.

- **Increasing relevance**

We must ensure that the courses of study that students embark on will advance their goal of moving to four-year universities or to a meaningful career within which they can progress. To deliver on this promise, we have sought input from employers and four-year institutions. We have examined what the marketplace will demand today and in the years ahead. We have evaluated what skills our students will need to thrive in fast-growing fields and on the campuses of four-year universities. Through this work, City Colleges' programs will have real value for employers, four-year colleges, and most importantly, our students' futures.

- **Reducing time**

We seek to maximize our students' resources – both the time and money spent at City Colleges as well as on the longer road to a bachelor's degree and beyond. At City Colleges, we provide a quality post-secondary education at one of the most affordable tuition rates in the region, giving us the opportunity to deliver an unprecedented educational value. To realize this value, we are reaching back to the K-12 education system and forward to four-year colleges and employers to maximize college readiness upon entry to City Colleges, to create a clear path through the institution, and to see to it that students maximize the number of transferable credits and earn careers in their desired field. Numerous studies show that the longer it takes to complete a degree, the less likely the chance of degree completion. We are, therefore, employing a number of strategies to reduce the length of students' programs without sacrificing educational quality, including structured pathways, predictive scheduling, whole program enrollment and more.

- **Increasing student supports**

Completion is key to success. A credential or degree earned at City Colleges is a signal of our students' persistence and skills and – when relevant – has marketable value that can immediately improve the lives of our students and their families.

We know that it will be crucial for us to better understand our students and for our students to better understand how to navigate our system. In improving our student supports, we aim to use data more effectively to help students, and provide more information to students so they can better help themselves. This will not only require improvements in our data management, but people who help students get to their end goals.

- **Strengthening operations**

In order to keep City Colleges strong for the coming five years, and to ensure that students are in conducive learning environments and working with the best faculty and staff, we need to foster excellent financial and human resources management.

With a careful eye on our targets and tireless implementation of our strategies, City Colleges will be recognized as an economic engine for Chicago and a linchpin in our students' success.

Excellent teaching is the key to our success. The strides we are making are realized by the work undertaken by our faculty day in and day out in our classrooms. In 2012, City Colleges and two of its faculty unions worked together to incorporate for the first time ever student success metrics as a basis for bonuses. Similar innovative reforms, led by faculty leaders, are being brought to the tenure process. It is through a strong partnership with faculty that City Colleges will ultimately ensure the success of all of our students.

Recognizing students' full range of accomplishments

The IPEDS (Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System) rate is an institution of higher learning's official graduation rate as measured following strict criteria under the Higher Education Act of 1965. City Colleges of Chicago's IPEDS preliminary rate estimate is 11 percent (a number in the process of final validation by the U.S. Department of Education that should be published in Spring 2013); the rate is up from 7 percent when the Reinvention initiative began in 2010. The rate captures only a portion of City Colleges' graduates, because it only includes "first-time, full-time" students who graduate within three years of first enrolling. City Colleges of Chicago is fully intent on working to help as many students as possible complete their studies as quickly as possible, so they can begin reaping the rewards of education.

As documented by Complete College America, time is very much the enemy of our students: the more you "linger" in school, the less likely you are to complete. Our data shows we are making progress in addressing this issue. IPEDS also tracks a four-year graduation rate, which at City Colleges has grown at a faster pace than the three-year rate. Though not as much as we

would like, this points to progress in our efforts to shorten the time to degree from 5 years or more, which used to be the norm. However, we also are very mindful that for most of our students, reality collides with outdated organizational expectations. Nearly half of our credit students are part-time; none of them can be counted in the graduation rate. Any returning student is not counted in the graduation rate.

Under the leadership of Education Secretary Arne Duncan, and with input from City Colleges, the federal government has begun a national conversation on this important issue. It must continue and deliver a more accurate "grade report" for institutions like ours. This is not about making excuses but rather recognizing the true achievements of our students and the true contributions of our dedicated faculty and staff.

As our nation rightly moves toward an education system that is more performance-based, we need to ensure outcome measures are encompassing the full breadth of student success, at the risk of otherwise one day seeing students and taxpayers severely shortchanged.

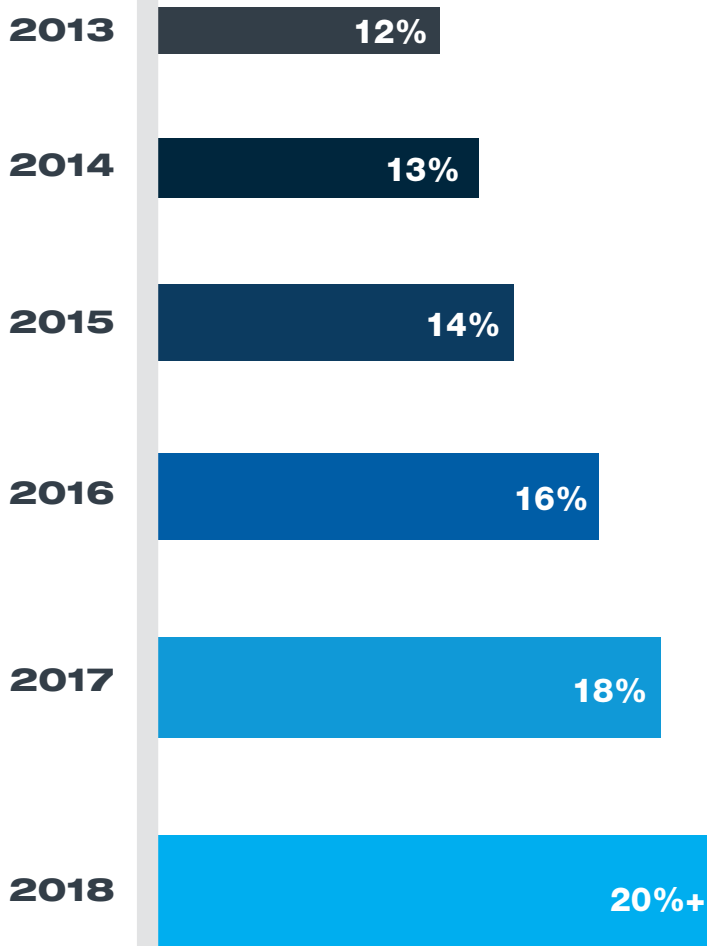
Official Federal Graduation Rate

The graduation rate is an official, federal measure collected and reported by the U.S. Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS) that only includes "first-time, full-time" students who graduate within three years of enrolling in a community college.

Many of our students are part-time and take more than three years to graduate. As an illustration of this, in Spring 2012, City Colleges counted 9,689 degree and certificate completers, an increase of more than 1,100 (13 percent) over the prior year that included a 35-percent jump in the number of students who earned an associate degree. Due to the IPEDS calculation criteria, we expect this will only translate into a modest increase – to 12 percent – in the official 2012 IPEDS graduation rate that will be published in 2014.

We plan on continuing to steadily improve our IPEDS graduation rate, which stood at 7 percent when Reinvention began.

Graduation Rate Targets



The model of change

The Reinvention model is unique among community colleges across the country. When Chancellor Hyman arrived, she recognized that those most knowledgeable about the opportunities for change at City Colleges were the faculty, staff and students who had invested their time, labor and money in the institution. Their first-hand knowledge of the organization and what could work on the ground would be critical to creating sustainable change.

Reinvention launched with collaborative teams of faculty, staff and students from every college. Their task: to comprehensively review and revamp all aspects of City Colleges to ensure students' success. They were given time away from their regular responsibilities to dedicate themselves to the reform effort. Faculty and staff received paid leave so they could focus full-time on designing and implementing change. Students were also paid for working part-time outside of their classes.

Nearly three years later, the model remains in place. After a semester or two on Reinvention, most faculty, staff and students rotate back to their colleges to become ambassadors for change and executors of their own projects on their campuses while new taskforce members join the team each semester. This model has created a permanent mechanism for deep and lasting change at City Colleges. And while necessary, it is not sufficient.

Reinvention⁷

In 2013, City Colleges launched Reinvention⁷, or Reinvention to the seventh power, implying the multiplication of impact by embedding the taskforce reform model at each of the seven City Colleges. Reinvention⁷ puts in place the processes and procedures that allow students to make good choices, to complete on time, and to transfer or move directly into the workforce. Through Reinvention⁷, City Colleges is creating our own StudentGPS, or Student Guided Path to Success, a comprehensive system of guided pathways and supports that will inform some of our students' most critical life decisions and help put them on the track to success.

Reinvention⁷ ensures that cultural change permeates every corner of City Colleges – from every district department to every college – from the advisors to the deans to the faculty to the support staff and of course to our students. Every person at City Colleges has a hand in bringing about our reinvention. Every member of the staff and faculty at City Colleges is responsible for student success and has a role in creating the structures to see that success realized.

The first area of focus for Reinvention⁷ is to leverage the local expertise at the colleges to develop and communicate with students about the paths they can take to college and career success. To begin, college-based teams are working on articulating the guided pathways under College to Careers to enable all of our incoming students to make an informed decision on their path, fully aware of its requirements, opportunities, and future implications. The teams will then examine how we deliver our courses, incorporating tools such as whole program enrollment, and block and predictive scheduling where appropriate.

Reinvention⁷ enables City Colleges to leverage the key learnings from Reinvention to make change at scale, building a new system of clear pathways colleges so that all incoming students at every one of our colleges will have a roadmap to success as they begin their journey, will have access to relevant programs with a schedule they can plan for well in advance, and the supports in place to ensure they complete.

Reinvention⁷ will allow us to meet the ambitious goals you will read about next.

GOALS & TARGETS



“Reinvention is a very exciting process of change—a comprehensive overhaul that is increasing graduation rates, and enabling more graduates to get good jobs and transfer successfully to four-year institutions.”

Anne Ladky, executive director of Women Employed in Chicago

Goals & Targets:

Measuring student access and success

Through a combination of discussions with faculty, staff, and students, and analysis of the challenges confronting current and prospective students, City Colleges has developed specific measures that, collectively, forge a culture of student success.

Our four performance goals deal with how we will know whether we are improving student success. Our organizational health goals deal with a combination of student access and underlying factors that must be in place for us to achieve any of our goals, such as financial health.

Increase the number of students earning college credentials of economic value.

City Colleges has made significant strides over the past three years in terms of the number of students earning credentials of economic value. The total number of degrees awarded at City Colleges in 2013 will be almost 4,000, up 80 percent since Reinvention began and the highest on record in City Colleges history. In spite of a temporary decrease in the number of certificates awarded in 2013 due to the realignment of occupational programs to better correspond to market demand, overall awards granted are up 21% in the same time period. Our IPEDS graduation rate as calculated by the U.S. Department of Education for first-time, full-time certificate and degree students who complete their studies within three years – has jumped from 7 at Chancellor Hyman’s arrival and the beginning of Reinvention to 13 percent in 2013 (projected). We must build upon this early progress by boosting retention and giving students clear, relevant, and direct pathways to high-growth, high-wage jobs through our flagship College to Careers initiative and to successful college transfer through our transfer support initiatives. This is the underpinning of Reinvention⁷. Our goal is to nearly double our graduation rate to achieve an IPEDS rate of more than 20 percent by 2018.

Based on a review of our peer group’s achievements in this area, we know our targets are aggressive but achievable. We define our peer group as the 108 community colleges located in cities of 100,000 residents or more, with fall enrollment that exceeds 5,000 students, and where at least half of first-time, full-time students are Pell Grant recipients. For instance, Kansas City, Kansas Community College exceeded our projected growth rate, going from 12 to 23 percent in six years. Our recent track record gives us confidence we can meet this ambitious goal. Our very own Kennedy-King College will have gone from an 8 percent graduation rate in 2009 to a projected 26 percent in 2013. Albeit starting with much lower graduation rates, San Antonio College and Central Piedmont College in Charlotte saw IPEDS rate growth of 150 and 83 percent, respectively, since 2009 – both using the same predictive scheduling that City Colleges of Chicago is working towards.

Reinvention already has taken a significant bite out of City Colleges’ chronic dropout problem by boosting student retention, adding 7 percentage points to the percentage of students who pass the critical milestone of 15 credit hours. In the case of both completion and retention, we are not satisfied with the numbers: 9 in 10 first-time, full-time students fail to complete within three years and roughly half our students fail to reach 15 credit hours — or the equivalent of one full semester of coursework — over the same period of time. But the trend is headed in the right direction, and the retention trend in particular supports a forecast of continued improvement.

The retention trend numbers also indicate we are making progress in ensuring students do not just accumulate credit hours, but get the right kind of credit hours leading to their educational goals. In 2010, only 60 percent of associate’s degree enrollees who earned at least 60 credits earned a two-year degree. In 2012, nearly all of them did.

We also are forecasting robust growth in student placement in relevant jobs as a result of our College to Careers initiative to align our occupational curriculum with the expectations of industry. Our goal is to have in five years more than two-thirds of completers employed in their area of training. College to Careers is about more than jobs; it is about good-paying jobs. We expect the median earnings of graduates in these jobs to increase and be sufficient to at least sustain a family. City Colleges does not currently track this metric. We will begin doing so and then will revise targets for growth in this area once the 2013 figure is available as a baseline.

Finally, enrollment is a pipeline to growth in each of these areas. We have the opportunity to build upon strong enrollment growth over the last three years.

Completion within 3 years

	Fall 2006 Cohort (Class of 2009)	Fall 2007 Cohort (Class of 2010)	Fall 2008 Cohort (Class of 2011)	Fall 2009 Cohort (Class of 2012)	FY2013	PROJECTED				
						FY2014	FY2015	FY2016	FY2017	FY2018
Percent of students in the IPEDS cohort (Fall first-time, full-time degree/cert. seeking student) who completes a City Colleges degree or certificate within 150% of normal completion time (2 years for certificate, 3 years for associate degrees)	7%	8%	11%	11%	13% ✓	13%	14%	16%	18%	20%+

✓ = FY13 goal attained

Total degrees/certificates

	FY2008	FY2009	FY2010	FY2011	FY2012	FY2013	PROJECTED				
							FY2014	FY2015	FY2016	FY2017	FY2018
Total number of degrees and certificates awarded	8,277	7,897	8,707	8,557	9,689	10,017 ✓	9,815	10,070	10,562	11,024	11,895
Total number of degrees awarded	1,813	2,201	2,421	2,459	3,324	3,778	4,122	4,280	4,586	4,873	5,414
Total number of certificates awarded	6,464	5,696	6,286	6,098	6,365	6,239 ✓	5,693	5,790	5,976	6,151	6,481

Credit retention from Fall to Spring semesters

	Fall 2007 to Spring 2008	Fall 2008 to Spring 2009	Fall 2009 to Spring 2010	Fall 2010 to Spring 2011	Fall 2011 to Spring 2012	Fall 2012 to Spring 2013	PROJECTED				
							Fall 2013 to Spring 2014	Fall 2014 to Spring 2015	Fall 2015 to Spring 2016	Fall 2016 to Spring 2017	Fall 2017 to Spring 2018
Retention Rate*	63.5%	66.5%	68.0%	68.0%	66.2%	67.6% ✓	66.9%	67.7%	68.2%	69.2%	71.6%

*Percent of students enrolled in the Fall and retained in the following Spring

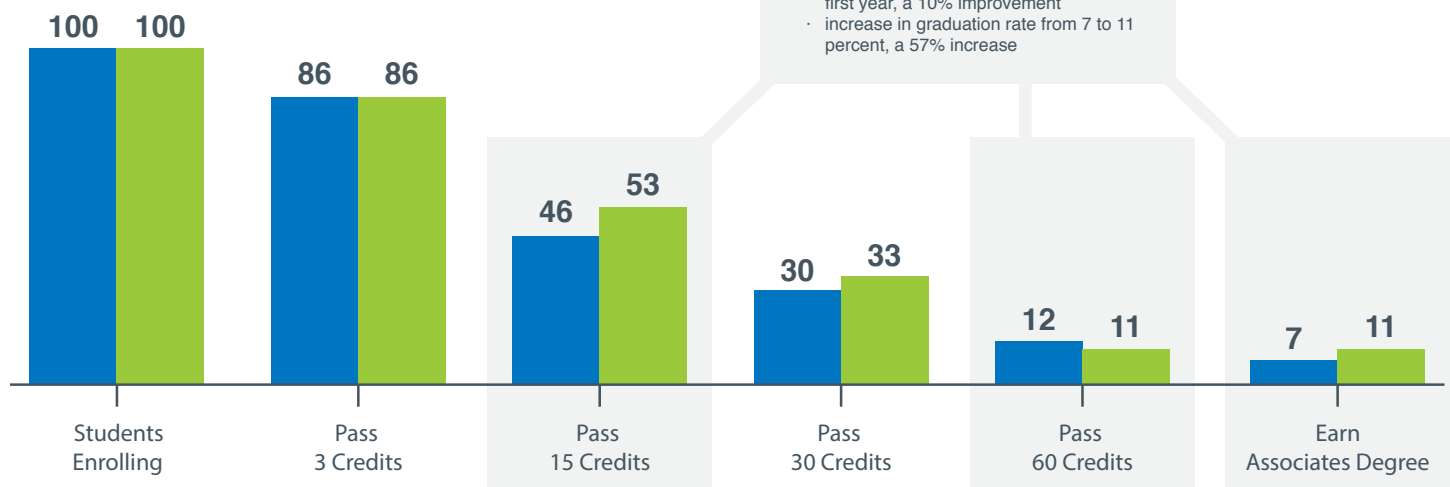
Job placement and median earnings

	FY2008	FY2009	FY2010	FY2011	FY2012	FY2013	PROJECTED				
							FY2014	FY2015	FY2016	FY2017	FY2018
Percent of students employed in the occupational area of their training	62%	61%	60%	60%	N/A ¹	60% ✓	60%	61%	64%	69%	71%
Median earnings of City Colleges graduates who are employed in the occupational area of their training ²	-	-	-	-	-	\$31,200 ✓	\$31,824	\$32,461	\$34,262	\$36,149	\$38,129

¹ Data not yet available from CCC post-graduation survey.

² CCC will begin tracking this data in 2013 to set a baseline that will refine future goals

3-year completion milestones Percent of Associate enrollees



Source: 2006 IPEDS data; 2007 cohort data, 2008 IPEDS data; 2009 cohort data

Enrollment with a purpose

While many of the measures above focus on student success, we are always cognizant of our need to ensure adequate student access. Urban community colleges across the country that excel in graduating their students concurrently enroll more of them, help current students complete, and have more new students follow in their footsteps. Over the past several years, City Colleges has seen a decline in overall enrollment as a result of a strategic decision to focus on credit and adult education enrollment.

Looking at overall enrollment, we appear to be bucking the worst of a demographic trend that is affecting Illinois community colleges, which experienced an average overall enrollment decline of -3.8 percent between 2011 and 2012. City Colleges lost slightly more than 1 percentage point over the same period. Down 0.4 percent in overall enrollment in spring 2013, City Colleges again outperformed most peers, which averaged a decline five times greater than ours. Our overall enrollment decline is driven by a drop in non-credit bearing continuing education courses (i.e., karate, dance, scrapbooking, etc.), which are not central

to our mission and do not advance the goal of increasing the number of students earning credentials of economic value. City Colleges has given students in these courses referrals to city agencies like the Chicago Park District and other community organizations that provide these classes as part of their core mission.

Enrollment in credit courses has increased markedly, showing the benefits of initiatives like College to Careers, refocusing our marketing and recruitment efforts, and better articulating the value of a certificate or degree from City Colleges. A federal financial aid rule that made it easier for students to enroll in summer courses was changed for summer 2012, prompting a sharp drop in summer credit enrollment that means credit enrollment will be down slightly for the 2012-2013 academic year. However, the overall credit trend is still positive: the projected 2013 credit enrollment of approximately 62,391 students is up 15% since Reinvention began.

The numbers of new credit students to City Colleges remain robust, at 25,000 so far in 2013, compared to 22,000 a year before Reinvention began. A years-long slide in adult education enrollment may be coming to an end; City Colleges saw a 5 percent increase in adult education from FY2012 to FY2013. This results from strategies to boost program quality and term-to-term and in-term retention, as well as the geographic realignment of City Colleges' adult education offerings with demand as documented by the 2010 census.

This performance in credit and adult education enrollment reaffirms our commitment to strategically growing enrollment, rather than seeking overall enrollment growth (including personal interest courses) for its own sake. Our goal is enrollment with a purpose.

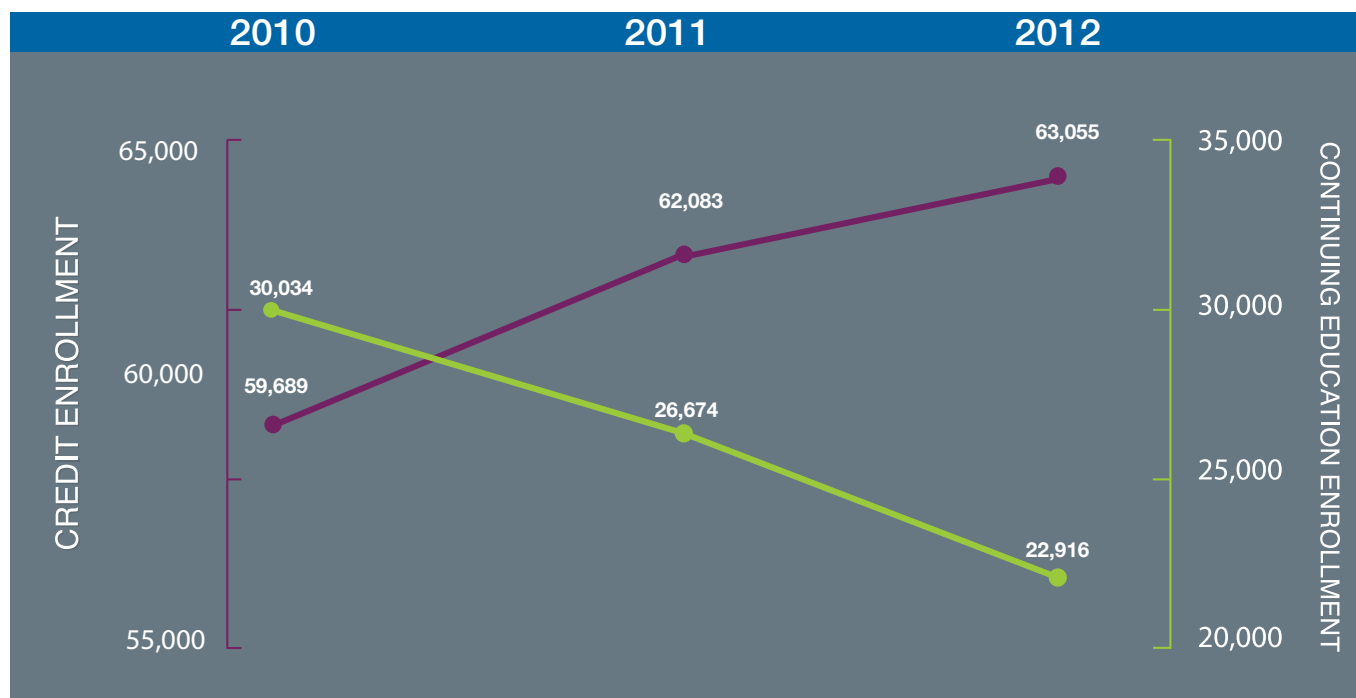
Total unduplicated enrollment	FY2008	FY2009	FY2010	FY2011	FY2012	FY2013	PROJECTED				
							FY2014	FY2015	FY2016	FY2017	FY2018
Total unduplicated enrollment	113,277	120,938	127,517	119,449	116,765	114,255 ✓	108,252	109,139	110,110	111,340	112,837

City Colleges enrollment by student type*	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	FY2013	PROJECTED				
							FY2014	FY2015	FY2016	FY2017	FY2018
Credit	50,683	53,360	59,689	62,083	63,055	62,391 ✓	62,744	63,246	63,752	64,262	64,776
Adult Education	38,701	42,294	43,332	35,978	34,836	36,642 ✓	35,371	35,725	36,082	36,623	37,356
Continuing Education	26,483	28,232	30,034	26,674	22,916	18,508 ✓	16,348	16,430	16,594	16,843	17,180

*Note: Totals would exceed the unduplicated headcount enrollment (above) due to some students enrolling in more than one program type, and hence being double counted.

College to Careers Enrollment	FY2008	FY2009	FY2010	FY2011	FY2012	FY2013	PROJECTED				
							FY2014	FY2015	FY2016	FY2017	FY2018
Total College to Careers Program Enrollment	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	9,518* ✓	17,611	26,163	34,716	43,268	51,821

*Note: Represents Fall 2012 and Spring 2013 only.



✓ = FY13 goal attained

Increase the rate of transfer to bachelor's degree programs following City Colleges graduation.¹

The difference in earning potential between workers with a Baccalaureate degree versus a high school diploma – what economists call the “college-graduate wage premium” – has risen sharply since 1980 and now stands at 84 percent.² Further, students with bachelor's degrees have lower unemployment rates, and jobs requiring a bachelor's degree continue to grow steadily while jobs requiring less than a college education continue to shrink.³ Nearly half of City Colleges students – including students in many of our occupational programs – are on track to transfer to a four-year institution either right after City Colleges or by going back after some time in the workplace. Just as with job placement, we must focus on ensuring that they not only transfer, but do so in a meaningful way that holds economic value. As many students as possible should have a clear pathway through City Colleges and should transfer as full juniors or as close to full juniors as possible.

	FY2009	FY2010	FY2011	FY2012	FY2013	PROJECTED				
						FY2014	FY2015	FY2016	FY2017	FY2018
Percent of CCC transfer degree completers who transfer to a four-year institution within two years of completing a CCC program*	44%	45%	47%	41%	42% ✓	42%	43%	47%	51%	55%

*Baccalaureate / Transfer graduates include graduates of the Associate in Arts (AA), Associate in Applied Science (AAS), Associate in Science (AS), Associate in General Studies (AGS), Associate in Engineering Science (AES), Associate in Fine Arts (AFA) and Associate in Arts Teaching (AAT).

Studies show that students who transfer following completion of an associate degree are more likely to go on and complete their bachelor's and that is why we have consciously chosen to emphasize completion prior to transfer. Nevertheless, recognizing that currently the vast majority of our transfer students transfer prior to completion, we will also continue to monitor the transfer rate of students with 12 credits or more.

When one considers this measure, City Colleges has experienced a decrease in the two-year transfer rate from 2010 to 2011. There is no clear explanation for this, though it is possible that more students have opted to stay at City Colleges longer rather than “transferring out” – thanks to the influx of tutors, advisers, wellness centers and other student-centered initiatives, along with a crisper articulation by City Colleges of the financial savings realized by staying at City Colleges the first two years on the way to a Baccalaureate degree. This possible rationale is also supported by the increase in the retention rate.

Whatever the source of the fluctuation the last two years, the goal of timely and efficient transfer remains paramount for those students who have decided to pursue a four-year degree. To support this goal, City Colleges has launched Reinvention⁷ to ensure students use their time and money with us wisely and have a clear path to completion and their goal of transfer or careers. To further bolster this work, we are creating transfer centers, boosting advisers and entering into strict articulation agreements with four-year universities. This, we predict, will result in boosting the numbers of transfers, and so we have set a goal that by 2018 nearly a quarter of students completing 12 credit hours will transfer to a four-year institution, an increase of 8 points over 2011, the latest available measure.

	FY2009	FY2010	FY2011	FY2012	FY2013	PROJECTED				
						FY2014	FY2015	FY2016	FY2017	FY2018
Number of Fall new students that transfer to 4-year institution after earning 12 credits	331	546	635	670	665 ✓	726	736	853	950	1121

¹Transfer rates are calculated according to complex USDOE formulas and are not available in preliminary form until the year following the graduation date.

²The College Wage Premium. Jonathan James, Federal Reserve Bank of Cleveland, 2012. <http://www.clevelandfed.org/research/commentary/2012/2012-10.cfm>

³“The College Advantage: Weathering the Economic Storm” by Carnavale, Jayasundera, and Cheah, Georgetown University Center on Education and the Workforce, 2012.

Drastically improve outcomes for students requiring remediation.

With more than 87 percent of incoming students requiring some amount of remedial education to achieve college-level readiness, and with clear evidence that the longer students remain in remediation the less likely they are to complete college, we must look for ways to reduce both the number of students arriving at our doors unprepared for college and the distance they are from being college-level. We must also alter our approaches to remedial education to reduce the time that any student is required to remain there before reaching college-level coursework. Co-requisites (classes taken concurrently rather than in embedding succession), contextualized remediation (embedding math and/or literacy skills in occupational or other coursework), summer refresher programs, as well as more accurate placement measures are among the strategies we are using to reduce time in remediation. Ultimately, we believe that addressing these issues early in students careers at City Colleges will be the best way to position them toward degree attainment and transfer.

We have had success with accelerating many students past remediation to college-level courses over the last two years. However, this has left behind a remedial cohort that is more academically challenged. Without their more advanced peers remaining alongside them, the outcomes for those left in remediation have experienced a drop. However, as our initiatives allow us to place students more accurately and as we improve our remediation efforts, we believe the trend will return to be entirely positive: Our goal is to have at least one out of every three students in remedial coursework progress to college-level work within one year of their first semester by 2018.

	FY2012	FY2013	PROJECTED				
			FY2014	FY2015	FY2016	FY2017	FY2018
Percent of students in the cohort (new students enrolled in remedial course) advancing to college-level work within 1 year of their first semester.	29.5%	32% ✓	30.2%	30.5%	31.2%	31.8%	33.1%

Increase the number and share of ABE/GED/ESL student who advance to and succeed in college-level courses.

ABE is Adult Basic Education, consisting of math, literacy and writing courses for students testing at the 1st through 8th grade levels. GED is General Educational Development for students to prepare for high school equivalency. ESL is English as a Second Language, courses which provide instruction for non-native English speakers. We encourage students in each of these programs to not only progress through that given program, but to then continue on into college credit courses and subsequently achieve success in those college-level programs. Ultimately, our analysis of labor market data shows that students increasingly require a college-level credential to be employable.⁴

We have already seen an increase in the numbers of adult education students advancing to college-level work over the last year. We aim to further accelerate the improvements and quadruple the numbers within five years.

	FY2010	FY2011	FY2012	FY2013	PROJECTED				
					FY2014	FY2015	FY2016	FY2017	FY2018
Total adult education students identified in the fiscal year who transition to at least one credit course after one semester	513	473	606	989 ✓	909	1181	1773	2128	2424

To ensure that more adult education students transition into college-level courses, we first have to ensure we are reaching students who need our programs the most. To that end, we have undertaken a realignment of our adult education off-site locations to better serve communities of greatest need. We have also significantly expanded bridge programs which provide math and literacy instruction as well as offer students the opportunity to earn industry-recognized credentials in College to Careers fields. The expanded Gateway to City Colleges program provides academic and social supports to assist advanced adult education students in making the transition to credit courses, to name a few efforts in this area.

In addition to our four performance goals, we have identified organizational health goals that we deem as foundational necessities to achieving our performance goals:

Increase the quality and effectiveness of student services and support.

All four of our performance goals rely heavily on our ability to serve our students' needs beyond the classroom. From admissions and advising through transfer and career placement, we must provide effective supports to our students that remove barriers to success and encourage persistence and achievement. As with moving students from developmental education to college credit, we believe that an early indicator of success is our students' credit accumulation.

In 5 years, our goal is to have increased by 25 percent the share of students who successfully complete in their first year 30 and 15 credits for full-time and part-time students, respectively. If we have more students accumulating more credits quickly, there will be a higher chance of their graduation.

	FY2012	FY2013	PROJECTED				
			FY2014	FY2015	FY2016	FY2017	FY2018
Percent of students in the cohort (Fall first-time, full-time degree/cert. seeking students taking >12 credit hrs) who earn 30 credits within their first year	7.7%	8.1% ✓	8.1%	8.2%	8.6%	8.9%	9.6%
Percent of students in the cohort (Fall first-time, part-time degree/cert. seeking students taking <12 credit hrs) who earn 15 credits within their first year	19.1%	19.8% ✓	20.0%	20.4%	21.3%	22.2%	23.9%

Improve operational discipline with a focus on high performance standards including excellent financial management.

We anticipate improving our operations across the board to better support our student success goals. We will focus on financial management, fundraising, and human resources as leading indicators over the coming years. We will maintain a strong unrestricted fund balance of 3% of our operations along with enhanced financial monitoring.

Metric	FY2010	FY2011	FY2012	FY2013	PROJECTED				
					FY2014	FY2015	FY2016	FY2017	FY2018
Percentage of unrestricted fund balance to total expenses	2.5%	5.5%	6.1%	3.2% ✓	3.0%	3.0%	3.0%	3.0%	3.0%

We will increase by a third the funds raised through grants and contracts.

Metric	FY2012	FY2013	PROJECTED				
			FY2014	FY2015	FY2016	FY2017	FY2018
Increase the amount of money awarded through grants and contracts	\$30M	\$32M	\$35M	\$37.5M	\$39M	\$40M	\$40M

For Human Resources, in addition to the establishment of a performance management system and significantly improved on-boarding process for new employees, we want to cut in half the time it takes us to hire faculty and staff. Ultimately, we know that improving our HR processes will make it possible for us to have the most talented possible team interacting with our students.

Metric	FY2010	FY2011	FY2012	FY2013	PROJECTED				
					FY2014	FY2015	FY2016	FY2017	FY2018
Improve time to hire	N/A*	240 Days	240 Days	180 Days ✓	190 Days	160 Days	150 Days	120 Days	120 Days

Ensure safe and secure teaching and learning environments.

The safety and security of City Colleges students, faculty and staff are our first priority. We have made strong progress towards systematizing our security practices, which has paid off in reduced crimes against persons and property district-wide. Unlike other measures, we make crime projections in one-year increments. Following that practice, we aim to reduce overall reported crimes, including crimes against property and persons, by 5% between FY2012 and FY2013.

	FY2011	FY2012	FY2013
Reported crime	860	811	770 ✓
Crime against persons	140	118	112
Crime against property	373	322	306

STRATEGIES



“The College to Careers initiative is crucial not only because it will help ensure a pipeline of qualified workers in the health and medical field, but because we must all contribute as corporate citizens to ensure that Chicago is a winner as more cities and countries vie for relevance in the world economy.”

Dr. Larry J. Goodman, CEO, Rush University Medical Center



Strategies:

How will City Colleges meet these goals?

Through the Reinvention process, working with faculty, staff, and students, we have created four cross-cutting strategies that will allow us to accomplish our performance and operational goals and to establish a culture focused on student success.

In each of these areas, we will describe a number of more tactical actions that we will take over the coming five years.

Increasing relevance

Increase the relevance of the work a student does at City Colleges: We must ensure that the courses of study that students embark on will advance their goal of a meaningful career or transfer.

Reducing time

Reduce the time it takes for a student to get through City Colleges: Numerous studies show that the longer it takes to complete a degree, the less likely the chances of degree completion. We have, therefore, created a number of strategies to ensure students have a clear path through the institution, reducing the time to degree.

Increasing student supports

Use data more effectively and deploy more resources to help students, and provide more information to students so they can better help themselves: We know that it will be crucial for us to better understand our students and for our students to better understand how to navigate our system. This will not only require improvements in our data management, but also in people who help students reach their end goals.

Strengthening operations

Ensure operational strength: In order to keep City Colleges strong for the coming five years, and to ensure that students are in conducive learning environments and working with the best faculty and staff, we need to foster excellent financial, operational and human resources management.

Our hypothesis, consistent with the latest research, literature and our review of City Colleges data, is that these four strategic themes form the means of achieving our goals.

INCREASING RELEVANCE



“Through our partnership with City Colleges, we are helping to create a rigorous training and education platform that will provide graduates with a competitive edge as they enter the workforce across the entire transportation and logistics industry.”

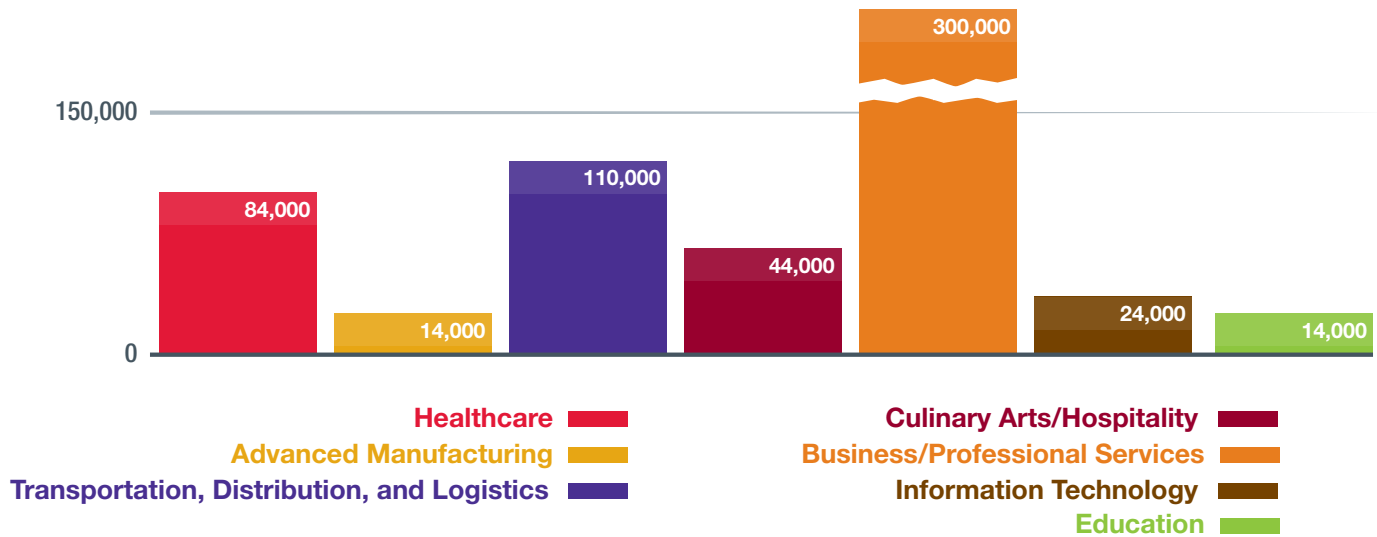
Jeff Silver, CEO of Coyote, a College to Careers partner

Increase the relevance of the work a student does at City Colleges.

Numerous studies suggest that many for-profit institutions' completers cannot repay their loans. In part, this is because of their high tuition rates; a contributing factor in this discussion is the failure to gain meaningful and relevant employment after graduation. City Colleges helps students obtain a quality education without a high debt burden, if any: Students can save up to \$40,000 by attending City Colleges for two years. We also are committed to ensuring that our graduates are able to find remunerative work in their field of study or be able to effectively transfer credits earned to the four-year institution of their choice. This is why we have set goals for job placement and median earnings after graduation.

There are substantial openings at area companies, despite persistently high unemployment rates. This stems in large part from the skills gap and an information gap that our College to Careers initiative is designed to help address, by offering training and retraining that empowers individuals with the tools to seize the jobs of today and tomorrow.

MORE THAN 500,000 JOB OPENINGS ARE EXPECTED OVER THE NEXT DECADE IN THE SIX COLLEGE TO CAREERS INDUSTRIES



Source: Economic Modeling Specialists, Inc., 2012-2022

Increasing the relevance of our programs means that students' time and energy will be fruitful when they move to the next step in their journey.

For faculty, businesses, and the community, keeping our programs relevant means an ongoing dialogue about our curriculum, the credentials we offer, and how many students the market can absorb. It will require faculty to incorporate community and business feedback in the curriculum in occupational areas and feedback from four-year universities in all academic areas. As we work to better align our programs with the demands of employers and universities, we also seek a commitment by both these groups to ensure that our students have opportunities upon exit from City Colleges.

Clear Pathways to Success

Through Reinvention⁷, City Colleges is ensuring all students have a clear path to success. City Colleges is working to ensure all students use their time and resources with us wisely by establishing a GPS-like system that provides students an efficient and direct roadmap to completion of their program and on to further education and a career, integrating the key principles of structure, relevance and predictability, clearly articulating what courses they need to take to move on to the next stage of their life as quickly as possible. Each student will be advised upon application and receive a full academic plan upon enrolling, which will be reassessed and updated regularly with an adviser to ensure the student stays on track to meet his or her goals.

In collaboration with our K-12 and community partners, we are creating a coordinated system that will allow students as early as juniors in high school to begin to take advantage of City Colleges and accelerate their path to a degree. Once at City Colleges, a student will benefit from a program map, outlining semester by semester, the courses that will result in a credential or degree. Coupled with this clear structure, we are working to ensure our programs are relevant – that all credentials have economic value and that all transfer pathways articulate to four year institutions.

We are also introducing predictability into our student's experience so they can plan their academic trajectory years ahead and better coordinate other responsibilities like work and family. By enrolling students in their whole program at the outset, and scheduling courses in blocks of time, we will help eliminate many of the logistical challenges that act as a barrier to completion and will ultimately, provide our students with a vision of their path to success.

To ensure the relevance of our programs and courses, City Colleges must assure alignment of our courses and programs in five areas. We will ensure the relevance of:

- a. High school curriculum to City Colleges' curriculum.
- b. Remedial curriculum to a student's chosen academic pathway.
- c. Adult education curriculum to City Colleges' credit curriculum.
- d. Occupational curriculum to the needs of employers.
- e. Transfer curriculum to the curriculum of four-year institutions.

Ensure the relevance of the high school curriculum to City Colleges' curriculum.

- *Work with Chicago Public Schools (CPS) to align the Math and English Common Core curriculum and new Partnership for Assessment of Readiness of College and Careers, PARCC, assessment tools so that students can seamlessly transition to City Colleges, reducing the need to remediate any subjects.*

With more than 90% of CPS students coming to City Colleges in need of remediation in math, and more than 80% in writing, we must do more to prepare students while in high school for college coursework. In addition to City Colleges faculty partnership with CPS teachers to work on curriculum alignment, it is important we work with the PARCC initiative through the US Department of Education to build college- and career-relevant pathways within the K-12 system that seamlessly transition to college-level. This will require aligning with national common core efforts to keep students as on track to college as possible.

- *Provide alignment of Chicago Public Schools' Career Technical Education (CTE) offerings to City Colleges occupational pathways.*

CPS' CTE offerings contextualize instruction and supports to provide career-specific preparation for students. The 11 high-level CTE career clusters include the present six City Colleges College to Career sectors. It is therefore of vital importance we ensure CPS CTE programming aligns with, and prepares students for, college-level occupational coursework. The more these two programs interlink and affiliate in personnel, processes, academics, employer partnerships, and resources, the more relevant the curriculum will be in both, in preparing Chicago high school students to transition to college, and college students to transition to careers.

- *Assess the effect of the administration of COMPASS Assessments by CPS on the reduction of remedial education needed.*

With a full quarter of college-bound CPS students enrolling in City Colleges, it is important to identify them early and prepare them for the college entrance exam that will determine where they place and how long it will take to attain a degree is of tremendous relevance. For this reason, City Colleges plans to expand present efforts at placement preparation at CPS, complementing curricular efforts in this area.



Ensure the relevance of remedial curriculum to a student's chosen academic pathway.

- *Provide contextualized courses when a student has chosen a pathway.*

Contextualized instruction of developmental and non-cognitive skills has the advantage of reinforcing critical competencies needed for success, transferring them to relevant work for a given educational focus and imbuing them with meaning specific to a particular discipline.

Examples include contextualized reading in science courses concurrently improving overall reading competency while building science-specific vocabulary and narrative interpretation by choice exposure to discipline-relevant texts. An added advantage of contextualized instruction is that while students usually deem developmental education and college success courses that impart basic and soft skills in isolation as hurdles to progress in their preferred area of focus, contextualized equivalents place students on relevant pathways immediately, and are therefore much more popular. Studies indicate that contextualized instruction also improves student learning. For these reasons, City Colleges will explore expansion of contextualized learning in the next five years.

Ensure the relevance of the adult education curriculum to City Colleges' credit curriculum.

- *Improve the rigor of upper-level adult education offerings, and ensure alignment to our college level offerings, both for students interested in academic transition (i.e., Associate of Arts and Associate of Science programs) as well as for students interested in occupational areas.*

Much as in curricular alignment work with high schools, City Colleges must integrate college-level preparation into adult education courses. Currently, students who complete the GED or ESL programs will often still require additional remediation before moving on to college-level work.

Chugani, Sugandhi, "CPS to City Colleges Transition Research: Data Analysis & Recommendations," Education Pioneers. August 2012.

Bork, Rachel Hare; Mason, Linda H.; Perin, Dolores; Peverly, Linda H.; Vaselewski, Megan, "A Contextualized Intervention for Community College Developmental Reading and Writing Students (CCRC Working Paper No. 38)," Community College Research Center. Teachers College, Columbia University. January 2012.

Ensure the relevance of the occupational curriculum to the needs of employers.

In 2011, City Colleges launched the College to Careers program to align City Colleges curriculum in occupational programs with the needs of Chicago employers in key industries. This initiative was modeled on the national work of Skills for America's Future and the Aspen Institute, which is "fostering partnerships between employers and community colleges to address America's pressing jobs issues."

- *Continue the College to Careers program by working with employers to create industry partnerships to ensure that City Colleges curriculum in occupational programs teaches the skills employers value using up-to-date technology.*

As part of ongoing efforts to align programming with workforce demand, City Colleges has been working closely with employers to infuse curricula with skills required to make City Colleges' degrees and certificates generate as much economic value as possible. Initially, we worked with partners to emphasize six career clusters that represent where over 80 percent of jobs will be created in the city during the next decade. Today, these same partners, and new ones, are working with us to simplify not just the pathway to degree attainment in these areas, but also the curricula within them in order to maximize job placement and college transfer opportunities.

College to Careers

Since the launch of the College to Careers (C2C) initiative in December 2011, City Colleges has made significant strides in enhancing its occupational programs to ensure they are directly applicable to employers' needs. In just one year, C2C has restructured the system's occupational offerings to focus on six high-growth sectors that are key to Chicago's future and to closing the city's skills gap: healthcare (Malcolm X College); transportation, distribution and logistics (Olive-Harvey College); business, entrepreneurship and professional services (Harold Washington College); advanced manufacturing (Daley College); information technology (Wright College); and culinary/hospitality (Kennedy-King College).

These sectors are projected to provide more than 500,000 jobs in the Chicago area over the next decade. By the beginning of 2013, more than 100 local and international corporations and organizations have partnered with City Colleges to develop cutting-edge curricula, and more than 700 City Colleges students have landed internships or jobs in C2C industries, many with program partners.

Presently, we have commitments from major corporate players in each cluster area to provide current job description and ideal resumés, helping us link the professional competencies and skills these documents indicate to the learning outcomes we must demand from our career programs. As scholars Belkis Suazo deCastro and Melinda Mechur Karp note, by aligning course outcomes with hiring requirements through job description provision and certification exam alignment, community college partnerships with employers "meet the labor market needs of an industry."

Successful national models of employer-college partnerships focused on curriculum development include Pacific Gas & Electric (PG&E) Company and California community colleges PowerPathway™ workforce development program focused on a workforce trained in Clean Tech Vehicles, Energy Efficiency and Renewables, Engineering and Smart Grid, and Skilled Craft. Through curriculum design and continuing engagement in the programs, PG&E ensures a trained workforce, and community college students gain access to entry level jobs starting at \$40,000. Over the next five years, City Colleges will aggressively expand employer-college curriculum partnerships to make sure coursework has immediately applicable real-world relevance.

- *Through the College to Careers initiative, create stronger relationships with employers to increase recruitment of City Colleges students for cooperative work opportunities and internships.*

City Colleges continues to work closely with employer partners, not just on curricular alignment efforts but on placement, and on contextualized training and internship opportunities that supplement instruction they receive at City Colleges. These professional opportunities not only make students more interested in academic programs – since real-world application and relevance are popular aspects of any program – they also improve chances for job placement.

Skills for America's Future. In The Aspen Institute. Retrieved December 9, 2012. <http://www.aspeninstitute.org/policy-work/economic-opportunities/skills-for-americas-future>

deCastro, Belkis Suazo; Karp, Melina Mechur, "A Typology of Community College-Based Partnership Activities," Community College Research Center, U.S. Department of Education, Office of Vocational and Adult Education. June 19, 2008.

PG&E PowerPathway™. In The Aspen Institute. Retrieved December 9, 2012. <http://www.aspeninstitute.org/policy-work/economic-opportunities/skills-americas-future/models-success/pg-e-powerpathway>

UPS Metropolitan College and Workforce Advisory Board Initiative. In The Aspen Institute. Retrieved December 9, 2012. <http://www.aspeninstitute.org/policy-work/economic-opportunities/skills-americas-future/models-success/ups-metropolitan-college-wo>

The Chicagoland Regional College Program. Retrieved December 9, 2012. <http://www.community.ups.com/Education/Employee+Education>

Employee Education. In UPS Corporate Responsibility. Retrieved December 9, 2012. <http://www.crcprogram.com>

Ensure the relevance of the transfer curriculum to the curriculum of four-year institutions.

- *Strengthen relationships with four-year colleges who will increase recruitment of City Colleges students.*

Presently, City Colleges already has numerous articulation agreements with local four-year universities. We must strengthen existing relationships and expand the number of agreements with institutions that excel in career and transfer areas City Colleges emphasizes. Some community college systems – such as those in Florida, Texas and elsewhere – go so far as to employ common course numbering systems with their four-year peers, making articulation a simple matter and enrollment activities at the four-year institution easier to understand from the transferring student’s perspective. City Colleges must model itself off such alignment efforts, and collaborate at the state-level to establish relevant articulation agreements as well as a schedule for updating them, revising curricula on an ongoing basis to consistently maintain alignment.

- *Students should be able to transfer in a meaningful manner that maximizes the return on their financial and personal investments in their City Colleges education: when they transfer, they will be on the same footing as peers who went directly to the four-year institution from high school.*

The City Colleges of Chicago must not only establish clear pathways in its degree programs but also must have policies in place informed by collaboration with four-year transfer destinations to facilitate smooth continuation along the pathway to the junior and senior undergraduate levels. To achieve this, City Colleges will need to assume a leadership role in the statewide Illinois Articulation Initiative (IAI) effort to facilitate transfer. This will involve immediate establishment of uniform, IAI-aligned course offerings across all seven of our colleges. City Colleges will also need to work directly with the four-year institutions who take the largest number of our students and graduate them, ensuring our policies get students to junior status upon transferring.

- *Seek partnerships with four-year colleges that will benefit students while they are enrolled at City Colleges and will encourage their pursuit of a four-year degree.*

Beyond articulation, which allows credits to move smoothly between City Colleges and universities, community colleges can also collaborate outside of the articulation realm to prepare students for transfer. Portland Community College, for example, works closely with Portland State University to complement its articulation efforts with advising components, including in financial aid and academic planning, to facilitate full readiness for the next step in students’ educational endeavors. City Colleges, through its student services programs and transfer and career centers, must build similar connections, complementing curricular links so students traverse four years of study with as little interruption as possible. This will also involve conjoining degree planning tools and standards, and sharing advising information across institutions.

Transfer

Thanks to ongoing outreach efforts to establish new and meaningful relationships with four-year institutions, City Colleges has added new system-wide articulation agreements with 12 different colleges and universities over the last two years. Some of these apply to specific College to Careers industry-related programs, while others provide guaranteed general admission to a four-year school’s bachelor programs.

Notable recent agreements have been developed with Illinois Institute of Technology (IIT), the University of Illinois at Chicago and Urbana-Champaign, DePaul University, Roosevelt University and Lewis University. For instance, in 2012, City Colleges and University of Illinois Chicago signed an agreement guaranteeing the admission of students earning an associate in nursing degree into UIC’s online bachelor of nursing (BSN) program, through which they can receive a degree that is increasingly essential for success in the nursing field.

Some agreements provide our graduates with unique financial or scholarship opportunities. For example, an agreement with IIT allows students who are nominated by a college president and admitted to IIT to be eligible to receive a Presidential Scholarship. Winners receive a \$23,500 annual tuition scholarship award, renewable for up to three years at IIT, and a \$5,000 annual housing scholarship award to support on-campus residence at the university.

To strengthen and expand connections to four-year institutions, in January 2013, City Colleges created a new Transfer and Articulation Office, which leads the effort to increase transfers through partnerships with other institutions. Its staff works directly with full-time Transfer Center Directors at all seven colleges.

REDUCING TIME



“City Colleges of Chicago is at the cutting edge of efforts nationally to fix a broken remediation system and graduate more students more quickly. Community colleges around the country should be watching Chicago to learn how important ideas for reforming our higher education system can be put into action.”

Stan Jones, president, Complete College America

Reduce the time it takes a student to complete.

The more consecutive semesters a student must attend to fulfill degree requirements, the less likely he or she will complete without dropping out or stopping out. City Colleges is focused on ensuring success within a given course as well as at key transition points so students don't fall through the cracks. This will be greatly facilitated by the introduction of pathways and the Student GPS system. This is not about rushing students through; this is about making sure they take the right courses and don't spend time with us they could be spending in their career or at a four-year institution.

One major element contributing to the amount of time a student spends at City Colleges is a lack of clarity about required course work and a lack of structure in certain offerings. Without significant guidance and structure to those choices, students can be adversely affected by wasting time, credits and money in courses that do not count towards a degree or even significantly exceed the requirements to earn a degree or credential.

In order to increase the number of students that complete programs at City Colleges we must target the time element in three strategic areas:

- a. Reduce the time between a student's entry into City Colleges and their choice of a program of study.
- b. Reduce the time required to complete a given program of study.
- c. Reduce the time required for a student to transition from adult education or developmental education to college credit.

We will also employ tactics, such as semester by semester pathway maps, block scheduling, predictive scheduling and whole program enrollment, to reduce barriers to completion and ensure students use their time and resources with us wisely.

Reduce the time between a student's entry into City Colleges and his/her choice of a program of study.

- *Through a reduced number of clearer pathways and enhanced advising support, City Colleges will assist students in investigating their options and getting them on a pathway.*

Numerous studies have established that students, upon admittance into community college, experience a "choice overload." When new students enroll they make numerous active decisions, often without adequate adviser guidance, unsure of what to specialize in and, worse, unaware of requirements towards degree attainment. The more advisers and other student support staff can help guide this choice and help students, in the midst of so much complexity, uncover what degree is relevant to their interests and define the sequence, semester-by-semester, of courses required for its attainment, the more likely students will graduate. The Community College Research Center advocates structuring the academic experience so students need not feel they are floating down a dark "shapeless river" towards an unknown destination. Complete College America also exhorts the use of structured pathways, declaring "Establish[ing] Model Four-Year or Two-Year Semester-by-Semester Road Maps for All Programs" as one of its three policies to reduce time to degree.

Many community colleges are adept at structuring the student experience, and perhaps none more so than Valencia Community College in Orlando, which attributes its high persistence and graduation rates relative to peer institutions, like City Colleges, to its LifeMap model. LifeMap, among other things, presents a model to faculty and advisers for counseling students from life goals to career aspirations to academic interests to course schedules. Students then work with support staff to chart out semester-by-semester plans, allowing for predictive scheduling of courses, and a clear path to degree completion.

City Colleges intends to adopt Valencia's structured approach to the academic experience. In doing so, we will combine a system of educational planning with effective advising, thus assisting students in defining and persisting on education plans that lead to more education and worthwhile careers.

Scott-Clayton, Judith. "The Shapeless River: Does a Lack of Structure Inhibit Students' Progress at Community Colleges? (CCRC Working Paper No. 25, Assessment of Evidence Series)," Community College Research Center, Teachers College, Columbia University, January 2011.
Johnson, Nate. "Three Policies to Reduce Time to Degree," Complete College America. Washington D.C., February 2011.

Reduce the time required to complete a given program of study.

- *Clearer pathways and strategic scheduling to reduce stop outs and drop outs and minimize the number of credits taken that don't contribute to a credential.*

Although pinning down student intention, semester-by-semester, drastically improves the odds that they will complete their degree program of choice, City Colleges must make sure these structured pathways provide students with clear direction. Along with helping students create a semester-by-semester plan to reach their educational goal, predictive scheduling will inform students well in advance of the scheduling requirements associated with a given program so they can plan their time, and adjust work and family commitments accordingly. Combining predictive scheduling with block scheduling, which groups or “blocks” classes for a program into multi-hour periods, will provide greater certainty and convenience to all students, especially part-time students and those juggling school, jobs and family responsibilities. We are also exploring “whole program enrollment” that would allow students to enroll in an entire transfer pathway or College to Careers program at once, rather than in a few classes each semester. This longer-term strategy would, for example, allow an aspiring nurse to begin her time at City Colleges confident in the knowledge that she or he has already enrolled in every class required to receive a Licensed Practical Nurse advanced certificate. If students know exactly the classes they need to take and when they will be offered, and those classes are strategically scheduled, we believe students will be more likely to reach their stated goals.

One of the keys to success of these approaches is the creation of clear program pathways that have been verified as relevant to future four-year institutions and employers. We have undertaken a process, beginning with our occupational programs through College to Careers, to review our programs and develop clear, relevant pathways from the pre-credit bridge level all the way to transfer and careers. As part of the effort on the occupational side, we are ensuring these pathways offer opportunities for students to progress in skill level while earning credentials that have value in the marketplace. These “stackable credentials” provide students with tools they can use to move immediately into the workforce, if circumstances require, while earning credits and remaining on the path to further education.

For example, a TDL student can start building basic skills in a free TDL bridge program, earning a forklift operator certificate in one week's time. This course can act as an elective in our enhanced supply chain management certificate program, which would prepare a student to move on to an associate and a bachelor's degree in distribution and logistics.

At each step, a worker can get a new, more advanced job, but each step is valuable in and of itself by leading to a good job. In this way, we can support students throughout their career trajectory, from certificate level to a bachelor's and beyond.

Providing adequate tools is also essential to minimize accumulation of credits extraneous to a student's field of interest. This is not designed to prevent students from taking additional course work if they wish, but to ensure they understand such courses are not required and can delay their completion date and complicate transfer of credits. To this end we intend not only to implement a new model for advising, but we also give student self-service access to degree planning. There are many successful models of such integration of advising and self-sufficiency, not just at Valencia with its Atlas program for student self-planning, but at Austin Peay with its highly sophisticated “advising by algorithm” system, and at Lone Star Community College and Houston Community College, which have similar degree planning tools as well.

Reduce the time required for a student to transition from adult education or developmental education to college credit.

- *Examine opportunities to make adult education more intensive, shorter in sequence and seamlessly linked to college-level coursework and career training.*

A primary opportunity for achieving these aims within the adult education sequence is through the use of adult education bridges. Geared towards adult learners seeking to achieve basic literacy and math skills and English language competency, City Colleges of Chicago adult education bridge programming helps individuals seeking career enhancement achieve this aim faster through intensive, contextualized instruction. In coming years, we must work to expand this and similar programming so adult learners more quickly achieve college and career readiness with us they could be spending in their career or at a four-year institutions.. We will also employ tactics, such as semester by semester pathway maps, block scheduling, predictive scheduling and whole program enrollment to reduce barriers to completion and ensure students use their time and resources with us wisely.

Today, City Colleges adult education bridges represent intensive, 20-hour-a-week classes that allow students to quickly progress from a 6th-grade level of proficiency to high school level. In this work we align with – and must continue to optimize on – three aspects of the Illinois Community College Board’s (ICCB’s) definition of bridge programming: contextualized instruction, career development and transition services.

Two models of bridge programming that City Colleges looks to emulate are Washington’s Integrative Basic Education and Skills Training (I-BEST) and Minnesota’s Fast Training, Resources and Credentialing (FastTRAC) programs. Both are geared towards the same population as City Colleges’ Bridge programs. I-BEST has a track record of national leadership in integrating content and basic skills curriculum to effectively blend the professional and the academic. City Colleges will do the same, linking bridge programming to the College to Careers effort to ensure that students receive contextualized instruction that employers confirm is relevant.

The “Training, Resources and Credentialing” triad of Minnesota FastTRAC aligns to ICCB’s Bridge emphases on instruction, transition and career development. Similarly to I-BEST, FastTRAC stresses the need for contextualized instruction to allow students to attain “career-specific training in fields where new skills are in high demand,” in order to meet “the needs of business while ensuring that students find well-paying jobs with room for advancement.” FastTRAC

has a particularly high program completion rate of 88 percent, and City Colleges intends to invest in the curriculum contextualization, intergovernmental agency collaboration, transition services and college and career placement services that have made it so successful.

In order to achieve the successes of I-BEST, FastTRAC and other adult education initiatives like it, City Colleges must similarly invest in student support resources to help students transition into jobs and college-credit coursework. Adult learners require investment in supports staffing to help cover what is typically a wider skills gap relative to those ready for college credit. City Colleges must hire more transition specialists, but also must ensure they have the same tools, technology and training as college-credit advisers to ensure they can meet the same performance standards required to properly advise students in pursuing relevant programming and persisting on the plans they create.

Minnesota FastTRAC: About Minnesota FastTRAC. 2011. State of Minnesota. Date of Access 12-8-2012. <http://www.mnfasttrac.org/about.html>



Gateway programs

In Fall 2012, CCC expanded its Gateway program District-wide to support adult education students' successful transition to college-credit courses. The Gateway program is a suite of supports that assist students in the transition to credit courses. Available to high-level ESL and GED students with college aspirations, the Gateway program redefines adult education as an "on ramp" to college and includes: tuition-waived courses, mandatory academic advising sessions and a new College Success Seminar course. Since its launch in Fall 2011, enrollment in the program has grown by more than 600%, from 138 to 872 students.

Gateway is based on a program developed at Truman College, in which participating students were 22% more likely to receive a grade of "A" in their courses than students in the general credit population over a two-semester period.

Bridge programs

To increase the relevance of our offerings and the share of students who move into college-level courses, City Colleges is offering career bridge programs that provide an entry point into College to Careers programs for low-skilled adults—Adult Basic Education, ESL and foundational studies students. In fall 2012, City Colleges launched five new healthcare bridge cohorts and one new transportation, distribution and logistics (TDL) cohort, which joined healthcare and manufacturing bridge programs already in existence at Daley College. Bridge programs prepare students for the GED exam and college-level work while teaching basic skills in the concept of a career focus. Most bridges also qualify students for an entry-level job. For example, TDL bridge students learn forklift operation and safety, and some healthcare bridge students receive Basic Nursing Assistant training.

Between spring 2012 and spring 2013 enrollment in our bridge programs grew six-fold — up from 40 students at one college. We expect up to 400 students to enroll in fall 2013, and are planning business and hospitality bridge programs for the future.

“Thanks to the new Gateway to City Colleges initiative, I was able to take college credit courses while completing my ESL studies in the Adult Education program. The program dramatically changed the way I view myself and education.”

Elizabeth Marquez, Daley College student



- *Partner with Chicago Public Schools to increase opportunities for students to participate in City Colleges' early college programs, allowing them to earn college credit while still in high school.*

Early college programs between high schools and community college can deliver results greater than the sum of their parts. City Colleges' early college partnerships with CPS tightly align coursework between high school and college, thus serving the purposes of making a student more ready for college and more able to quickly complete a degree in a relevant program area.

- *Improve placement to ensure that with proper supports and supplemental learning, students can succeed.*

For many who place into the developmental education sequence, the "finish line" of degree completion can seem unattainable. Placement is where the distance to this finish line gets measured – it is how we determine whether incoming students are college-ready. City Colleges uses a set of multiple choice exams in Math, Reading and Writing published ACT called COMPASS to place students either in developmental or college-credit courses.

A Community College Research Center study posed the question in its title: Do High-Stakes Placement Exams Predict College Success? The answer was no, at least not by themselves. The study found that in community college systems like City Colleges, with high enrollment of diverse populations, placement tests were not nearly so effective: composite high-school GPA was better at predicting readiness for college-level classes. "In both math and English," the study states, "using high school GPA/units alone as a placement screen results in better outcomes than using placement test scores alone," and that, in English, using placement scores actually increased severe error rates, sending students into classes for which they were over-prepared or not ready enough.

Scott-Clayton, Judith. "Do High-Stakes Placement Exams Predict College Success? (CCRC Working Paper No. 41)," Community College Research Center. Teachers College, Columbia University. February 2012.

Bagg, Eva; Creason, Paul; Hetts, John; MacKay, Jannie; Nunez, Jose Ramon; Peterson, Gregory; Villalobos, Bobby. Long Beach City College. Telephone Interview. September, 25, 2012, 3:00 – 4:00 P.M. CST.

Robbins, Steven. Educational Testing Services. Personal Meeting. August 24, 2012 9:00 AM-1:00 PM CST.

While many community college systems are looking towards GPA, and some, such as Long Beach Community College, have placed more than three times as many students into college-level courses than in prior years when they relied upon standardized exams, others, including in Houston and Boston, are instead exploring using a robust placement algorithm that matches the precision on the non-cognitive side to that on the academic side. City Colleges of Chicago intends to be a forerunner in responsible holistic placement, which relies not only on using non-cognitive and cognitive tools to address the whole student so they do not needlessly sit in remedial math, reading or writing – but also to use placement tools as non-cognitive diagnostics as well. This will allow us to prepare the supply of student support services necessary to meet the soft skill needs of our students, whether these services take the form of more study skills workshops, Wellness Center offerings or college success seminar curricular adjustments.

Boosting dual credit and dual enrollment

During 2012, City Colleges significantly expanded its two early college programs, dual enrollment and dual credit, which enable high school students to take college-level courses for credit. The dual enrollment program, which allows high school students to enroll in City Colleges courses at any of the system's seven campuses, has seen an increase of 350 percent (fall 2011 vs. fall 2012), with 410 students enrolled during the fall 2012 semester. Eighty-eight percent of these students earned college credit.

Since its inception in spring 2012, City Colleges has tripled the reach of its dual credit program, which allows Chicago Public School students to earn college credits through classes taught by college-certified instructors at their high school. Students at 15 CPS high schools have taken advantage of dual credit during the 2012-13 academic year, with as many as 500 students expected to be served in spring term courses.

- *Develop accelerated approaches to remedial math, reading and writing and re-think existing structures.*

Beyond placement, City Colleges must make sure students in developmental education do not remain in courses with curricula not relevant to them or their future career goals. For mathematics, the area in which City Colleges students as a whole have the highest attrition rate in the developmental education sequence, the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching Quantway and Statway initiatives proposed we rethink how we structure math sequencing to promote student success. As the Foundation states: “Many community college students find themselves struggling unsuccessfully to complete multiple developmental mathematics courses that mirror their earlier failed mathematics experiences,” causing them to feel “disengaged and unmotivated by courses they see as having no relevance to their aspirations or the world around them.”

To keep courses relevant, City Colleges will introduce a one-and-done developmental education course for students not interested in pursuing further work in science, technology, engineering or mathematics. For new students in need of much high school developmental math education, this would create a separate, shorter path than the present two-course / two-semester developmental pre-requisite sequence. It makes sense to have such an alternative offering for students with different academic interests, and thus different academic needs. By properly segmenting our approach to developmental math, we hope to have more relevant programming for students, thereby reducing attrition without losing quality.

For those students not deemed college-ready for English 101 who require reading or English developmental courses, we are exploring potentially more innovative ways than the traditional, pre-requisite approach to readiness, i.e., repeating a semester’s worth of material likely familiar from high school before gaining entrance into a college-credit course. Instead, we are moving towards what the national nonprofit Complete College America (CCA) advocates: the use of co-requisites. Co-requisites are different from pre-requisites since they enroll students in remedial and college-level courses simultaneously.

Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching: Quantway. Carnegie Foundation. 2012. Date of access: December 8, 2012. <http://www.carnegiefoundation.org/quantway>

An example is the Accelerated Learning Program at the Community College of Baltimore County, which allows students who did not pass writing placement to concurrently enroll in English 101 and in extra support, as opposed to having to take a prerequisite course. In Baltimore, the accelerated students complete English 101 at twice the rate of non-ALP students. Baltimore is not the first school to attempt, and succeed, with co-requisites. Presently, some City Colleges offer a limited number of co-requisite-based courses, and we will improve and extend these offerings to all seven of the colleges.

Finally, for those students who demonstrate high developmental education need, City Colleges is exploring a model that will allow for full-time enrollment in intensive study in multiple content areas, or part-time enrollment for intensive study in one area. When combined in curricula with non-cognitive, soft skills promoting full college readiness, we expect such a program to drastically improve outcomes for students far from degree attainment. Such a program works in New York, where the community college system employs its CUNY Start program of concentrated coursework coupled with non-cognitive skill development. CUNY Start has seen high enrollment coupled with high success. It is our intention to mirror elements of CUNY Start and like programs into offerings we gear towards students with high-needs.



INCREASING STUDENT SUPPORT



“As a Reinvention taskforce member, I am able to be a part of the solution for the many challenges we face in our effort to improve student learning, graduation and transfer rates. The bottom line is, we are in it for the students, they are at the center of what we do.”

*Daniel Forbes, Kennedy-King College faculty member
and Reinvention task force member*

CCC will use data more effectively to help students and provide more information to students so they can better help themselves.

To ensure students find success, we must provide them with a clear picture of the path to their end goal, whether that is further college or a career. Over the past two years, we have halved the student-to-adviser ratio and ensured that every student has an adviser. But we know that we need to go further to get students more thorough information on career and transfer options.

At the City Colleges of Chicago, as at other educational institutions, there has tended to be a paucity of data about student programs and data is often not in the hands of those who could use it the most. We are taking decisive steps to ensure faculty and advisers are fully equipped to help their students. With our new GradesFirst early alert system, we are combating an age-old problem: administrators and advisers not knowing which students are at greatest risk of failing until too late in the semester. Our new advising and pathways initiatives will help by giving students a clear way forward.

Creating a student-focused, data-driven culture – City Colleges must dedicate itself to achieving what is best for our students, and to applying data analysis in determining the direction that best serves our students. We must:

- a. Ensure our students have the resources they need to navigate the colleges and reach their end goals
- b. Understand our students better by getting more information about them and their goals
- c. Enable richer data analysis to improve how the system supports student success

Ensure our students have the resources they need to navigate our colleges and reach their end goals

- *We must provide tools and experiences that enable students to make good academic, career, and socially responsible choices.*

Constructing a personal education plan, and persisting along it, is not an easy feat. It requires guidance to translate life aims into career choices and academic plans that will serve them. To assist in this effort the City Colleges of Chicago will furnish students and advising staff – including specialists in adult education, career placement and transfer services – with all resources possible to be effective. On the process side, we will continue to expand today's early alert practices that allow faculty to quickly notify appropriate advising staff when a student is at-risk of veering off path, whether through poor course performance or even inappropriate course selection.

Additionally, students must be able to assess their interests by using state-of-the-art career and academic assessment tools, and they must be able to manage their own plans to degree attainment. For their part, advisers must be versed in the tools students use. Community colleges and four-year institutions across the country leverage such processes and supporting software to great success. Examples include career planning software systems for career path assessment and degree audit solutions for quick visibility into courses required to complete a degree in a given student focus area. City Colleges hopes to leverage such solutions in the service of advising students in creating pathways to degree attainment, and sticking to these pathways.

Early Alert System: Helping Before It's Too Late

In September 2012, CCC launched GradesFirst, a web-based student support tool that aims to improve student success by combining academic early alerts with advising and tutor management capability. As of April 2013, approximately 28,000 advising appointments and more than 17,000 tutoring appointments set up through GradesFirst have occurred—indicating significant improvements in student touch points with advisors. More than 82,000 progress reports have been submitted by faculty members to keep students informed about their progress in classes and identify at-risk students.

Holistic student-facing resources

Ensuring the academic success of all students requires more than dedicated faculty, academic advisers and tutors. To support the personal well-being of students outside the classroom so they can excel inside, City Colleges made the decision to build on the successes of three Wellness Centers by creating additional Centers at all the colleges in 2012. These free facilities provide critical and confidential assistance to students, including one-on-one counseling, referrals to social-service providers and support groups that help students overcome challenges that could otherwise lead them to drop out or underachieve.

During Fall 2012, the Wellness Centers collectively served more than 4,000 students, including 2,446 first-time clients. Staff didn't wait for students to walk in—Wellness Center teams conducted presentations on time and stress management skills in the classroom and at other events at the colleges, reaching nearly 10,000 students with important services.

During the last 18 months we have created additional student resources at the colleges. Transfer Resource Centers at every college offer students information and advice about four-year schools, and help them create an academic plan to ensure credits earned at City Colleges are transferable at target institutions. To help military veterans more quickly and easily transition into careers, we established dedicated Veterans Resource Centers at each campus. These centers are part of the "Service to Success" program, which helps Chicago's returning veterans get the support and education they need to succeed after returning home.

In spring 2013, we launched the City Colleges Job Board, a centralized place for students across the colleges to search for job opportunities and access career-related services. The tool will provide an enhanced resumé builder, career development resources, and links to job boards, and students will be able to access it via mobile and social media applications.



- *Provide critical academic advising by ensuring an effective adviser case load and that every student has a dedicated adviser.*

Since Reinvention began, City Colleges halved its student-to-adviser ratio, from 900:1 to 450:1. The National Academic Advising Association recommends a 300:1 ratio, so we have closed 75 percent of this gap, and, in the next five years, intend to close it fully. This will improve the likelihood of every student seeing an adviser, hopefully multiple times, to construct relevant education plans that minimize time to degree, and to persist on them.

City Colleges has also introduced a case management approach to advising so students and advisers can develop a relationship and there is opportunity to identify the student's needs and give them the best possible advice. Students no longer need to seek out help, but are approached with a go-to source of support from day one. Ensuring every student sees an adviser also requires advising time be used effectively. We hope to continue to automate administrative tasks and avoid role confusion so advisers spend less time evaluating transcripts and inputting student registration information and more time coaching students, developing personalized education plans and assisting in transfer and career identification. Advisers also are able to take advantage of a new early alert tool to track students' progress and, working with faculty and other support services, proactively address their concerns.

- *Ensure that transfer and career centers are introduced to students early in their academic career and provide them with detailed information about how to reach their end goal.*

City Colleges has established career and transfer centers where students can access job opportunities, build job-seeking skills, and learn about partnerships with four-year institutions and employers. As we increase transfer and career placement resources, we will work to integrate them into the growing network of student supports and encourage students to visit these centers as early as their first semester so they can match graduation plans to employment and transfer outcomes.

Understand our students better by getting more information about them and their goals

- *Make student placement decisions in a holistic manner, incorporating both our best measurements of students' current academic achievement along with new tools to measure their personal capabilities to persist and succeed. Combine traditionally isolated data sources to create a more comprehensive picture of the student.*

As mentioned above in the section on reducing student time to degree, the City Colleges of Chicago intends to use holistic placement, employing both non-cognitive and cognitive assessments to create full student profiles. Data collected via such placement tools will allow us to not only place students into courses for which they are best suited but provide the opportunity to prescribe supports as individualized and precise as the diagnostics. For example, if a student indicates he/she struggles in math as well as with time management, our advising staff should have the data at-hand to refer him/her directly to, perhaps, back-to-back math tutoring and study skills workshops, or maybe to a new type of contextualized college success course that emphasizes study skills attainment using math content and curricula, thereby growing soft skills while reducing time to degree.



“By rapidly expanding its adult education bridge programs around the city, City Colleges is providing adults with the basic skills they need tailored to in-demand careers that support them in moving quickly into college-level work and employment.”

Juan Salgado, president, Instituto del Progreso Latino, a partner in Carreras en Salud

- *Expand access to relevant data for all front-line staff and faculty.*

Creating a culture of excellence requires opening access to relevant information so that administrators, instructors, and staff can make intelligent decisions that are as much evidence-driven as they are mission-driven. Opening access to this information involves ensuring the accuracy of data we have, creating new more relevant data measures where none exist today, and reporting it widely.

Faculty, in particular, must have the student information, both in aggregate at departmental/discipline levels as well as across the college. By collecting student data in real-time as they interact with computer systems in the classroom, teachers and researchers can later look for correlations between these classroom activities and student performance, whether on an individual exam, an individual course or for many courses throughout multiple semesters.

Rio Salado College in Arizona has begun to use such learning analytics to predictively model the likelihood of student success from such digital elements as log-in frequency to a learning management system, pace of work as indicated by program timers, involvement in academic discussion forums and more. These help faculty refine the definition of what it means to be an “at-risk” student, helping teachers, in turn,

provide more detailed information to advising and other student support staff for quicker, targeted, more suitable interventions. City Colleges will pursue this strategy of data-driven decision-making at all organizational levels.

- *Work through the academic communities across the district to identify those students at academic risk early enough to provide the most effective interventions.*

By having faculty and advising staff work together, we can leverage the student profile information gathered during holistic placement, alongside the learning analytics gleaned in the classroom, to provide detailed evidence as to whether a student is failing – beyond common signs such as poor grades or attendance. Advising staff, once alerted, will be able to actively intervene in student affairs to drastically reduce attrition.

City Colleges has already invested in creating and tightening such a process through the use of early alert software. We intend to collect more data to support student service decision-making through this early alert tool as well, allowing access to reporting of at-risk behaviors, and the ability for advisers and tutors to intervene via information that tracks visits.

EDUCAUSE Learning Initiative, “Things You Should Know About...First Generation Learning Analytics,” EDUCAUSE. December 2011.

Enable richer data analysis across the system

- *Provide relevant, timely and accessible reporting to support every City Colleges employee in his/her role.*

In order to create a culture of sound decision making at all levels of the organization, City Colleges must create an employee self-service capability to create reports on the fly in order to track success along key performance indicators associated with strategic, performance and operational health goals. In addition to diagnostic, descriptive data, we must be able to project enrollment, retention, graduation and other metrics – in absolute terms and as percentages – several years out.

Taxpayers should have access to much of this information to see returns on their investments. Therefore, we also intend to have a public-facing Web presence for the express purpose of clearly conveying information on key performance indicators, especially those related to ensuring student success. Individual students' data will remain confidential, only being reported on in the aggregate.

- *Implement a data warehouse to standardize, govern and connect traditionally disparate/isolated data sources to improve the quality of student data and allow for more real-time insight into student enrollment, academic progress, completion, and transfer.*

To use such business intelligence reporting, City Colleges must integrate its data, not just internally, but also with other government agencies, such as the Chicago Public Schools system. The data warehouse must be able to take in data from any system, including our learning management system storing attendance and grades, our early alert software holding at-risk statuses for students, and our enterprise resource planning platform housing personnel and student record data. In addition, it must furnish information to reports in a manner that allows for them to be run quickly and accurately.

In order to properly manage and leverage the data so we can trust that it accurately reflects the reality of our institution and the students we serve, we must make sure we govern our data. This will require us to develop common systems of data decision rights and accountabilities, prescribing who can see which data and when. We must establish clear channels of data ownership and governance, ensuring accountability for data quality and facilitating quick delivery of data to faculty, staff, students and taxpayers, while maintaining all necessary privacy controls.

- *Incorporate data into goal setting and strategic plans at the district, college, department, and individual-level and establish mechanisms to help monitor those goals.*

Quick and easy access to accurate data, in relevant contexts, will provide City Colleges employees with the information they need to improve student outcomes and institutional operations. In other words, it will provide the ability for smart decision-making.

Thomas, Gwen. "The DGI Data Governance Framework," Data Governance Institute. 2007.

STRENGTHENING OPERATIONS

A photograph of the Richard J. Daley College building, a modern structure with large windows and a blue sign that reads "RICHARD J. DALEY COLLEGE" and "One of the City Colleges of Chicago".

RICHARD J. DALEY COLLEGE
One of the City Colleges of Chicago

“With its FY2013 budget, City Colleges continues to be a model of fiscal stewardship and financial best practices. We applaud the continued commitment of Chancellor Cheryl Hyman and her team to improving student outcomes without adding to the burden of Chicago taxpayers.”

Laurence Msall, president of the Civic Federation

Ensure operational strength

The changes described throughout this document, past and present, are dependent on a strong foundation of support services to keep the colleges running smoothly. Without an effective human resources or finance function, we would be unable to focus on our performance goals and strategies.

We have made strides in ensuring effective financial management, tying – for the first time ever – all budget expenses to one of our organizational goals. We have also realized millions in operational efficiencies and redeployed this money towards attainment of our educational goals. We will look to expand on our successes in each of these areas.

Looking ahead, we will need to secure a modest portfolio of debt to finance our five-year capital plan, which includes investments in long deferred maintenance, proactive upkeep and the construction of the new Allied Health Academy and General Education campus for Malcolm X College and the Transportation, Distribution and Logistics Center at Olive-Harvey College, respectively.

To ensure that we operate efficiently, driving greater value to our students and other stakeholders, we must:

- a) Maintain a sufficient unrestricted fund balance and enhance financial monitoring
- b) Increase funds raised from grants and contracts
- c) Improve human resource practices
- d) Ensure safe and secure teaching and learning environments

Maintain unrestricted fund balance and enhance financial monitoring

- Consistently set aside 3 percent of operating expenses in a reserve fund on an annual basis.

Since its introduction by Chancellor Cheryl Hyman in 2010, one of the hallmarks of Reinvention has been strong financial operations, a balanced budget and strong operating and capital reserves to hedge against reductions in funding and/or tuition and fees.

City Colleges has reconstituted its Education Reserve Fund as a pillar of our fiscal operations to leverage risk. We have committed to holding 3 percent of our operating expenses in the Fund each year.

In addition, we have stepped up our financial monitoring by implementing a monthly close and producing monthly interim financial reports. We are also working on a rigorous analysis of our capital improvement program (CIP) funding, on streamlining the timeline around delivery of our comprehensive annual financial report, and on improving our outreach to students around the issue of loan defaults.

Increase funds raised from grants and contracts

- City Colleges must diversify its source of funding to continue to ensure strong financial health and continue to serve as one of the most affordable post-secondary educational options in the region.

City Colleges will seek to maximize funding opportunities with federal, state, local and private sources in alignment with organizational priorities. In effort to expand and diversify City Colleges' pool of grants and contracts, we will encourage faculty and staff to seek out funding opportunities, undertake prospect research that aligns with City Colleges focus areas, launch an alumni association, and build an individual giving base. City Colleges has historically raised little money from private sources. Going forward, it will explore strategic opportunities to partner with foundations and corporations.



Improve human resource practices

- City Colleges must increase its ability to efficiently source, recruit, hire and retain quality faculty and staff.

As with any organization, our ability to retain and find the most talented faculty and staff is one of the most crucial factors in our ultimate success.

We have been working to improve our hiring processes, working not only on reforming the process itself, but introducing new technology to improve internal data tracking and controls. In 2012 we procured the Taleo system, which will present candidates with a better experience and allow better administration of the hiring process.

We will look at the steps in the hiring process and how they can be reformed. This will include:

- Conducting a Job Analysis and Competency Mapping exercise to ensure employee job descriptions match the duties expected of each new and existing employee.
- Incorporating a robust and comprehensive on-boarding program that allows all new hires to automatically receive support tools and equipment, schedule and complete orientation and new hire welcome programs, and participate in training programs designed to acclimate to the organization and their respective duties.
- Transitioning from the Hiring and Recruitment tool to an automated Performance Management tool to increase employee support and feedback provides a platform to standardize performance expectations across the district. It will also ensure a structured, integrated and managed professional development program, and introduce a rewards and recognition program for all employees.

Ensure safe and secure teaching and learning environments

- Reduce reported crimes, including against persons and property, by 5%

City Colleges continues to standardize security best practices across all colleges. Key tactics have included employing a mobile operational patrol strategy (On Your Feet, Not On Your Seat) that raises the visibility of security personnel, the institution of standardized ID and access control systems at every college and the district office, alternative patrol strategies such as bicycle patrols, regular employee training, complete and accurate reporting of all incidents, and enhanced collaboration with the Chicago Police Department.





Technology at the campuses

The strategic deployment of technology across the District is a critical part of our ongoing effort to ensure operational strength and support student success. During the last 18 months, more than 50 “smart” classrooms have been outfitted with equipment including digital white boards, video projectors and other AV features that provide interactive and enhanced learning experiences with more such investments on the way.

Other technology upgrades at colleges include: creating new computer labs, outfitting instructional labs with smart boards, updating AV equipment throughout campuses to improve multimedia teaching opportunities, installing new computers in tutoring labs for student use, providing librarians with extra mobility via tablet computers so they can better assist students where they are studying, and online student registration.

THE WAY FORWARD



“We are determined to become the institution the nation needs us to be and that the Mayor expects us to be, the institution I know we can be.”

Chancellor Cheryl Hyman, City Colleges of Chicago

The way forward

Three years in, Reinvention boasts many proud accomplishments. But while outcomes have improved, they still are not reflective of the best-in-class college system Chicagoans have a right to demand. We have assembled a strong team at City Colleges, with new leadership at our colleges and in key District Office departments. We have cemented strong partnerships across the city with four year colleges, community organizations, and employers to ensure our programs are relevant to the real world.

To build on our early successes, we must leverage the now proven winning approaches in new ways by taking to the next level our drive to make our student-centered culture pervasive across the organization.

Every day, students, faculty and staff drawn from the seven colleges come to a dedicated space at the District Office to work through barriers to success.

They have worked to carry out the new policies and practices that have already delivered a more rigorous and relevant education for thousands of students. They will continue to do so. But it is now incumbent upon us to find additional ways to empower college faculty, staff and students to themselves drive further change at the college level through “Reinvention”.

Through Reinvention⁷, we will achieve change at scale. We will ensure every student – at every college – has access to programs that lead to further college or a career, that every student is equipped with a plan for how to reach their goals, and that we have coordinated our scheduling and supports so that students use their time and resources with us wisely and efficiently and complete ready to take the next step.

The central idea of Reinvention⁷ is to create a culture of student success that permeates each college – a culture driven to see that every one of our students meets his or her goal and earns a credential of economic value. From the very first moment prospective students interact with us, we should be engaged in an active conversation with them about their goals and the best way to achieve them. That conversation should be informed by solid data and superb advising: What do they seem predisposed to succeed in academically and personally? How many jobs and what earning power do various career paths open up? What commitment, requirements and costs do various courses of study require? The conversation will be facilitated by a structure of clearly articulated educational pathways that outline the courses needed for competition and success in fast-growing career fields and subject areas leading to transfer.

This process must result in students making an informed decision as to their academic and professional path. That choice made, it must be constantly verified with the help of advisers, other student services staff and faculty in light of academic performance and the self-discoveries that a good college education brings about.

To hold up its end of the bargain, City Colleges of Chicago must provide students with a clear road map to reach their chosen goal. We will be launching a new system-wide initiative called Student GPS, for Student Guided Path to Success. The concept is a common sense one: Ultimately, each student should be equipped with a Student GPS academic pathway and the supports needed to meet his or her academic goal.

The lack of such a tool has resulted in too many students taking more classes than they need to reach educational goals, or not reaching completion because they have lacked the “light at the end of the tunnel” focal point that solid advising and a clear road map provide.

Such an effort will involve everyone on the front lines at the colleges: not only advisers, but all other staff, understanding the concept that, in the end, every staff and faculty member is an adviser, tutor, and mentor.

There are many operational implications for us. We must redouble our commitment to student service, including the consistent and unrelenting application of impeccable customer service standards as well as stepped-up training and resources so everyone is empowered with the information and means to properly advise and guide students.

It is only then that we will be able to make a pledge on which we can deliver: no one should ever get lost at City Colleges of Chicago. Instead, everyone should confidently and quickly find their way forward. We owe nothing less to taxpayers and students, and we will dedicate the next five years to continuing the transformation of City Colleges into the community college system that we all deserve.



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