

College & Career Readiness

The Alliance for College Readiness' Leadership Team identified the following priority areas for the 2019-2020 academic year, which align with four components outlined within the Illinois Postsecondary & Workforce Readiness Act (PWR Public Act 99-0674).

A brief summary of progress within each priority area is provided below:

1. *Ensure student readiness improvements increase student access and student success.*

- a. *Transitional courses* –Transitional courses are collaboratively developed by high school and colleges to ensure student readiness for college-level work, as required by the Postsecondary and Workforce Readiness Act. Transitional courses are/will be offered at the high school during students' senior year for students who demonstrate a need to strengthen their skills in the areas of math and English Language Arts.

Transitional math courses – Transition to STEM, Transition to Quantitative Literacy, and Transition to Technical Math – were first taught in the 2019-2020 school year in each of our D509 secondary districts. All three courses have been approved by the State Portability Panel, ensuring students who earn a grade of C or better place directly into college-level math upon entry to ECC.

The state has convened a Transitional English Language Arts (ELA) competencies development team that includes content experts from secondary and postsecondary institutions for this fourth year high school course. ECC's Professor II of English and Director of the Alliance for College Readiness, Ms. Alison Douglas, is a contributing member of this statewide team. State guidelines will be published later in 2020, which will then guide the development of D509 Transitional ELA curricula. In the interim, ELA faculty from the college and high schools are engaging in a "faculty exchange" program in order to continue to strengthen their understanding of instructional practices and content used at both levels. The exchange will take place in February and March 2020.

- b. *Student placement multiple measures* – In fall 2019, the college implemented revised placement requirements for the SAT in order to align with the ICCB Placement Framework. While we examine student success data to analyze the impact of these revisions, we are also studying the use of PSAT scores as another placement measure. This test is administered by each of the D509 school districts to students in grades 9 and 10. PSAT scores are currently being collected from each partner district for an internal analysis. A taskforce convened by the Vice President for Teaching, Learning, and Student Development, comprised of ECC faculty and administrators, will review the analysis later this term.

2. ***Continue to expand dual credit options for regional students (on-campus and in-high school) as well as strengthen communication about program options.*** Communication improvements have included revising ECC dual credit web pages (www.elgin.edu/dualcredit), developing short videos to “tell the dual credit story”, enhancing student/parent publications to provide just-in-time information, and establishing a Dual Credit Advisory Council comprised of District representatives who will advise us in planning for and supporting students as well as provide feedback regarding program improvements.

3. ***Define/strengthen pathways for regional students and identify new opportunities for pathway collaboration.*** Elgin Community College faculty and administrators continue to partner with Community College District 509 school districts (District 300, District 301, District 303, and Unit District 46) and the Northern Kane County Regional Vocational System EFE 110 to further the strategic development of regional College and Career Pathways. Through an investment from JPMorgan Chase, the Alliance for College Readiness is partnering with the Northern Illinois University’s Education Systems Center (EdSystems) team. EdSystems is a mission-driven policy development and program implementation agency focused on shaping and strengthening education and workforce systems in order to prepare more young Illinoisans for productive careers and lives in a global economy. Their support in addressing the following outcomes began in December 2019: (1) map and implement strategic college and career pathways and (2) define and scale a work-based learning continuum aligned with state policies and definitions. To date, we have defined a process for pathway development that includes (a) identify promising credentials within local labor market; (b) backward map from the college’s programs of study strategic dual credit courses to achieve multiple promising credentials; (c) determine student eligibility and teacher credentials; (d) and map ideal career-focused course sequence collaboratively across secondary and postsecondary levels. Initial pathways under development include Information Technology and Business & Financial Services. Workgroups will continue meet monthly with the support of the EdSystems team through October.

4. ***Establish a series of regional professional development opportunities to strengthen college and career readiness-related knowledge.*** In spring and summer 2020, multiple professional development sessions are planned for high school personnel. These sessions will provide more information about experiences of instructors teaching dual credit as well as provide training for approximately 20 new high school instructors who will teach dual credit at their high school building in the 2020-2021 school year. Transitional math instructors will meet in spring 2020 to review student success data and continue to strengthen their support network and compilation of instructional resources. JPMorgan Chase grant funding will fund focused professional development for high school counselors to learn more about college advising in summer 2020. In addition, we expanded regional college/career readiness events for D509 parents and students. Two workshops will be held focused on early college credit options and ECC programs to assist middle and high school students with college preparation. Approximately 400 area high school juniors attended the annual First Lecture event on February 7 where they heard lectures from two ECC faculty. This experience provides students a contextualized literacy experience whereby they can participate in

real-college classroom experience early in order to assess their own readiness for this type of learning environment.

In addition to the above priorities, the Alliance for College Readiness's Leadership Team has begun reexamining the Alliance governance structure. The EdSystems team guided an internal self-assessment in December 2019 using a tool created in partnership with Jobs for the Future and ConnectEd. The *"Leadership and Governance for College and Career Readiness: Self-Assessment Tool"* is based on extensive research on national best practices as well as the collective experiences these organizations have gained in leading robust regional college and career readiness strategies across the country. The tool will inform the evaluation of the Alliance's current governance structures to ensure we are able to maximize our partnerships across the region and ensure continuous improvement of college and career readiness planning and programming. Based on recommendations from the Alliance Leadership Team, Dr. Sam and our regional superintendents/CEO have requested we explore alternative governance structures. Our discussions will continue in February as we learn more about the Northwest Educational Council for Student Success (NECSS), which is the governing structure used by Harper College, partner Districts 211, 214, and 220, and the Regional EFE 070 (for more information see www.necsspartnership.com).

Dual Credit Partnerships

Our staff continues to support students currently enrolled in both full- and part-time dual credit programs in spring 2020. As the semester ends, we will celebrate another class of dual credit students who will earn their Associate degree prior to their high school graduation. This year we anticipate honoring approximately 30 graduates on Friday, May 15, 2020. Invitations to the Accelerate College commencement ceremony will be forthcoming.

In addition, we are working diligently with our high school partners to recruit and enroll a new cohort of dual credit students for the upcoming 2020-2021 school year. Students have been meeting with high school counselors to review the options available for the upcoming school year:

- (1) Full-time Accelerate College program at the ECC campus. Students enroll in a minimum of twelve credit hours in the fall and spring terms taking general education core courses (GECC).
- (2) Part-time courses at the ECC campus. Students enroll in up to seven credit hours in the fall and spring terms. Courses can be career-technical education (CTE) or general education courses.
- (3) Part-time courses at the high school campus. Across districts 300, 301, 303, and U46 qualified high school instructors will deliver fourteen college courses via the in-high school dual credit program model.

The next quarterly report will include a summary of enrollments planned for the fall 2020 semester.

College Transition Programs

Federal TRiO grant programs identify and assist individuals from disadvantaged backgrounds who have potential to succeed in higher education with the goal of supporting their high school completion and enrollment in college.

Talent Search

In the current academic year, the Talent Search program is supporting 500 middle and high school students from School Districts U-46 and 300. In spring 2020, students in this program are participating in the following support services:

- Middle school-based tutoring and workshops
- Transition Academy (approximately 100 students enrolled)
- Talent Search Tuesdays at high school location include academic support and workshops
- Parent and student workshops on Financial aid/Literacy and Career Exploration

Upward Bound

The two grant programs support 136 high school aged students from School Districts U-46 and 300. In spring 2020, students in this program are participating in the following support services:

- After-school tutoring at ECC, Monday thru Thursday 4-7 p.m.
- Academic Skills Workshops
- Social Skill Activities
- Cultural Enrichment Events
- Academic and personal advising
- Financial aid and scholarship application workshops

Student Support Services

This year 526 ECC students receive support from two grants: Student Support Services and Student Support Services – English as a Second Language. In spring 2020, students in this program are participating in the following support services:

- Academic and career preparation
- Selecting postsecondary academic courses and major exploration
- Scholarships and financial aid programs
- College tours occurring over the College's spring break include:
 - A combined trip with the College of Lake College for a Southern Tour to Memphis Tennessee to visit four colleges (University of Memphis, Fisk University, Middle Tennessee State University and Tennessee State University). Approximately twenty participants from both school will be on the trip.
 - The second group of 36 ECC Student Support Services and Student Support Services – ESL students, and chaperons, will visit California University of Pennsylvania, Howard University and Georgetown University in Washington D.C.
- Assistance for ESL students enrolled in mainstream college classes
- Cultural, social, personal, and leadership development experiences

The request to renew both the TRiO Student Support Services and Student Support Services – English as a Second Language grants was submitted to the Department of Education in January. The grant request is for 2021-2026.

*Report submitted by Dr. Mary Perkins, Dean, College Transitions & Secondary Partnerships
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