

## 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.

Transition to STEM, Transition to Quantitative Literacy, and Transition to Technical Math were first taught in the 2019-2020 school year enrolling 330 students. All three courses have State Portability approval, ensuring students who earn a grade of C or better place directly into college-level math upon entry to ECC. We continue to collaborate with each District to assess the impact of the courses and provide support for (11) high school instructors.

The state taskforce is near releasing a draft of Transitional English Language Arts (ELA) competencies and policies for review. ECC's Professor II of English and Director of the Alliance for College Readiness, Ms. Alison Douglas, continues to serve on the state Transitional English Competency Development taskforce which has completed the drafting process for state competencies. The group expects the state competencies to be released for public comment soon.

- 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. The Vice President of Teaching, Learning, and Student Development's Placement Taskforce has approved use of PSAT scores as another placement measure starting in fall 2021. This will provide an alternative method for placement that will most benefit students currently in high school.
- ### 2. *Continue to expand dual credit options for regional students (on-campus and in-high school) as well as strengthen communication about program options.*
- As noted in previous quarterly reports, we continue to partner with our public and private schools in D509 to expand dual credit course and program options for students in AY2020-2021. A Dual Credit Advisory Council was established this year, comprised of District representatives, who have identified multiple methods to improve processes and communication. Our team is also collaborating with the ECC Marketing department

to create several short videos to “tell the dual credit story”. During the Covid-19 “shelter at home” process, dual credit courses have continued online, and ECC faculty liaisons remain in communication with dual credit instructors at the high school sites to maintain student and teacher support and rigor during these new circumstances.

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 continues to partner with the Northern Illinois University’s Education Systems Center (EdSystems) team to: (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 and mapped courses for an Information Technology pathway aligned to ECC programs of study. The next area of focus – the Business & Financial Services pathway – will commence via virtual meetings in May 2020. In addition, the federal Perkins V grant guidelines require close collaboration between secondary and postsecondary levels, as well as businesses and community agencies, to develop a Comprehensive Local Needs Assessment. This document will guide action planning for FY2021-2024. The divisions of College Transition & Secondary Partnerships and Workforce Development & Continuing Education are jointly providing support for these efforts.
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 summer 2020 to review student success data and continue to strengthen their support network and compilation of instructional resources. We are also exploring training opportunities to enhance high school counselors’ college and career development knowledge and skills. During the Covid-19 “shelter in place,” we are working with our high school partners to provide planned professional development in virtual environments.

As noted in our February 2020 Board report, the Alliance for College Readiness’s Leadership Team is reexamining the Alliance governance structure with the guidance of the EdSystems team to align with national best practices for robust regional college and career readiness strategies across the country. A small workgroup is drafting recommendations for revisions to the Alliance governance structure that will be presented to Dr. Sam and the District Superintendents at a virtual meeting on May 15, 2020.

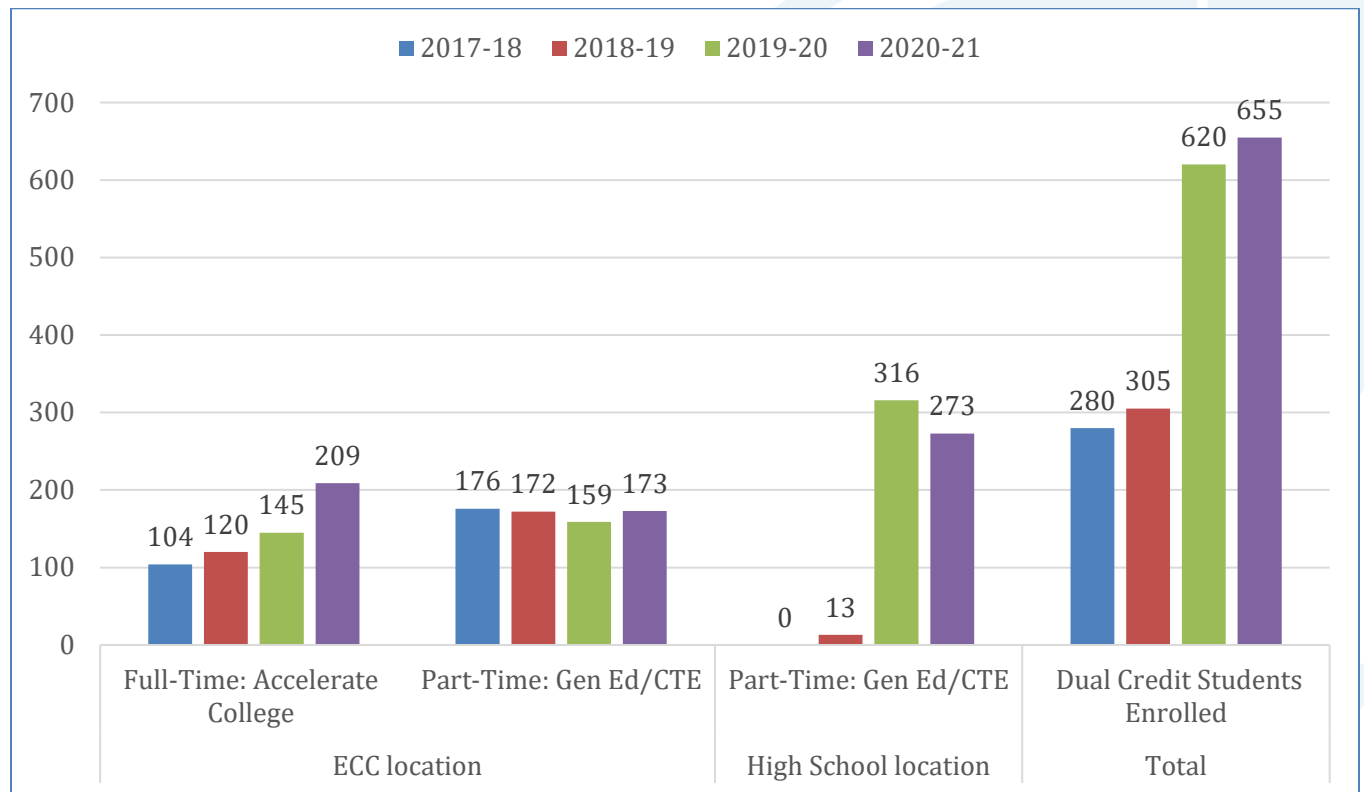
## Dual Credit Partnerships

Our staff supported over 600 enrolled dual credit students in AY2019-2020 via our full- and part-time dual credit programs. In May, approximately 30 students will earn their Associate degree prior to their high school graduation. Due to the COVID-19 crisis, the in-person celebration planned for May 15 is on hold. To honor these students, we will place a yard sign at each graduate’s home in the coming weeks.

In addition, we are enrolling a new cohort of dual credit students for the AY2020-2021 school year. New full-time students are in the process of meeting with academic advisors (virtually) and registering for classes, all other students have completed their course selection. The following chart provides an update on dual credit student enrollment. Definitions for the categories listed in the chart include:

- (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.

Figure 1: Dual Credit Student Enrollment Trends



\*Enrollments as of 4/28/2020

Lastly, the college continues collaboration with the Kane County Juvenile Justice Center to deliver several one-credit hour courses for students in residence. Six students enrolled in the COL-101 course delivered in February at the facility. The COVID-19 pandemic has resulted in cancellation of the courses planned for March and May 2020.

## **College Transition Programs**

In AY2019-2020, the College Transitions department hosted nine Middle school Friday events (two sessions in March and April cancelled due to the COVID-19 pandemic). Nearly 1,000 students participating in these events learned about the habits for success in school, how to make the most of high school in preparation for college, and reasons to make college a choice after high school. Students also previewed several ECC academic programs while on campus. In addition, 250 high school seniors who had not yet confirmed college plans were scheduled to attend the annual Plan, Learn, Navigate Success (PLANS) event on March 20; however, this event was also cancelled due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

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. Elgin Community College proudly supports students through five TRiO grant programs:

### **Talent Search**

In AY2019-2020, 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. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the staff is adapting its support services for delivery via online methods. In the month of April, Talent Search hosted a virtual Transition Academy session.

- Middle school-based tutoring and workshops
- Transition Academy (approximately 100 students enrolled)
- Talent Search Tuesdays at high school location include academic support and workshops
- High school parent and student workshops

### **Upward Bound**

The two grant programs support 136 high school aged students from School Districts U-46 and 300. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Upward Bound staff are adapting service delivery via online methods as follows:

- Scheduling virtual meetings
- Email responses concerning inquiries related to scholarships, letters of reference, college entry exams, Summer Bridge Program, and classroom books and fees
- Providing updated information regarding college application processes, supporting completion of financial aid documentation, and responding to other inquiries
- Follow-up phone calls
- Parent/student contact and documentation

## **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. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the staff is adapting its support services for delivery via online methods by implementing the following:

- Scheduling virtual meetings with students
- Email responses to academically related questions
- Group communication to connect students with ECC’s virtual Student Life events
- Reviewing student files to ensure currency with next steps for enrollment at ECC or their next institution
- Follow-up phone calls
- Connecting students with other departments to access remote student services

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  
April 30, 2020*