

MCHENRY COUNTY COLLEGE

STRATEGIC PLAN

2013-2018

ADOPTED: AUGUST 2013

McHenry
County College



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LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT



McHenry County College (MCC) provides exceptional learning experiences and opportunities that have the power to transform lives. The MCC Board of Trustees reaffirmed our commitment to student success as our central value with the adoption of the College's new mission statement:

Our focus is learning. Student success is our goal.

The 2013-2018 Strategic Plan outlines a road map for McHenry County College to become one of the top community colleges in the country. We will accomplish this by continuing to be a student-centered institution that provides a high-quality educational experience. MCC's strategic plan provides broad, overarching goals to be implemented over the next five years, and it outlines the educational direction to encourage innovation, foster learning-centered environments and develop curriculums which respond to the needs of the workforce and economic development within the county.

The College's strategic planning process is based upon the key elements of information gathering, critical thinking and collaborative input. Five significant initiatives, which have involved employees from all departments, have contributed to the development of this plan:

1. Self-assessment and enrollment trends
2. Student and community input
3. Visional directions established through the master planning process and documents
4. Environmental scans, which review the external trends of the workforce, economic development and county-wide demographics
5. Enrollment management research gathered by a Noel-Levitz student survey

As a result, the following overall strategic directions were identified:

1. Student engagement, completion and success
2. Academic transfer and learning-centered programs
3. Workforce development and training programs designed for career-long learning
4. Fiscal and infrastructure development
5. A culture of measurement, assessment and continuous improvement

I am confident that this strategic plan provides a new foundation upon which we allocate the necessary resources to remain a model of success in higher education. Every plan continues to evolve, so I look forward to the ongoing development and measurement in order to hold ourselves accountable for our decisions. Your voices have been heard, and I welcome further input.

Thank you to all the caring and committed faculty and staff who are dedicated to our priority of student success at MCC.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Vicky Smith". The signature is fluid and cursive.

Vicky Smith, Ed.D.
President

MCHENRY COUNTY COLLEGE BACKGROUND

McHenry County College is located in northwest Illinois on the Wisconsin border. MCC's district covers 600 square miles across most of McHenry County and small parts of Boone, Lake and Kane counties. There are 30 incorporated municipalities and two unincorporated Census Designated Places (CDPs), which cross the Wisconsin border. The College district encompasses 18 school districts with 76 schools. There are a total of nine public high school districts, with 14 individual public high schools and one private high school in the county.

MCC's boundaries were drawn many years ago based upon K-12 school district boundaries and were not intended to be contiguous with the county border. Because MCC's district closely aligns with that of McHenry County, county-level data is used for planning purposes.

Roughly 77% of the MCC district is considered rural, and the other 23%, concentrated in the eastern half of the county, is suburban in nature. The county has a population density of 511.9 people per square miles, covering a total of 603.17 square miles of land. McHenry County is located on the western edge of the Chicago urbanized area and is included in the Chicago Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA).

ENROLLMENT - Credit

MCC served over 11,000 credit students in FY 2012. Of these:

- 1,187 were GED and/or English-as-a-Second-Language (ESL) students
- 3,468 were enrolled in career/technical programs
- 6,564 were in enrolled in baccalaureate transfer programs

SPRING 2012 ENROLLMENT

- 7,024 credit students (headcount)
- 38% full-time students
- 58,010 credit hours

FALL 2012 ENROLLMENT

MCC's Fall 2012 enrollment growth is the highest over the past five years among all Illinois community colleges.

- 6,976 credit students (headcount)
- 37% full-time students
- 62,519 credit hours*

**4.5% credit-hour enrollment increase over prior year*

SPRING 2013 ENROLLMENT

6,550 credit students (headcount)
59,309 credit hours

ENROLLMENT - Workforce and Community Development Enrollment (FY 2012)

- 25,182 unduplicated Adult Education and Workforce and Community Development students
- 25,578 facility rental attendees

EMPLOYEES

- Approximately 850 full- and part-time employees
- Nearly 91% of faculty hold a master's or doctorate degree; 68% of adjunct faculty hold a master's or doctorate degree
- Nearly 65% of administrators hold a master's or doctorate degree

MCHENRY COUNTY COLLEGE LEADERSHIP

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Chris Jenner, Cary
Cynthia Kissler, Wonder Lake
Linda Liddell, Crystal Lake
Mary Miller, Crystal Lake
Ronald Parrish, Woodstock
Molly Walsh, Crystal Lake
Tom Wilbeck, Lakewood
Michele Lambert, Lake in the Hills (student trustee)

EXECUTIVE COUNCIL

Dr. Vicky Smith, President
Laura Brown, Vice President for Institutional Advancement
Dr. Allen Butler, Chief Information Officer
Dr. Tony Miksa, Vice President of Academic and Student Affairs
Bob Tenuta, Chief Financial Officer/Treasurer

STRATEGIC PLANNING COMMITTEE

Laura Bantz	Loreen Keller
Donna Bieschke	Talia Koronkiewicz
Teresa Bossert	Dr. Paige Lush
Laura Brown	Dr. Tony Miksa
Mike Clesceri	Kay Moormann
Dr. Beverly Dow	Dr. Amy Ortiz
Tina Drzal	Peter Ponzio
Nicole Garcia	Rob Rasmussen
Marla Garrison	Dr. Marcella Reca-Zipp
Christina Haggerty	Mark Rockwell
Paul Hamill	Larry Savard
Kate Harger	Pat Stejskal
Kathy Hayhurst	Tawnja Trimble
Anne Humphrey	Don Wallace
Margaret Keehn	



CREATION OF THE STRATEGIC PLAN

McHenry County College engages in planning across all areas of the College in order to establish a clear vision and road map that allow us to adhere to our values of **Quality, Community and Change Ready.**

The institution's leadership is committed to advancing the progress of recent years. The strategic plan explores future opportunities and innovative methods to deliver education to the residents of McHenry County. It also is a comprehensive strategy built with the input from all parties, both inside and outside of the institution.

Ultimately, the plan is dynamic, comprehensive and continuous so as to ensure our future directions are built on providing quality educational opportunities for McHenry County residents, students and stakeholders.

This five-year (2013-2018) strategic plan articulates the College's mission by giving broad direction; examining the operational strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and challenges; and providing the overarching goals that keep the institution focused. These initiatives establish the direction for all departments, divisions and employees to work in unison to answer four basic questions:

1. Where are we now?
2. Where do we want to be?
3. How do we get there?
4. How do we measure our progress?

The McHenry County College Board of Trustees reexamined the College's mission statement and values in preparation for the 2013-2018 strategic planning. The consensus was to develop a mission statement that was clear, with a unifying focus of "why we exist." In addition, the mission statement was developed with simplicity in mind and a goal of resonating with the College's constituents and residents county-wide. Subsequently, the strategic planning committee determined that the mission statement was focused enough to also serve as the institutional goal for planning purposes:

"OUR FOCUS IS LEARNING. STUDENT SUCCESS IS OUR GOAL."

The new McHenry County College mission statement was adopted on July 26, 2012.

MCC's values are a result of planning, research and analysis conducted throughout a year-long branding initiative. These values come out of ideas inherent in the brand pledge and, by articulating them, add substance and depth to the pledge's applications. Unlike the College's brand pledge, which serves primarily as an internal guide and touch point for marketing strategies and messages, these values and language are used regularly in all communications. MCC's values are:

Change Ready. Defined as the capacity to identify and act on opportunities to be responsive, innovative and agile in meeting student and stakeholder needs. It requires a willingness to take risks and be proactive rather than reactive and to anticipate where the institution needs to be in five years, rather than focus exclusively on today's needs. Change ready is an institutional value that is modeled by leadership and fostered and supported by every member of the organization. MCC's ability to be change ready will be driven largely by enrollment demands and the workforce-related expectations of students and employers, so the data presented for this value focus on overall enrollments, industry/occupational growth and needs and commuter trends.

Community. This value addresses MCC's commitment to building a community of learners whose learning takes place both within and outside of the MCC campus. To do this will require that all MCC students and employees embrace the range of learning needs and aspirations that are brought to such an enterprise and celebrate diverse backgrounds, heritages and experiences. It also will require providing each learner with access to the resources needed to participate fully in available learning opportunities. Data presented for this value emphasize changes in demographic characteristics, income and financial need and readiness to learn.

Quality. The production of educational outputs and outcomes that meet or exceed the expectations of students, employers and the community and contribute to quality of life in McHenry County. Information presented for this value addresses accountability, technology, readiness to learn and return on investment.

These three core values are now incorporated into all facets of the College, creating the identity and supporting the philosophical direction of serving the residents in McHenry County.



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

We live in a rapidly changing environment. The cost of higher education is increasing, and economic conditions continue to ebb and flow. While increasing traditional-age student enrollment remains important, we are also expanding our efforts and outreach to increase the enrollments in the areas of adult returning students, veterans, students of diversity, workforce employee training and mature adults. These expanded areas are developed through comprehensive planning to identify the programs, needs, services and delivery methods that will ensure future students are successful in accessing a higher education. Student success is the end goal that resonates throughout all planning efforts. Deeply rooted in the College, a vision of student success defines our direction of work for the future, calling us into action to improve our students' lives and the community we serve.

There is much evidence to show that student success is already embedded in MCC's environment. The challenge is to extend our efforts further and more deeply so that success is encountered by all who have, or seek, a relationship with MCC. At the same time, dedication to achieving each of our goals will secure the academic quality and reputation of our students, faculty and staff, and the distinctive educational experience that MCC provides.

Our progress in achieving the action plans developed in support of each goal will be the basis for MCC's sustained competitiveness in higher education, as well as the development of the county's future workforce.

McHenry County College leadership, faculty and staff are committed to achieving the adopted strategic initiatives during 2013-2018.

There are five strategic directions that inform our initiatives, which have been developed with insight from data and research compiled:

1. Student engagement, completion and success
2. Academic transfer and learning-centered programs
3. Workforce development and training programs designed for career-long learning
4. Fiscal and infrastructure development
5. A culture of measurement, assessment and continuous improvement

2013-2018

STRATEGIC INITIATIVES

Initiative 1

Increase student engagement, completion and success.

Examples

- Improve the student experience by increasing access and affordability, strengthening academic programs, providing needed learning facilities, expanding student services and activities (including student life and athletics) and strengthening programs that support high school students' readiness for college.
- Ensure preschool through higher education curriculum alignment and transfer articulation.
- Integrate college and career readiness skills into education and training programs, with an emphasis on adult education.
- Increase the number of certificate and degree completers and prepare them with skills needed for success.
- Utilize research to assess and develop curricula to meet the needs of all student groups, employers, the community and transfer institutions.
- Focus, align and integrate organizational efforts to create learning-centered environments that offer all students an opportunity to succeed.
- Develop pathways that support the timely completion of degrees or career pathways for all students with stackable credentials that allow individuals to transition between degree and workforce.
- Provide innovative developmental education and college readiness programs that work to close achievement gaps and address structural inequities that impede student success.
- Implement comprehensive, research-based strategies to increase student retention and persistence.
- Emphasize the diversity, quality and affordability of the College's programs and services.
- Prepare for increased diversity in student populations, with a focus on the Latino community.
- Offer classes and curricula during times and days that meet the needs of the students, especially the resident commuter.



Initiative 2

Maintain the College's financial stability, and expand infrastructure and technology to establish state-of-the-art learning environments that inspire postsecondary education and career development.

Examples

- Maintain user-centered, state-of-the-art technology and staffing support that enhances student learning, supports faculty/staff productivity, maximizes student success and ensures organizational effectiveness.
- Establish systematic processes and practices to maintain data integrity.
- Promote a culture of data security awareness across all areas of the organization to support student privacy and limit liability.
- Focus on controllable revenues and costs to sustain our current reputation and facilities and provide funding for strategic priorities.
- Maintain short and long-term budget and finance priorities that provide a balanced approach to the needs of a learning organization with the flexibility to realign resources.
- Seek alternative resources, which include sustainable environmental options, to supplement and/or increase existing revenue streams and funding sources.
- Expand academic offerings in the area of healthcare and social assistance.

Initiative 3

Ensure high-quality services and learning opportunities through a culture of continuous improvement, innovation and accountability.

Examples

- Enhance and align continuous process and systems improvement to respond quickly to changes in the internal and external environment.
- Expand and integrate the use of quality improvement processes within and across divisions and departments.
- Establish measurements and benchmarks to systematically advance organizational effectiveness and efficiency.

Initiative 4

Engage in partnerships that enable MCC students to succeed in a global economy.

Examples

- Develop and offer degrees and certificates that are closely aligned with current and future labor market needs within the county. (Examples include those in: robotics, health careers, technology, manufacturing, culinary arts and hospitality and paralegal).
- Create and support an entrepreneurial environment that encourages design processes built upon innovation, creativity, adaptability, risk taking and collaboration in an atmosphere of mutual respect and support.
- Maximize employer engagement in the development of relevant programs that will lead to sustainable wages.
- Focus on outreach of entry-level positions, cultivating students' career path advancement.
- Ensure that MCC programs and services are directly related to the current and emerging labor market needs of our region.
- Continue to partner with local, regional and state entities to ensure that our students are prepared to meet the needs of the workplace.
- Participate in coordinated leadership with local, state and regional efforts to attract and retain jobs.
- Monitor global markets for emerging fields of study that will bring new opportunities to our students, the community and the region.

Initiative 5

Attract, develop and retain quality instructors who are outstanding scholars/teachers and an excellent, diverse staff who are committed to the mission of MCC.

Examples

- Promote a culture that fosters collegiality, creates a sense of community among faculty and staff and furthers employee responsibility for outcomes.
- Maintain rigorous selection and performance standards for faculty and staff.
- Provide comprehensive professional development opportunities that improve teaching and learning, develop leadership and strengthen employee skills.
- Design and institute a leadership skills development program for managerial personnel.
- Promote diversity among all staff.



THE PLANNING PROCESS / METHOD

A cross-representative committee, comprised of all levels and areas of the College, formed the strategic planning committee in Fall 2012. The committee was charged with soliciting and examining all the ideas, suggestions, history and input shared by focus groups, surveys, other data collected and face-to-face interviews regarding the College's future directions. The overall objectives of the planning process included:

Objectives

- Help guide the College toward achieving its mission
- Reflect priorities, goals and objectives in the development of the College budget
- Assess and report progress toward achievement of goals and objectives
- Support the integration of planning, budgeting and assessment
- Involve a large number of the College community in the development of plans
- Develop and communicate widely a shared vision for the future of the College
- Direct the use of assessment results to improve processes and revise plans

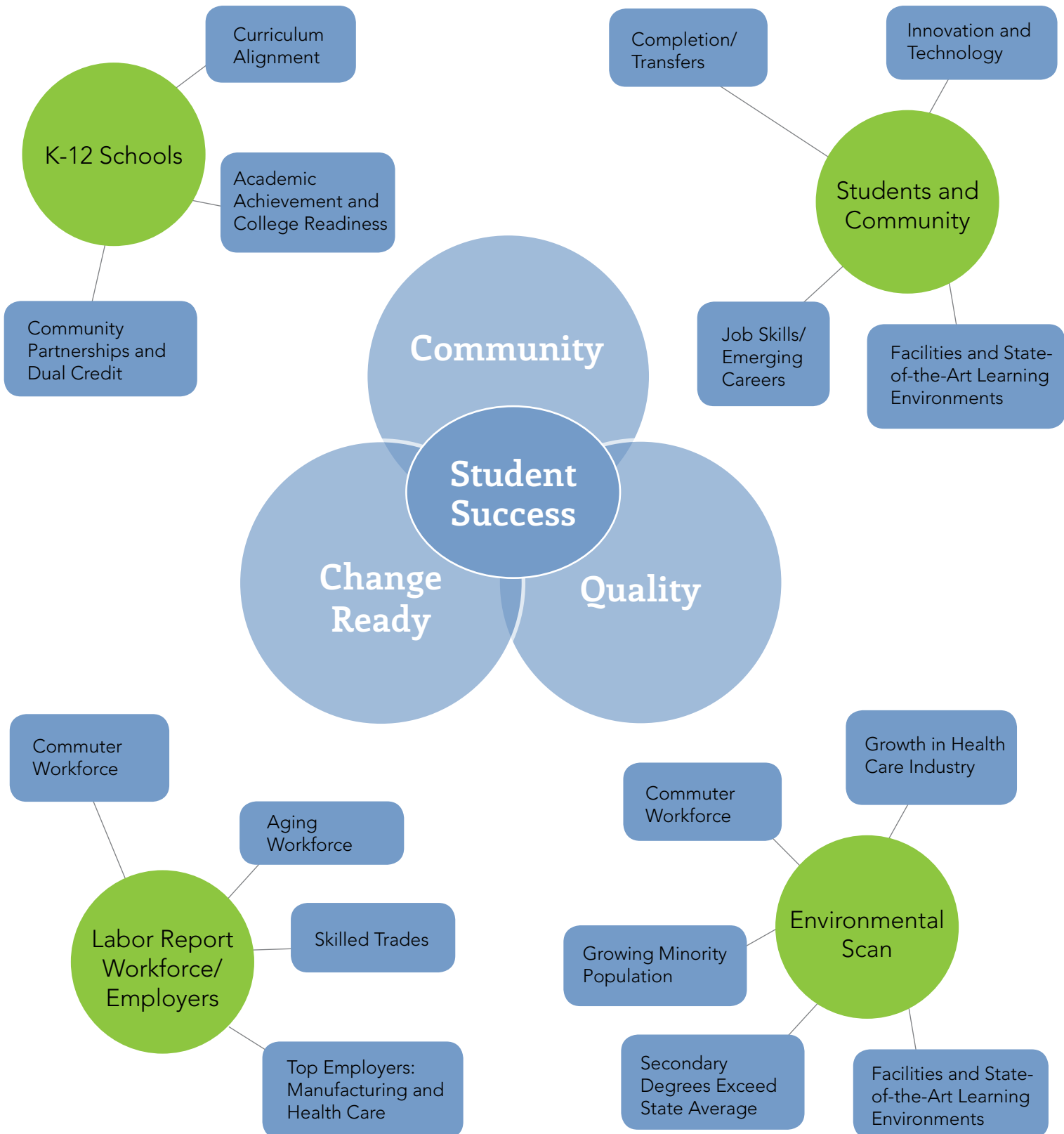
Once all the data were completed and reviewed, the committee drafted strategic initiatives and major objectives. Then, units across the College developed their ideas for possible tactics and performance measurements. Performance measures assigned to each strategic outcome demonstrated a willingness to be held accountable and enabled the group to effectively assess progress.

The planning process began with the College's mission: ***Our focus is learning. Student success is our goal.*** Development of the strategic plan is a continuous process, which involves key steps:

- Assessment of internal and external environments
- Thoughtful interpretation of information by faculty and staff
- Development and selection of specific directions and choices aimed at improvement
- Implementation of specific actions required to make improvements
- Assessment of performance measurements to determine progress

Emerging Trends and Themes

The committee reviewed and compiled a wide array of information to help establish the overarching initiatives that were recommended for the MCC Strategic Plan 2013-2018. As the committee reviewed all of the input and research, there were emerging trends and themes that surfaced. These were used to develop the overarching initiatives and focus for the strategic plan.



RESEARCH AND DATA COLLECTION

The complete reports, surveys, research and consumer input of information can be found in the Appendices. The following are the highlights, key findings and summaries of the data collected.

BOARD OF TRUSTEES RETREAT – JUNE 16, 2012

The Board of Trustees began the strategic planning process by evaluating and revising the College's mission, updating the Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats (SWOT Analysis) from August 2011 and examining the overarching values for the College. There were some changes to the SWOT summary from 2011 and clarification of the values. At the conclusion of the retreat, the Board provided direction for a revision of the College's mission statement, which was later adopted on July 26, 2012:

"OUR FOCUS IS LEARNING. STUDENT SUCCESS IS OUR GOAL."

The following is a summary of the findings from the June 16, 2012 Board of Trustees retreat, which aided in validating directions (or themes) for the development of the strategic plan.

Review of the SWOT Summary

Strengths

- Employees and quality educators administrators staff
- Fiscally sound
- Attractive curricula
- Collective bargaining teams
- Shah Center outreach
- Community outreach
- Location
- Proven success
- Personal attention to students
- Positive attitudes

Weakness

- Complaining without forgiving vs. solution oriented
- Visual media image, perception
- Physical facilities
- Inconsistencies in staff
- No overarching vision
- Expense
- Angst over cultural shifts



Opportunities

- Future high school students
- Community engaged
- Enhance reputation
- Online education
- Create a strong identity
- Impacting more of our community
- Board training
- Business involvement
- Media campaign
- New programs
- New buildings
- Potential donors to engage
- New talent to recruit

Threats

- Media, bloggers
- Online universities
- Funding
- Taxpayer backlash
- Discontinuity of Board membership
- Baggage – history
- No continuity – staff, strategic plan and direction

Review of the Values

Values from Board Retreat

- Educating
- Student success, staff and individual success
- Student to student success
- Trust
- Honesty
- Openness
- Listening
- Communication – public and internal
- Diversity
- Improvement and steadfast planning
- Fiscal responsibility
- Integrity
- Service
- Quality Educational Opportunities
- Community
- Student and community learning
- Leadership



SUMMARY OF ENVIRONMENTAL SCAN

A county-wide environmental scan was conducted by the Center for Governmental Studies, Northern Illinois University, in January 2013. The complete study and supplemental presentations can be found in the Appendices. The purpose of the scan was to identify data that may be helpful in making informed decisions about the current and future operation of the College. The report addresses economics, demographics, educational and workforce trends. The data will continue to validate or modify strategic directions, identify emerging issues to explore further and educate MCC employees and other stakeholders about the environment within the county. Following are the environmental scan highlights and recommended planning opportunities:

- The overall ethnic make-up of the county is primarily White. The largest-growing minority population is Hispanic, projected to increase to 11.4%. This gives McHenry County the 10th largest proportion of Latinos among Illinois counties.
Planning Priorities: *Expand services and outreach to Hispanic population to overcome language and cultural barriers. Prepare for increased diversity in student population.*
- McHenry County is one of the fastest-growing areas in Illinois, with an 18.7% population increase in 2000-2010. Growth in five years will increase by another 2.3%, with a projected population of 319,136.
- The average age in McHenry County was 38 years in 2010. (Statewide average is 36.6 years).
Planning Priorities: *Prepare for a shift away from traditional undergraduates. Focus on returning students and baby boomers (48-66) who are focusing on career change, updating technical or technological skills, or moving from unskilled labor to skilled professional.*
- While manufacturing is experiencing a 28.8% decline, it still remains the largest industry for employment in the county. **Planning Priorities:** *Align academic offerings with new and changing jobs in construction/manufacturing-green construction, Medtronic (robotic) manufacturing.*
- Higher-wage workers (\$40,000 and more) travel for employment outside the county.
- Based on McHenry County's landscape for employment (supply and demand), associate's degree workers make slightly higher salaries than those with bachelor's degrees (\$63,735 vs. \$63,224). Those with associate's degrees make \$23,000 more than workers without postsecondary degrees.
Planning Priorities: *Encourage completion.*

- MCC's laddering curriculum was described as an "exemplary practice" by high school leaders.
- Nine of the McHenry County high schools scored above the national composite score, and eleven scored at or above the state average. Three were below both. The other large potential MCC market are nontraditional students, particularly baby boomers between 48 and 66 years of age who may want to update their technical skills, reinvent themselves from a career perspective, or pursue leisure and recreational educational programming. Baby boomers represent 33% of total population.

Planning Priorities: *Support noncredit, workforce and community development needs.*

- While overall enrollment in the county's 18 school districts has declined 0.7% since 2006, school districts that experienced an increase in enrollment had a total enrollment in 2011 of 27,770 students, while school districts with declining enrollment only had a total enrollment in 2011 of 23,557 students. Declining enrollments in schools with small populations will have a greater effect on enrollment rates than schools with large populations. The 2011 average school district size with increasing enrollment was 4,628, compared to an average school size of 1,812 with decreasing enrollment.

- The overall birth rate in the county has declined 21.4% in the last nine years. This represents a 37% decline in kindergarteners in 2010.
Planning Priorities: *With these declines, we must look beyond the traditional student and focus on adult and returning students and those workers retooling or enhancing their skills.*

- Health care and social assistance are anticipated to add the most jobs between 2008-2018.

Planning Priorities: *Continue to expand academic offerings in support of jobs in this area.*

- Between 2008-2018, 8,282 new jobs are projected. However, these jobs will be in low-wage and low-skills areas. As these positions stimulate the economy, these same workers need to be prepared to move into more stable and higher-paying career paths.

Planning Priorities: *Focus on outreach to those in entry-level positions, cultivating career path advancement.*

- A larger percentage of workers commuting into McHenry County for work have no degrees, versus those who commute out of the county for work.

Planning Priorities: *Focus on a workforce initiative to help train and attract workers into higher education.*

- The largest number of positions and careers being filled by workers outside the county include manufacturing, educational services, health care and social assistance, and professional/science/technical services.

Planning Priorities: Focus on career path programs to train residents for these positions.

- McHenry County ranked the ninth highest of the state's 102 counties in the loss of inflation-adjusted household income.

Planning Priorities: Opportunity for fundraising campaign to support scholarships at MCC for students.

- In McHenry County, there were 15 high schools (including Marian Central) serving 4,284 seniors in the 2012 academic year. Of these, 30% completed the FAFSA application.

Planning Priorities: Focus on increasing percentage of high school graduates who attend MCC. This is an indicator that interest in attend. Huntley and Marian Central had the highest percentages, while Harvard had the lowest completion rates at 12%.

- Nine of the county's 76 elementary schools have higher percentages of low-income students than the statewide average of 49%.

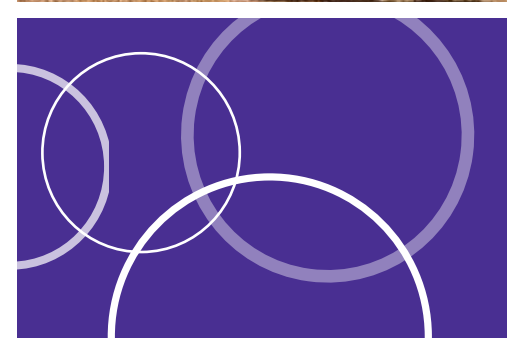
Planning Priorities: Review tuition and fees, as well as financial aid and scholarship opportunities. This could affect college affordability in upcoming years.

- The Prairie State Achievement Exam measures 11th grade achievement in reading, math and science. Four high schools had decreased scores greater than 10% in reading, math or both.

Planning Priorities: This will affect students for these schools' college placement tests. Indications could be these students would need to take 090, 095, 096, 097, 099 classes before advancing into 100 level courses.

- There are 625 postsecondary programs and certificates within a 20-mile radius of MCC.

Planning Priorities: Plan to position MCC to compete for the same students. Competition for the same students could impact enrollment rates in the future.





PRESIDENT'S GOALS

Prior to the development of an extensive and detailed strategic plan, designed to give broad direction over a period of three to-five-years, the President and Board of Trustees established in 2011 multi-year overarching goals for the College. These goals articulated the College's mission and provided the overarching annual objectives for fiscal years 2012-2014:

Goal One: Establish and implement institutional plans that provide direction for College decisions.

Goal Two: Ensure Student Learning and Student Success is occurring, and we are moving toward being the leading community college in Illinois.

Goal Three: Ensure that the MCC faculty, staff, administration and Board are prepared for the next phase of growth at the College, while focusing on helping MCC be the "...leading community college in Illinois...."

Goal Four: Develop strategies and activities that will enhance economic and workforce development in the College's service area.

Goal Five: Evaluate the systems and processes at the College and implement appropriate improvement measures.

These goals have been implemented and are updated annually. All College departments have access to the President's goals, which provide insight and direction on aligning department/division efforts and plans across the institution.

FOCUS GROUP RESULTS SUMMARY (SWOT)

Critical to the data collection for the Strategic Plan, a subgroup was formed to gather information from key stakeholders and tasked to develop an outline and format for workshops. One of the initial goals of this group was to be inclusive by involving as many as possible in the strategic planning process as well as ascertaining their feedback. The following list of stakeholder groups was determined:

- Students (credit and noncredit)
- Community
- Employees
- Board of Trustees

EMPLOYEE GROUP RESULTS

On Tuesday, October 16, 2012 (Professional Development Day), approximately 350 MCC employees were available on campus to participate in the event. A pre focus group event quiz on strategic planning to educate and generate interest was emailed the week before the occasion, and the results were presented as part of the kick-off and introduction. Employees were divided into 14 different groups across the campus to brainstorm lists of Top Treasures (strengths) and Top Opportunities for MCC. Results were analyzed with an axiomatic analysis to identify common themes across the strengths and opportunities identified. There were 293 (54.5%) Treasures and 245 (45.5%) Opportunities. Responses were divided into three categories of Community, Quality and Change-Ready. Items were further categorized into six areas: facilities, student services, academics, technology, people and reputation. Common themes in each category of the six categories became apparent. Results are located in Appendix D (*Professional Development Day Treasure Hunt Results*).

On Wednesday, December 12, 2012, all employees were invited to a focus group session to determine Weaknesses and Threats of the six areas identified through the axiomatic analysis. Forty-four employees attended (in person faculty, staff and administrators), as well as a group remotely participating from Shah Center in McHenry. Small groups were organized to discuss each of the six categories to review strengths and opportunities and brainstormed weaknesses and threats. There were 139 weaknesses and 76 threats identified. Again, common themes emerged.

Data from both events were summarized into a SWOT (strength, weakness, opportunity, threat) table by the six categories and themes that were prevalent (*Appendix C - Strategic Planning SWOT*).



STUDENT SURVEY RESULTS SUMMARY (CREDIT STUDENTS AND APPLICANTS)

As part of the data collection process that contributed toward the College's 2013-2018 Strategic Plan, the College surveyed two stakeholder groups in November-December 2012, both of whom have a vested interest in the future success of the institution. These groups are currently enrolled students for Fall 2012 classes and those individuals who applied but did not enroll for either Summer 2012 and/or Fall 2012 semesters. While both groups were surveyed simultaneously, the questions they were asked varied based on whether they were students or applicants. Both groups were required to answer a general question, which routed them to unique questions based on their response. In order to allow students to navigate through the survey more quickly, a portion of the questions was optional; however, even with these being optional, an average of 92% of respondents answered each question—still a very high response rate overall. Below is a summary of findings based on each group's responses.

Results from Fall 2012 Enrolled Students*

Out of the 7,000 students surveyed, 712 individuals responded. This is a 10% response rate, which is higher than average. The average response rate for an email survey is between 2-3%; MCC's high response rate from students is encouraging and likely means that students are reading email messages from the College and care about providing input toward MCC's planning efforts. Respondents identified the two main factors that determined their attendance at MCC as affordability and convenience, followed by the availability of select/specialized programming. 91% of total respondents answered the question about what they would tell people about MCC; over 70% of these individuals said that MCC is either a good value for the money, or they said that MCC is a great stepping stone to a four-year degree. When asked what they would like to see improved over the next three years, enrolled students emphasized a focus on growing academic programs and related support services to provide more options for students. Respondents requested that administration focus on varying the scheduling classes and as adding new curricula. When asked what MCC should focus on if it was to expand, respondents identified the greatest needs for more lab space as the greatest need followed by parking lots, classrooms and updated existing facilities.

**This group was required to answer the first question, then was routed to question 7 through the end of the survey (please see survey questions in Appendix E).*



Results from Applied but Not Enrolled Individuals*

Out of the 451 applicants surveyed, 36 individuals responded (8% response rate). This response rate is impressive, specifically because these individuals are not students—they have only submitted an application with MCC. Of the 36 respondents, 66% confirmed that they are planning to attend college, the majority of whom identified community college as their choice. When asked what programs would encourage them to attend MCC, the greatest response (following “other” with a variety of answers) was health careers, followed by business/accounting and graphic arts. In the “other” category, technology fields were mentioned most frequently. These respondents were aligned with enrolled student responses in indicating that the College should focus on academic programs and related support services over the next three years. Of those remaining respondents who said they are not going to college, 36% identified that they already have a degree or the skills they need.

**This group was required to answer the first and second question. If they planned to go to college, they were routed to question 3, then questions 5 and 6. If they did not plan to go to college, they skipped to question 4, 5 and 6 (please see survey questions in Appendix E).*

COMMUNITY SURVEY RESULTS SUMMARY (NONCREDIT STUDENTS AND COMMUNITY EVENT PARTICIPANTS)

To assist in supporting the data collected by the credit student group in Fall 2012, a similar survey was sent out to other key stakeholder groups in May 2013. Included in this survey distribution were several groups: 1) noncredit students in community and professional education (included participants in Retired Adult Program and Trips & Tours), 2) adult education students (included GED and English-as-a-Second-Language students), 3) professionals who have attended training and development programs through Workforce, Community and Business Programs at the Shah Center and 4) conference and facility rental clients and attendee participants. Many of the questions asked of these groups were similar to those asked of credit students, specifically about their experience with McHenry County College and the areas where they think MCC should focus in the coming years. Just as with the student survey, in order for respondents to navigate through the survey with ease, some of the questions were optional. The survey was sent to a total of 1,910 individuals, with an overall response rate of 146 people (7.6%); this rate of response is slightly lower than that of the student survey because of the audience and the percentage of respondents not currently taking a course at MCC. However, this result is still satisfactory for an email survey and should be used to help clarify direction moving forward. The following is a summary of findings from this survey.

While 83.4% of respondents said they are not currently taking classes at MCC, 77.3% of them said that they have taken classes or attended events at the College within the past five years. Of the options provided, the top categories of courses taken were identified as: 1) Community Events, 2) Workforce Development and Training, and 3) Conferences and Facility Usage. According to all respondents when asked the question, "What should MCC focus on in the next three years?" the strongest response was Academics (85.4% of respondents selected this answer), aligning with results from the credit student survey. When asked what programs to grow at MCC, respondents' top three selections were health careers, business/accounting, and culinary/hospitality. Over half of respondents said they would tell family and friends that MCC is a good value for the money, and another 26.8% said that MCC provides an outstanding, quality education. Finally, respondents would like future focus to include: more technical/professional education classes (47.4%), the addition of new programming (39.2%) and more class time options to allow for flexibility (38.1%). All of these answers also reflect similar desires as to what credit students expressed in their survey results.

**This group was required to answer the first question, then was routed to various questions based on response (please see survey questions in Appendix F).*

STUDENT FOCUS GROUPS

Results from the student survey identified four areas that needed clarification:

- Academic programming
- Facilities
- Technology
- Academic space

An online Modified Nominal Group Technique (MNGT) was employed to obtain artificial consensus in these four areas. A MNGT is a specialized and highly structured focus group that can be conducted in face-to-face, online or blended settings. This method was chosen because participation is balanced among group members, there is no need for respondent validation of the data since the group itself prioritizes the importance of statement and the specialized steps reduces variation between the procedures conducted (MacPhail, 2001¹). Advantages to using a group technique include the large number of ideas generated, decision through consensus and a low cost of time and money (Islam, 2002³). Since the process is highly structured in terms of keeping to a schedule of activities, and the amount of time spent on each activity is only a matter of minutes, the concentration level of the participants is less likely to wane. Participants are more likely to stay engaged and attentive throughout the process.

A unique quality to the MNGT is that the whole group is involved in

¹ MacPhail, A. (2001). Nominal group technique: A useful method for working with young people. *British Education Research Journal*, 27(2), 161-170.

the process, and there is greater consensus from the members, which leads to legitimate prioritization from the participants. Group members of an MNGT report being more satisfied with the group process than members of other types of group decision making such as brainstorming, unstructured group decision making (i.e., meeting) or focus groups and have an overall sense of accomplishment (Hegedus & Rasmussen, 1986²; Islam, 2002³).

The online MNGT has 3 steps: 1) Introduction, 2) Generation and recording of ideas, and 3) Final ballot. Students received an email explaining the purpose of the data gathering and an expectation that there would be communication through several emails. They were thanked for their willingness to participate and share their experiences. The introduction was followed with a Yes or No question, in which the student chose to continue in the strategic planning data gathering group, or to not continue. If the student chose to continue, they are directed to the first of four data gathering questions. If the student does not wish to continue, they were directed to a "Finished" page, and their email was removed from the list for the duration of this activity.

The second phase consisted of generating and recording ideas. Since this activity was conducted in an online environment, all of the ideas generated were compiled into a comprehensive list from each group. Duplicate ideas were removed, and spelling and grammar were only corrected to ensure that each statement was coherent.

The final phase consisted of balloting. The list of items generated by the group was emailed to each group participant, who was then asked to choose 10 ideas from each of the four categories that were the most important to him/her in order of importance, with 1 being the most important and 10 being the least important.

Five groups of students were queried via email through Survey Monkey to gather responses related to the four areas of interest. Participation numbers, based on the number of students who completed the MNGT from start to finish, follow:

- Full-time traditional: 51
- Full-time nontraditional: 48
- Part-time traditional: 131
- Part-time nontraditional: 32
- Student Senate: 6

² Hegedus, D. M., & Rasmussen, R. V. (1986). Task effectiveness and interaction process of a modified nominal group technique in solving an evaluation problem. *Journal of Management*, 12(4), 545-560.

³ Islam, R. (2002). Modified nominal group technique for group decision-making. *IJUS Journal of Economics and Management*, 10(2), 1-27.

The initial list of responses collected for Academic programming was 482; 287 for Facilities, 321 for Technology; and 296 for Academic space. These lists were consolidated by eliminating duplicate answers, combining similar answers and removing comments not relevant to the question to create a final list for balloting. The final list consisted of approximately 60 items for each category.

The final phase of the MNGT resulted in several statistically significant ($p < 0.001$) items for each category, based on priority of need. The following shows the items in each category that were considered most important by students:

Academic Programming

- Add new programs in health sciences, specifically in the areas of Dental Hygiene, Veterinary Technician, and Ultrasound Technician, and increasing enrollment in Nursing.
- Course scheduling changes were requested to make course availability greater on evenings and weekends, as well as during the summer.
- Courses that are core courses for a degree or certificate should also be offered each semester, as these classes 'fill up' quickly, students are not able to take the course, and must wait up to a year to be able to take the course and continue with their credential.
- Increase the number of online courses available, especially in the high-demand classes.
- Increase the number of seats offered in high-demand classes by using lecture halls more efficiently.

Facilities

- Science labs are very crowded, outdated, and do not have enough sections offered to accommodate the enrollment demand.
- Science labs are not available for study or homework completion.
- Computer labs should have hours increased, as well as have more labs open or more computers added. Students wait to use computers and printers during peak times on campus. Students have limited access to computers with specialized software programs on weekends.
- Health care programs are crowded and need more classrooms so that more sections can be offered.





Technology

- The MCC network is very unreliable and causes frustration to students trying to use online services (i.e., registration and scheduling), use the Internet for academic purposes or use computers in the classroom.
- Computer labs are too crowded and do not have convenient hours for students who work.
- MyMCC is difficult to navigate.
- ANGEL (former learning management system) is inconsistently used among faculty, is not compatible with MCC computers or mobile devices, and is unstable.
- Computers in classrooms do not work reliably, and very often class time is misspent dealing with technology problems instead of learning.

Academic Space

- Classrooms are too crowded.
- Desks and chairs are extremely uncomfortable and do not offer enough work space to accommodate books, note-taking, laptops, etc.
- Tables and chairs would be more conducive to learning and be more comfortable.
- Lecture halls should be used to increase class sizes for high-demand classes.



MCHENRY COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT TRENDS AND STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

Out of the 18 public school districts in McHenry County, 12 currently have strategic plans uploaded on their websites. The special Education District of McHenry County (SEDOM) also has a strategic plan. Most are three-to-five-year plans and are current. Student performance and academic achievement, fiscal responsibility, and technology and communication are the main themes. However, strong community partnerships are emphasized in most of them, and making or maintaining affiliations with MCC is specifically mentioned in several plans (District #47, #155, #50 & SEDOM). Dual-credit options and opportunities with MCC are actually provided in the center of the homepage for District 155.

There was a great disparity in terms of detail and terminology for the various plans. All listed a mission statement and visions. Some stated core beliefs, values and commitments. When goals were stated, they were not always followed by action steps (strategies) or targets, and they remained general in many cases. Others provided specific targets in terms of student performance goals, facility changes, technology updates, etc.

SUMMARY OF EDUCATIONAL MASTER PLAN

McHenry County College's Educational Master Plan was established in 2011 to ensure that the educational needs of the residents and workforce were met. The intent of this multi-year plan is to structure the academic environment to best meet the needs of a dynamic community in concert with McHenry County College's core principals of quality, accessibility, affordability, innovation and accountability.

Increased access will be achieved through program growth and more effective use of resources to offer the best educational and career opportunities in the state. Excellence in teaching and learning will be nurtured in College classrooms with a steadfast and well-supported environment for faculty, employees and students. Cultivating a climate of student success will be developed through integrated services, emerging educational technology implementation and intentional planning and communication across the MCC experience.

Plan Overview

The Educational Master Plan was completed with input from college administrators, faculty and staff, 2009-2011 community surveys, and data from state, county and national sources. Additionally, MCC Core Principles, Academic Plan, presidential goals and the Academic Quality Improvement Program (AQIP) Systems Appraisals Report were integrated. The Plan incorporated the following sources and evaluative works:

- Research trends in postsecondary education, historical student enrollment, strategic plans and current regional economic demands
- Assessment of the internal environment, including the current population served by MCC
- Examination of the relationship of MCC to the local service area, regional and statewide stakeholders
- A survey of faculty, staff and administrators regarding the aspiration to become the “leading community college in Illinois”
- Public surveys and community input
- Analysis of courses, programs and services to support the educational mission of MCC
- Proposal of future capacities in the next five years

Key Components

Regional Outlook – Neighboring counties hold significant population centers offering employment opportunity and regional growth for McHenry County residents in the next decade.

Educational Attainment (2005-2010) – McHenry County has more individuals completing bachelor’s degrees or higher than the statewide average.

Internal Environment – The growth and demand for courses and programming has increased significantly over the past five years (11.8%), despite the growth rate stabilization.

MCC Graduates (2007-2011) – MCC has consistently increased in the number of AA/AS degrees and Career and Technical Education degrees awarded each year.

Outcomes

As a result of research the following were identified as priorities for the College:

- Increased Access
- Excellence in Teaching and Learning
- Student Success

FACILITY MASTER PLAN

A Facility Master Plan was completed in April 2012. The plan provides the vision to shape space to support the Educational Master Plan goals of increased access, excellence in teaching and learning, and student success. The plan illustrates the amount of space necessary to house the projected number of students and programs needed in the future. The Facility Master Plan was developed for the 20-40 year timeframe in order to plan for land acquisition and fiscal needs, while the 10-20 year vision plan can be implemented within the boundaries of land currently owned or in the process of being acquired by MCC.

Plan Highlights

- MCC is currently short of space by almost 100,000 gross square feet (GSF). The average gross square foot per full-time student is 120 GSF. Average for peer community colleges in Illinois for space needs per student is 85-169 GSF. MCC is currently (2013) at 97 GSF/student. For planning purposes, 120 GSF is used.
- Reallocation of space or programs cannot occur until new space is constructed.
- Priorities have been outlined for program expansion:
 - Sciences and Health Professions
 - Student Life Center
 - Public Safety Center
- Conservation of resources and sustainability should be the guiding principle for growth and expansion. This includes reducing energy and resource use costs, community environmental stewardship, health and productivity of building occupants, storm water management and best practices, energy conservation and efficiency, alternative energy sources, energy saving building materials, water use reduction, recycling materials, repurposing and reusing existing buildings and alternative public transportation modes.
- The Facility Master Plan is meant to be guiding and fluid.
- 40-year projection land space needs are for 325-350 acres.
- 3% college enrollment growth is used for the space planning. This growth includes career-oriented adults seeking training and certificates, adults re-entering work environment, high school graduates, transfer students taking summer classes and adult general interest and noncredit classes. The 3% is not intended to project population changes within McHenry County.





MCHENRY COUNTY LABOR REPORT / INDUSTRY

The 2012 McHenry County Labor report offers a current snapshot of the local workforce and highlights the following key areas:

- Industries
- Economic base
- Occupations
- Demographics
- Workforce and employment opportunities

The unemployment rate is starting to decrease from recent highs and has dropped 3.0% since July 2009. Although the rate is lower, there has also been a decline in local labor force availability. This can be attributed to a number of factors, such as an aging population and retirements, moving out of the area, or individuals dropping out of the labor force altogether. 50% of the unemployed had no college education; about 30% had some college or technical school. This stresses the need to reach out to the unemployed and assist them in enrolling at MCC to improve their job prospects.

In conjunction with the lower unemployment rate, there has been a significant increase in the amount of jobs advertised compared to the same period in 2011. For example, health care related openings increased sevenfold with 3,000 jobs added in the 2.5 years. The top advertised occupations were in a variety of fields:

- Health care and education
- Sales and related careers
- Office /administrative support
- Management

The aging workforce in many of the major industries in the county brings up significant concerns and challenges in building a pipeline of replacement workers. Top industries expected to have staffing issues:

- Agriculture
- Manufacturing
- Education and government
- Health care



The local workforce system and MCC will continue to meet these challenges through a variety of tactics:

- Ensuring training programs are aligned with area demand occupations and industries, through training activities that will develop the skills of workers and a pipeline of qualified employees for area businesses
- Focusing on enhancing strengths, identifying and addressing gaps
- Workforce and Economic Development partners seeking input from area employers on their current and future needs.
- Developing integrated strategies that not only improve business attraction and retention strategies but also enhance career pathways of workers through collaboration with industry, education, McHenry County Workforce Network and McHenry County Workforce Investment Board
- Seeking greater effectiveness of area resources by linking workforce development with traditional economic development strategies
- Developing strategies to attract emerging industries and skilled workers for those industries

Individuals employed in the area of Information Technology earn the highest wages, with Construction and Professional, Scientific and Technical coming in second and third. Construction, however, is declining within the county. The IT and Professional, Scientific and Technical areas require degrees or certificates. This is an opportunity for MCC to strengthen the baccalaureate transfer program and provide specific certification programming.

55% of jobs in McHenry County are held by residents. 45% are held by non-residents. This means that 35% of those who live in the county are filling 55% of the jobs within the county. 65% commute outside the county for work.

Summary and Planning Priorities from Labor Report

1. Health Science programs are the pressing need for programming, resources and facilities.
2. Certification programming competition from other institutions may become significant.
3. There is much potential for increased completion of FAFSA applications by area high school students.
4. Partnering with area schools to pull in students has not yet been fully explored.
5. There is potential for increased enrollment of area high school seniors into MCC's baccalaureate transfer program.
6. Accountability programs such as ILDS can support MCC's mission greatly.
7. Continuing Education programming can target baby boomers.
8. Making MCC an attractive opportunity to the Hispanic community is essential.
9. MCC needs to ensure that training programs are aligned with area demand occupations and industries through training activities that will develop the skills of workers and a pipeline of qualified employees for area businesses.
10. Focusing on enhancing strengths, identifying and addressing gaps is critical.
11. Workforce and Economic Development partners should seek input from area employers on their current and future needs.
12. It is important to develop integrated strategies that not only improve business attraction and retention strategies but also enhance career pathways of workers through collaboration with industry, education, McHenry County Workforce Network and McHenry County Workforce Board.
13. We must seek greater effectiveness of areas resources by linking workforce development with traditional economic development strategies.
14. Developing strategies to attract emerging industries and workers' skills for those industries should be a priority for the College.

STRATEGIC VALUES AND PRIORITIES OF PEER COLLEGES

Six peer community colleges were surveyed for values and priorities. There was a high frequency of related values and priorities but substantive disparity as well.

Waubonsee Community College: Quality, Value, Innovation, Service, Accessibility

Elgin Community College: Excellence, Freedom of Inquiry, Equity, Ethical Practices, Accountability, Respect for Diversity, Community Engagement

Harper College: Completion, Accountability, Partnership, Inspiration

College of Lake County: Learning, Integrity, Quality, Service, Accountability, Diversity

Moraine Valley Community College: Student Success, Partnerships, Diversity, Plan/Achieve/Manage Growth, Continuous Improvement

College of DuPage: Demographics, Student Success, Programs, Funding, Partnerships, Facilities and Technology, Workforce

Most Common Values/Priorities – identified by three colleges:

Accountability	College of Lake County, Elgin, Harper
Diversity/Respect for Diversity	College of Lake County, Elgin, Moraine Valley
Partnerships	College of DuPage, Harper, Moraine Valley

Somewhat Common Values/Priorities – identified by two colleges:

Quality	College of Lake County, Waubonsee
Service	College of Lake County, Waubonsee
Student Success	College of DuPage, Moraine Valley



Values/Priorities - selected by only one college:

Accessibility	Waubonsee
Community Engagement	Elgin
Completion	Harper
Continuous Improvement	Moraine Valley
Demographics	College of DuPage
Equity	Elgin
Ethical Practices	Elgin
Excellence	Elgin
Facilities & Technology	College of DuPage
Freedom of Inquiry	Elgin
Funding	College of DuPage
Innovation	Waubonsee
Inspiration	Harper
Integrity	College of Lake County
Learning	College of Lake County
Plan/Achieve/Manage Growth	Moraine Valley
Programs	College of DuPage
Value	Waubonsee
Workforce	College of DuPage

*Source – current strategic plans, as of Fall 2012
(except Moraine Valley, for which no plan was obtained so strategic priorities were used)*

Peer colleges share in the planning process and aspire to many of the same values as McHenry County College. Through its strategic plan, MCC will strive to reach and surpass others as the leading community college in Illinois, and among the finest in the nation.

NOEL-LEVITZ SURVEY

In Spring 2012, 527 students completed the Noel-Levitz Satisfaction Survey. The survey was online and emailed directly to students. Responses show that:

- Compared to national sample of 50,706 students, MCC students were more satisfied with:
 - Parking lot security
 - Tutoring services
 - The campus in general being safe and secure for all students
- Compared to adult students, traditional age students were less satisfied with:
 - The helpfulness of staff
 - The instruction they receive in the classroom (i.e. fairness, quality, practical uses of the information presented)
 - Tuition paid as a worthwhile investment
 - Personalized attention prior to enrollment by admissions staff
- Other findings:
 - There were no notable differences in satisfaction based on students' educational goal, GPA or racial ethnic group.
 - In general the students felt that our top strengths were: a safe campus, convenient ways to pay school bills, how well the campus is maintained and the availability of faculty outside the classroom.
 - Students felt that some of our top challenges were not enough classes within each term, convenience of class times and their ability to register for classes without schedule conflicts.





ACADEMIC QUALITY IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM (AQIP) SUMMARY

McHenry County College is accredited by the Higher Learning Commission (HLC) via the Academic Quality Improvement Program (AQIP). This method of accreditation is focused upon continuous improvement and involves the constant evaluation of college processes. Action Teams across the campus determine areas for improvement, analyze data and best practices and implement recommendations for improvement which are tested and engrafted. McHenry County College has completed its first seven-year cycle of AQIP which included the submission of a Systems Portfolio that provided a detailed snapshot of MCC's programs and services for students and the community. After responding to the corresponding feedback from the Higher Learning Commission, a Quality Check-up was conducted in September, 2011, when two peer reviewers came to MCC for a three-day site visit. Based on the successful completion and documentation of all of our accomplishments, MCC received a letter of Reaffirmation of Accreditation on June 22, 2012.

McHenry County College – AQIP Quality Highlights (May 2012)

McHenry County College (MCC) is focused on making “McHenry County College the leading community college in Illinois by focusing on excellence and student success.” This goal has been the driving force for the College over the past two years. Much has changed at MCC since the submission of a Systems Portfolio in November 2009, as the College now emphasizes excellence, quality improvement and comprehensive strategic planning more than ever before.

Continuous Improvement at McHenry County College

MCC has been an Academic Quality Improvement Program (AQIP) institution since 2006. In November 2009, the College submitted its first Systems Portfolio and in February 2010, received the Systems Appraisal Feedback Report. Six “Issues Affecting Future Institutional Strategies” were specifically outlined: Comprehensive Strategic Planning; Responding Proactively; Comprehensive Metrics, Performance Targets and Systematic Analyses; Leadership Development; Comparison Data and Continuous Quality Infrastructure and Culture.

On September 28-30, 2011, Dr. Cecilia Wittmayer and Dr. Cathy Anderson completed MCC's first Quality Checkup visit. Their report to the Higher Learning Commission (HLC) stated that, “In the team's judgment, McHenry County College presented satisfactory evidence that it met this goal of the Quality Checkup. The institution's approach to and schedule for the Quality Checkup visit provided ample opportunity for the review team to examine evidence provided in the Systems Portfolio. No additional clarification or verification is needed. McHenry (County College) complies with Commission and AQIP's expectations.”



To date, MCC has implemented 56 Action Teams. Of those, nine Action Teams have been reported directly to the HLC:

- Clarify and Improve the Process of General Education Assessment (Fall 2006)
- Develop a Culture of Continuous Improvement (Fall 2006)
- Key Performance Indicators and Balanced Scorecard Development (Fall 2006)
- Curriculum Mapping (Spring 2009)
- Comprehensive Emergency Response Plan (Spring 2009)
- Enterprise Resource Planning (Spring 2009—project put on hold and re-launched Fall 2010)
- Implementing Priority Registration (Spring 2010)
- Student Success (started in Spring 2011)
- Planning for Employee Effectiveness and Success (started in Spring 2011)
- Planning and Measuring Institutional Effectiveness (started in Spring 2011)

MCC's AQIP Steering Committee consists of members of the Executive Council, administration, faculty, staff, members-at-large as needed and three ex officio members from Institutional Research, Institutional Effectiveness and the President's Office.

Initiatives Since Systems Appraisal and Quality Check-up:

Educational Master Plan

The Educational Master Plan was approved by the Board of Trustees in August 2011. This plan was designed to provide direction to the development of programs, support services and ultimately facilities to meet the higher educational needs of the district. There are three areas of emphasis are: 1) increased access for district residents, 2) ensuring excellence in teaching and learning and 3) cultivating a climate of student success. This plan serves as the roadmap for the development of the Facility Master Plan, Technology Master Plan and Fiscal Plan. The Educational Master Plan provides MCC's focus for "Helping Students Learn." Accomplishments in this category include several initiatives:

A. Excellence in Teaching

An AQIP action team is focusing on the quality of instruction at MCC with the development of a clear definition of excellence in teaching and a faculty enrichment process that reflects those values. On April 26, 2012, MCC's Curriculum and Academic Policy Council (CAPC) approved the definition. Professional enrichment opportunities to enhance the four areas of expertise (subject matter, pedagogy, assessment, and professionalism) will be implemented via Faculty Professional Development Days, the New Faculty Orientation/tenure process, the Adjunct Faculty Orientation and a stronger professional development web presence.

B. Focus on Student Success and Completion

An increased focus on student success, support and completion resulted in a restructuring of the Student Affairs Division. This was necessary to create three redefined clusters that align with the Educational Master Plan. The new structure includes more efficient student services, increased academic support and tracking and expanded educational and student development and engagement. The clusters interface and will track quarterly student success, completion and support rates. These data will influence the future structure and support efforts for students.

C. High School Dual-Credit Programming

Through strong partnerships with nine area high schools, MCC has dramatically expanded its dual-credit programs to increase from 148 students in 2009 to 1,097 in 2012. Three dual-credit options provide high school students with the opportunity to earn college credit and increase college readiness skills while attending high school. While it is too early to chart statistics for the current year, of the 118 students enrolled in "Partnerships for College and Career Success" in 2009, 80 (68%) returned to MCC for a college education over the next two years.

D. New Academic Programs

Since 2009, MCC has added a stackable culinary degree in Pastry, Culinary Management and an Associate of Applied Science in Culinary Management. Much of this was made possible through a partnership with Woodstock North High School that allowed use of their newly created space and allowed them to enroll high school students in MCC classes. An extensive renovation took place in Summer 2012 to include a culinary lab on campus and expand on the strong success of this new academic program. An Occupational Therapy Assistant (OTA) program is underway, and a weekend nursing program was launched in January 2012 to meet the demand for more sections and availability at non-traditional class times. Robotics and Graphic Arts degree programs also have been added, as well as a certificate in Medical Billing and Coding.

E. Expanding to Reach Residents in the Far Northwest Corner of Service Area

In an effort to increase access in the far northwest corner of McHenry County, MCC developed an outreach site in Harvard, IL which offered 14 different classes in Fall 2012. Five classes were conducted in Spring 2013, and twelve are offered for the Fall 2013 semester. Residents take high-demand classes, working toward their degree or certificate--all closer to home, saving time and transportation costs.

Facility Master Plan

In response to the direction of the Education Master Plan to meet the needs of the County, a Facility Master Plan establishes the educational facility space needed for the next 10, 20 and 40 years. The year-long development of the plan obtained public, business, legislative, faculty, board and student input through focus groups and community-wide presentations. The final plan was presented and adopted by the Board of Trustees in April 2012. Input from three AQIP action teams also contributed to the final designs and information, including Campus Signage, Room Usage and MCC's newly adopted Sustainability Strategic Plan.

Professional Development Strategic Plan

In support of the Educational Master Plan's focus on Excellence in Teaching and the College's focus on quality employees, a new Professional Development Strategic Plan was developed. This plan supports the mission of the College through a continuum of strategic professional enrichment opportunities for all faculty, staff and administrators. A strong component of leadership and organizational development is built in. The Professional Development team will use the strategic directions of the plan to design topic specific, year-long curriculums, workshops and courses. In addition, a satisfaction tool and data tracking venue will be used to improve and respond to needs and desires in meeting individual employee development plans.

Revising the Board Policy Manual

In June 2010, teams of MCC administrators began taking a careful look at the current *Board Policy Manual*. Although many of the policies and procedures within it have been updated, the last major revision was in 2007. Using AQIP principles, each section is benchmarked against other institutions and then rewritten to undergo attorney review before being presented to the Board for their input and final approval.

Community Engagement Efforts

Since 2009, MCC has proactively engaged the community by soliciting input on specific topics/programs to help with planning and development efforts. In 2009, MCC's community engagement effort (*MAP*) brought community members together various times for presentation and discussion. The feedback that resulted from this year-long effort informed the College's new strategic plan and direction. These community engagement efforts continued during the facility master planning process, the visioning of a manufacturing training center and the rebranding process. The College has also initiated a Community Outreach Core Team of individuals who will more proactively engage different groups of the community in discussion and feedback.

Brand Identity Initiative

Since early 2011, MCC has been focused on defining the MCC experience, or brand, in order to better describe the College's focus and commitment in a way that is relevant to the many groups served. Through the delivery of a new brand, the College now consistently uses the same language and imagery to describe its strengths and uniqueness so that the community is more aware of how MCC is significant to their needs. After research conducted with employees, students, community members and business partners, three distinctive qualities were established to best define MCC. With the launch of its new brand in August 2012, MCC demonstrates that anticipating change, building a community of learners and delivering quality programs are at the heart of what makes this a leading community college in the nation.



Managing College Data

MCC currently is in the midst of a new Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) implementation which will allow for the collection, tracking and measurement of data that has not been accessible in the past. Information on student, employee and financial records and reports will be readily available to drive data-informed decision making and systematically stimulate continuous improvement.

Using Assessment Results to Drive Transformations

Faculty assess student learning relative to MCC's general education goals and record their results and the resulting transformations on a shared network drive. The Assessment Team, composed of faculty, administrators and staff, reviews these assessment reports and categorizes the transformations made in response to assessment results. The typology of transformations includes pedagogical change, curricular change, modification of assessment tool, etc. In 2011, we began reviewing these results annually to ensure that transformations are meaningful and substantive.

Planning and Measuring Institutional Effectiveness

In Spring 2011, in direct response to feedback we received on the Systems Portfolio, MCC launched an AQIP Action Team to develop operational performance metrics for the non-academic departments of the College. The team is active and will include a tool or template for department leaders to enter their metrics into a central repository, which will allow them to access their metrics as needed and also allow institution-level reports to be run.

As the College moves forward, an emphasis is being placed on utilizing best practices from other institutions. On a more informal basis, employees are encouraged to interact with others through their own professional networking opportunities and conferences, and bring that learning back into the institution. The College also collects data from the Community College Survey of Student Engagement (CCSSE), the Personal Assessment of the Collegiate Environment (PACE), the Noel-Levitz Student Satisfaction Inventory, and the National Community College Benchmarking Project (NCCBP). We are at the early stages of using these data to set performance targets and develop meaningful action plans.

Benchmarking Academic Performance Indicators

An AQIP action team was formed to develop academic performance indicators to measure student learning and success. After investigation and discussion, the team developed indicators in four distinct areas: College Readiness; Assessment Outcomes; Retention, Persistence, and Success; and Goal Completion and Graduation. The Academic Performance Indicators book has been developed by Institutional Research, and the College is working to use this information to create a dashboard that will drive data-based decision making regarding the academic enterprise and student learning at MCC.

Planning for Employee Effectiveness and Success

After careful consideration of System Appraisal results in preparation for the Strategy Forum in October 2010, the College focused on "Valuing People." The topic of communication came up as an area for improvement, and new initiatives were implemented. A monthly Town Hall meeting held the day after Board meetings now encourages employees to meet with the president for information sharing and Q&A. The Vice President of Academic and Student Affairs regularly hosts an open Q&A session. The executive council team meets with the academic divisions and provides communication and answers questions. To promote the communication of expectations and drive accountability, a new annual employee performance evaluation tool and process has been developed by an AQIP action team with the primary goal of facilitating communication between supervisors and employees. Another action team is implementing an employee classification and compensation analysis to improve job descriptions, appropriate compensation levels and sufficient staffing needs.

The Future of AQIP at McHenry County College

AQIP is now embraced at McHenry County College. A culture and infrastructure of continuous quality improvement is firmly in place. A series of well thought out initiatives and action projects are using metrics, performance targets, systematic analyses and comparison data to strategically plan for the future. The action project process has been streamlined to make AQIP "a way of life" as opposed to a list of action teams. Based on feedback from the Quality Checkup, a student and an adjunct faculty member are joining the AQIP Steering Committee. A more comprehensive action project selection and scheduling process will place a strategic focus on priorities and address the opportunities for improvement in the College's Systems Appraisal.



TECHNOLOGY MASTER PLAN

The McHenry County College Informational Technology division established a three-year master plan (2013-2016) to address the technology needs of the College. The plan outlines similar focal points as other College planning documents, including:

1. Learning
2. Student success
3. Quality
4. Community
5. Business processes
6. Excellence in teaching

The plan is intended to support the long-term needs and vision for technology for students, instructors, support staff and the community.

Executive Summary

In keeping with the vision that *“McHenry County College will be the leading community college in Illinois by focusing on excellence and student success,”* this document details a long-term Technology Master Plan to support this vision.

Why MCC Should Have a Technology Master Plan

Because technology plays a major role in the lives of students and the world in which we all live. It has become an everyday part of our lives and is a powerful educational and informational tool when used appropriately. According to the Lone Star College National Student Report, “American colleges strive to improve student success, retention, achievement and satisfaction for their students, and often use technology as the vehicle.” The strategic use of technology in higher education is also imperative since the average community college in the United States typically invests at least 8% or more of its revenue in technology <http://lonestar.edu/nationalstudentreport.htm>.


In the same Lone Star report, 77% of surveyed students indicated that the use of technology helped improve their education. These factors clearly indicate that a high level of technology usage is required in order to deliver a quality education to students. Given this reality, McHenry County College needs to follow a comprehensive Technology Master Plan to guide the institution on the path to technology innovation and excellence. It will make a positive difference to the community and inspire, engage and transform learners through quality, meaningful educational opportunities.

The Center for American Progress indicates that technology will transform Higher Education. In the Center’s article “The Personalization of Higher Education” author Louis Soares claims technology will give students “... more power to understand and craft the educational experience they want for themselves.” [<http://www.americanprogress.org>, 10/4/2011] Therefore, educational institutions must harness the technology tools already being used by students in their everyday lives in order to educate students effectively. Smartphones, personal computers, tablets and online internet resources have become commonplace tools in the personal lives of students, and higher education must utilize these personalized tools to get into the hearts and minds of students.



To fully realize the educational potential of technology, planning and due-diligent assessment of what technologies are needed is essential. Without planning, unintended issues can result both operationally and financially. Considerable thought should be given to determine how technology should be used to improve the educational process for faculty and students. Since there are numerous technology solutions available to address a wide variety of uses, attempting to acquire or use too many technologies without vision, purpose and consistency is not feasible or fiscally responsible. Investments in technology must be done strategically and synchronized with the overall educational goals of the institution.

Once technology strategies are selected they must be operationally implemented in a controlled and organized fashion or else major obstacles will arise for students, faculty and staff. In the Lone Star report, 25% of students indicated they missed an assignment because of technology-based problems. To complicate matters further, technology is often viewed as a mysterious “black box.” Students, families and taxpayers often pay a lot of money for technologies they know little about. This puts an additional burden on educational institutions to do a better job informing students about how technological tools can be used to obtain educational services from an institution. Once all parties begin to have a better understanding of what tools work best (e.g. web, smartphones, tablets, etc.), how much these technologies cost and where to make appropriate investments in technology, then real and meaningful dialogues can be had about the affordability and performance of higher education. Therefore, a Technology Master Plan can act as a kind of “contract” with students and the community to document how the institution will target and deliver technologies to support the overall vision of the College.



Consequently, the Technology Master Plan will guide the strategic application of technology at McHenry County College based on the “right use of technology, at the right time, at the right cost”.

Since McHenry County College does not want to be just another “average player” in higher education, it should follow a strategy that will uniquely identify the College as a special place for students to be successful. This can be accomplished by surrounding students with a change-ready, technology-savvy environment. In today’s climate of economic challenges, competition for dwindling resources, and demanding customer requirements, the College must deliver a unique and engaging atmosphere by providing a quality educational experience through excellent teaching, supported by effective technology systems. Otherwise, students will “vote with their feet” and go elsewhere for their educational needs.

The full technology plan can be found in Appendix S.

APPENDICES

- A. Environmental Scan and Faculty Presentation (January 2013)
- B. President's Goals
- C. SWOT Analysis
- D. Strategic Plan Survey (Fall 2012)
- E. Student Surveys
- F. Noncredit/Community Survey
- G. Summary of McHenry County Schools Strategic Priorities
- H. Educational Master Plan
- I. Facility Master Plan
- J. McHenry County Labor Report
- K. Strategic Values and Priorities of Peer Colleges
- L. MCC Strategic Priorities (2011-2013)
- M. Summary of Priorities from Municipalities
- N. Noel-Levitz Student Survey (2012)
- O. MCC Student Transfer Survey Results (from Northern Illinois University)
- P. MCC 2012 Annual Report
- Q. Workforce Investment Board (WIB) Industry Clusters
- R. Academic Quality Improvement Program (AQIP) Status Report and Appraisal Feedback
- S. MCC Technology Master Plan



