

# **HIGH ASPIRATIONS, HIGH EXPECTATIONS**

## **2013-2015 Strategic Priorities**

*Adopted by the EICC Board of Trustees, September 16, 2013.*

**Mission:** *The Eastern Iowa Community Colleges deliver high-quality education and training that prepare a skilled workforce, provide affordable access to higher education, and build and strengthen our communities.*

**Vision:** *The Eastern Iowa Community Colleges will be the first choice for education, training, and partnerships that strengthen Eastern Iowa.*

Building on the momentum and success of our 2011-2013 strategic initiatives, the following priorities will drive the work of the Eastern Iowa Community Colleges (EICC) through 2015.

These priorities reflect the high aspirations we have for our students, faculty and staff, and the high expectations required of all to make high quality outcomes possible. Operational plans for each college and functional unit support these initiatives.

Underlying these strategic priorities is a comprehensive, institution-wide effort to build and strengthen a culture of high aspirations and high expectations for student and employee performance.



*Between now and 2015, EICC will deliver on its mission by focusing on the following priorities:*

- Increase the number of students earning postsecondary certificates and degrees that have value in the marketplace;
- Prepare a skilled and educated workforce to support the economic development of our region;
- Provide a high-quality, high-value, smart start for further higher education;
- Deepen partnerships with K-12 schools to improve educational outcomes in our communities;
- Continue to increase operational efficiency and effectiveness as a high-performing organization.

1. **CERTIFICATES & DEGREES:** Increase the number of students earning postsecondary certificates and degrees that have value in the marketplace.

*EICC will continue to respond to the national call to action to double the number of adults in our communities possessing the skills, abilities and postsecondary certificates and degrees required to compete in a global economy.*



- a. Continue to implement a comprehensive strategy of best practices to increase the number and rate at which students complete postsecondary certificates and degrees.
- b. Identify and mitigate barriers to students' completing their programs of study, including improving gateway course completion, improving success in math courses, reducing program length, and closing achievement gaps identified among different demographic groups.
- c. Implement best practices in providing student support services linked to student success, including enhanced tutoring; enhanced writing, math and skills labs; and career exploration and advising.
- d. Implement best practices in scheduling to support program completion for nontraditional students, including expanded hybrid, evening, weekend and compressed and accelerated programming.
- e. Work with four-year colleges and universities to provide incentives to students to complete degrees prior to transfer, including scholarships and preferences in admissions and articulation.
- f. Work with employers to provide job applicants hiring preferences for completion of postsecondary certificates or degrees and third-party and industry-based certifications.
- g. Implement a comprehensive strategy to increase the enrollment of students seeking postsecondary certificates and degrees, including target marketing of underrepresented groups, including but not limited to adults with some college but no degree, active and veteran military, high-performing high school students, recent immigrants, Hispanics and other minorities, international students, GED graduates, and EICC noncredit students.
- h. Grow EICC's online program enrollment and increase student completion by expanding and improving online student support services in coordination with the Iowa Community College Online Consortium.

2. **WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT:** Prepare a skilled and educated workforce to support the economic development of our region.

*Core to the mission of every community college is preparing a skilled workforce to support the economic development and prosperity of its region. EICC will continue to earn its position as a leader in workforce training.*

- a. Build and strengthen "signature" programs in Engineering, Engineering Technology and Advanced Manufacturing; Information Technology and Computer Science; Nursing and Allied Health; Transportation and Logistics; and other high-demand, high-skill areas to support the economic development of the region.
- b. Ensure that EICC career and technical programs are state-of-the-market with highly skilled faculty and up-to-date equipment and facilities that prepare a workforce with the technical skills needed to support existing and prospective business and industry.
- c. Incorporate third-party, industry-based and career readiness certificates into program curricula to ensure the technical skills of program completers.
- d. Ensure that EICC career and technical program completers have both the technical skills required by industry and the "soft skills" needed to be successful employees, including work commitment, attendance, timeliness, communications, critical thinking, teamwork and other requisite workplace skills. Incorporate a culture of high expectations into EICC career and technical programs that carries over into the workplace.
- e. Expand the Blong Technology Center delivery model to appropriate programs at all EICC campuses.
- f. Build, strengthen and support business and industry-led advisory committees and sector boards to provide input on design and delivery of EICC programs and training.

- g. Expand customized business and industry training and retraining, and support small business development and entrepreneurship.
- h. Participate in and support multi-organizational efforts to expand internships, related work experiences, and career mapping efforts that identify requisite coursework, soft skills and technical requirements needed for successful career progression, with an emphasis on STEM fields.
- i. Participate in business and community development initiatives, and develop partnerships to provide needed services to improve the quality of life in our communities to support its economic development.
- j. Support regionalization of the economic development efforts of our Eastern Iowa communities.

3. **TRANSFER PROGRAMS: Provide a high-quality, high-value, smart start to further higher education.**

*Nationwide, college students are increasingly choosing community colleges as the smart economic choice considering rising tuition and high costs of four-year institutions and the high return on investment offered by a high-quality community college education. EICC will be a great place to start a higher education for a broad range of students.*

- a. Establish the value and currency of completed Associate of Arts and Associate of Science degrees and enhance sophomore year curricular options to provide incentives for students to complete these degrees prior to transfer to a four-year college or university, including study abroad opportunities, service learning experiences, Honors programming and enhanced coursework.
- b. Enhance student life, clubs, government, intramural sports, community service opportunities, and other extracurricular activities, including achieving “Five Star” status for all Phi Theta Kappa chapters.
- c. Enhance summer session to provide both comprehensive year-round college credit programming for EICC students, guest students and degree-seeking students of all ages, and provide summer enrichment programs and camps for pre-college youth.
- d. Increase the level of both need-based and merit-based institutional scholarships, including those to attract the region’s high-performing high school students.
- e. Develop and strengthen articulation agreements with four-year colleges and universities that guarantee the transfer of credits upon completion of the Associate of Arts or Associate of Science degree.
- f. Establish transfer centers at each campus to support student choice and smooth transition to four-year colleges and universities.
- g. Communicate the fundamental value of education, including the critical need for postsecondary education, the timeless value of general education and the fundamental imperative to develop self-reliant learners.
- h. Establish EICC campuses as centers of lifelong learning and community engagement.
- i. Enhance campus facilities, technology infrastructure and student services to provide a rich and full college experience for students.



4. **K-12 PARTNERSHIPS: Deepen partnerships with K-12 schools to improve educational outcomes in our communities.**

*EICC, in partnership with area K-12 schools, strives to improve educational outcomes by building students’ success skills, offering a seamless process for high school students to earn college credit, and supporting future-driven attitudes for all K-12 students.*

- a. Deepen relationships and improve communication with all K-12 stakeholders to support a systemic, community-wide approach to ensure the educational outcomes necessary to compete in a global economy.
- b. Establish “centers of excellence” with secondary schools that connect high school students, high school and college faculty, and business and industry leaders to support career and technical education, career academies, and expansion of the STEM pipeline.

- c. Work closely with high school partners to align secondary and college curriculum, promote understanding of college expectations and rigor, and provide students with opportunities to earn significant college credits, up to and including associate degrees, upon graduation from high school.
- d. Ensure standardization and adherence to high-quality standards and college-level rigor in concurrent enrollment courses and expand programming with high schools.
- e. Support college and career exploration activities and efforts to promote the critical value of postsecondary education and training.
- f. Expand engaging summer school and supplemental year-round programming for elementary and middle school students and their families to support career exploration and college readiness, including College for Kids.

5. **HIGH-PERFORMING ORGANIZATION: Continue to increase operational efficiency and effectiveness as a high-performing organization.**

*While countless efficiencies are engrained in college operations, EICC commits to ongoing continuous quality improvement to optimize both efficiency and effectiveness as a high-performing organization.*



- a. Strengthen an institutional culture in which all EICC employees are committed to high aspirations and expectations in the services provided to students and internal and external constituencies.
- b. Strengthen an institutional culture that values and supports diverse students, faculty and staff, and that encourages a diversity of perspective in decision making and seeking high expectations and performance.
- c. Expand data analysis capabilities and support the use of data-driven decision making to improve student completion and to increase instructional and operational efficiency and effectiveness.
- d. Implement a human resources strategy that supports institutional initiatives and priorities, including expansion of professional development for both full-time and adjunct faculty and staff, a focus on inclusion and diversity in hiring, and succession planning.
- e. Implement a constituent-focused, strategic communications plan to better engage EICC and its colleges with its local and regional stakeholders.
- f. Continue to upgrade technology to meet multiple constituent needs, including staff development and training on available technology.
- g. Continue to increase efficiency and generate revenue by multiple strategies, including sustainable practices, outsourcing selected services, maximizing the value of our contracts and assets, increasing grant revenues, increasing productivity with technology, and identifying and implementing best practices, and other strategies.
- h. Develop a forward-looking case statement and conduct a feasibility study to establish the basis for a successful capital and major gifts campaign coordinated among EICC's four associated foundations.
- i. Advance Iowa community college interests by supporting relevant legislative and governmental policies, regulations and appropriations at the state level.
- j. Establish and promote an identifiable EICC brand highlighting quality, value, excellence, and efficiency and effectiveness in mission delivery.

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