

## FALL 2009

### CONTENTS

2. Q&A: What the Experts Have to Say about the Federal Community College Initiative
5. Developmental Education Initiative: Six States Selected
7. Indiana, 20 New Colleges Join Achieving the Dream
8. Updates from Achieving the Dream States
11. Resources on Community College Student Success

This newsletter is published by Jobs for the Future for *Achieving the Dream: Community Colleges Count*, a national initiative to help more community college students succeed (earn degrees, earn certificates, or transfer to other institutions to continue their studies). The initiative is particularly concerned about student groups that have faced the most significant barriers to success, including low-income students and students of color. See [www.achievingthedream.org](http://www.achievingthedream.org) for more on the initiative and [www.jff.org](http://www.jff.org) for more on Jobs for the Future.



**JOBS FOR THE FUTURE**

88 Broad Street  
Boston, MA 02110  
Boston, MA  
617.728.4446  
**WWW.JFF.ORG**

## In this Issue

Welcome to the Fall 2009 issue of *Achieving Success*, the quarterly state policy newsletter of Achieving the Dream. In this issue, you'll find:

- A special Q&A feature entitled "What the Experts Have to Say about the Federal Community College Initiative." On July 14, President Barack Obama unveiled his plans for an unprecedented federal commitment to supporting student success in America's community colleges. In the weeks since his announcement, the American Graduation Initiative has taken shape and, in the process, generated a great deal of discussion among policymakers and practitioners. We asked a diverse group of five experts from the two-year sector for their take on the proposed federal legislation.
- An update on the Developmental Education Initiative, an ambitious three-year project designed to help states and institutions dramatically improve student success in developmental education. This spring, JFF selected six early-round Achieving the Dream states to participate in this targeted initiative. These states met in July to kick off the initiative and begin mapping out their approaches to improving outcomes for students who are placed in developmental education.
- An update on the new members of the Achieving the Dream initiative. This summer, Indiana became the sixteenth state to join the project. In addition, a cohort of twenty new community colleges joined the initiative, including institutions from seven new states.
- Updates on recent legislative actions, policy developments, and headlines in Achieving the Dream states.
- Links to useful resources on community college success and state higher education policy.

We are always looking for new subscribers and are particularly interested in reaching readers in state offices, two-year institutions, and education research and policy organizations. Please refer anyone you think should receive this free newsletter to our new registration page on Jobs for the Future's *new* Web site:

[www.jff.org/register.php](http://www.jff.org/register.php)

If you have questions about newsletter subscriptions or content, please contact:

Jeff Wetherhold, [jwetherhold@jff.org](mailto:jwetherhold@jff.org).

Q&A: WHAT THE EXPERTS HAVE TO SAY ABOUT THE FEDERAL COMMUNITY COLLEGE INITIATIVE



John Morton



Diane Bosak

On July 14, 2009, President Barack Obama proposed the establishment of the American Graduation Initiative, an unprecedented federal commitment to strengthening America's community colleges. The President delivered his address at Macomb Community College, an Achieving the Dream institution in Warren, Michigan. Building on his goal to help America become the world leader in college completion rates by 2020, President Obama called for community colleges to graduate an additional 5 million students by that year.

The American Graduation Initiative includes a set of proposals designed to support community colleges in their efforts to contribute to President Obama's goal. Its most prominent components are the Innovation Fund and the Community College Challenge Fund, two new competitive grant programs that will provide funding for community colleges to test new innovations or scale up existing reforms that effectively help students reach outcomes, particularly those who have been traditionally underserved. The initiative also includes a \$2.5-billion federal fund to help spur the modernization of facilities on community college campuses, as well as an online skills laboratory to facilitate curricula sharing across campuses. A transcript of the President's remarks is available on the White House Web site at the link below:

[http://www.whitehouse.gov/the\\_press\\_office/Remarks-by-the-President-on-the-American-Graduation-Initiative-in-Warren-MI/](http://www.whitehouse.gov/the_press_office/Remarks-by-the-President-on-the-American-Graduation-Initiative-in-Warren-MI/)

This summer, President Obama's proposal has taken shape as House Bill 3221, Title V, also known as the Community College Initiative. The proposed bill has generated a great deal of coverage in the mainstream press. We have asked a panel of experts, including both policymakers and practitioners, to share their thoughts on what excites them most about the Community College Initiative and what additional reforms they wish were included in the legislation.

- **Gail Mellow** is president of Fiorello H. LaGuardia Community College in Long Island City, New York. As president of one of the largest and most diverse community colleges in the country, Dr. Mellow is a national leader in advocating for the critical role that community colleges play in our postsecondary system. Over the course of her career, she has served as a faculty member, dean, provost and president in community college systems in Connecticut, Maryland, New Jersey, and New York. Dr. Mellow is also a former community college student, having earned her Associate's degree at Jamestown (NY) Community College.
- **Thomas Bailey and Davis Jenkins** are director and senior research associate at the Community College Research Center at Columbia University's Teachers College, an Achieving the Dream partner organization. Dr. Bailey, who founded CCRC, also serves as the George and Abby O'Neill Professor of Economics and Education at Columbia. Through his work with CCRC, Dr. Bailey oversees a vast body of research—and publishes regularly—on community college student progression and completion with a focus on low-income and minority students. Dr. Jenkins's research at CCRC focuses on ways to strengthen the capacity of public postsecondary institutions, particularly community colleges, to educate economically and educationally disadvantaged individuals for gainful employment in a knowledge economy. The two are currently co-directing a study of community college institutional effectiveness for CCRC.
- **John Morton** is vice president for Community Colleges for the University of Hawaii System. Dr. Morton oversees executive leadership, policy decision making, resource allocation, and the development of support services for the seven community colleges of the



Gail Mellow

“With his speech in Michigan, President Obama has focused attention on the immense value and untapped potential of community colleges to educate and train Americans for the jobs and communities of tomorrow.”

-Gail Mellow

University of Hawaii. He also plays a leadership role in Hawaii’s Achieving the Dream policy agenda. Dr. Morton has served as a community college faculty member, chancellor, and dean over the course of his career.

- **Jim Purcell** is director of the Arkansas Department of Higher Education. He is a member of Governor Mike Beebe’s full cabinet as well as the Governor’s Workforce Cabinet, an appointed group of state government leaders charged with creating 21st-century jobs and skilled workers. Dr. Purcell’s efforts in institutional effectiveness are wide and varied, with extensive experience in student placement, academic and student affairs program review, academic program development, program entrance requirements, course evaluations, grade distributions, and student retention and graduation.
- **Diane Bosak** is executive director of the Pennsylvania Commission for Community Colleges. In this capacity, Ms. Bosak represents a decentralized and highly diverse network of 14 community colleges serving more than 450,000 students annually. She also leads the state’s Achieving the Dream state policy team, which has advanced Pennsylvania’s efforts to increase its capacity to gather and analyze data on student progression and to promote improved alignment with both the K-12 sector and four-year institutions in Pennsylvania.

**What excites you most about the Obama Administration’s recent announcement?**

**Gail Mellow:** One of any President’s most powerful tools is their ability to use the “bully pulpit” to shape viewpoints and draw attention to long-ignored issues. With his speech in Michigan, President Obama has focused attention on the immense value and untapped potential of community colleges to educate and train Americans for the jobs and communities of tomorrow. More importantly, his rhetoric was backed up by \$12 billion in federal monies to help community colleges

build classrooms and labs, hire faculty in growing programs and undertake the professional development and classroom innovation that will improve student outcomes. What excites me is the potential for the President’s actions to spark the same type of leadership from governors, state and local lawmakers, business leaders and philanthropies to similarly make long-term investments in their community colleges.

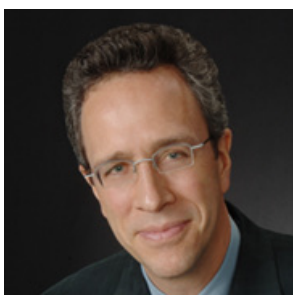
**Thomas Bailey and Davis Jenkins:** With its new community college initiative, the Obama Administration acknowledges the vital role community colleges play in expanding access to higher education and gainful employment, and more specifically in reaching the President’s goal to improve postsecondary attainment. The initiative also recognizes that community colleges need encouragement and support to improve outcomes for their students. What excites us most about the initiative is the focus on evidence-based innovation. We say this not just because we are researchers who seek evidence of effective practice, but because we believe that systemic improvements in student success will not occur until colleges on a wide scale use evidence to identify barriers to achievement, formulate strategies for increasing success, and evaluate and improve their effects.

**John Morton:** These are challenging times for community colleges. We are attempting to deal with unprecedented demand at a time when our traditional state funding sources are less able to provide support. The Obama initiative helps meet these challenges in two ways. The funding opens up a new source of revenue, particularly for improvement, research, and development—critical if we are to further our own success agenda. Just as importantly, the President (and hopefully Congress) signals to the country that community colleges are important and significant players in higher education, workforce development, and moving this country forward. We have always believed in that message. It is wonderful to hear it echo back from such high mountains.

**Jim Purcell:** I applaud the efforts being made by the federal government to improve student success across the country.



Thomas Bailey



Davis Jenkins

“We believe that the proposed legislation would have a greater, more lasting impact if testing of promising practices by colleges and others were carried out in concert with efforts by states to implement systemic reforms.”

-Thomas Bailey and Davis Jenkins

Up until the last few years, higher education policies focused primarily on access with little or no recognition that access is a hollow promise without success. It is good to see that mindset changing. I am also encouraged to see an emphasis on credentials that are valued in the labor market, particularly those that lead to high-demand, high-wage jobs. We know that a state’s economy is directly correlated with its citizens’ educational attainment levels. No state that has a low educational attainment level has a high per-capita income level. We need assistance in determining best practices to create a workforce for a knowledge-based economy.

**Diane Bosak:** First and foremost, community colleges are finally garnering the national spotlight and recognition for the unprecedented role they play in meeting the education and training needs of increasing numbers of students. Nearly every critical issue pending in Congress today has workforce and education implications. Whether it is health care reform or clean energy or other vital industries, community colleges do play and will continue to play a central role in providing a skilled workforce. Another exciting aspect of the President’s initiative is that it is so strongly connected to the strategies and ideas of Achieving the Dream. With this type of support, our colleges will be well positioned to build on and sustain student success innovation!

**What would you like to see changed in the final legislation?**

**Gail Mellow:** First off, what we need to prevent is the President’s proposal being diluted because of horse-trading in Congress. Of greatest concern would be that the \$12 billion is reduced or the funds are made available to non-community colleges. Right now, community colleges spend on average \$9,183 per student, while spending for four-year public college students averages \$27,973 a year. We need to create real funding equity among educational sectors. Second, the role of states in the final legislation needs to be fine-tuned. We know that some states have spurned federal stimulus dollars, even monies for unemployed individuals because of state-

wide politics, fear of the “heavy hand” of the federal government, or because of cost-sharing requirements. While states need to be at the table, we need to make sure that community colleges can avail themselves of federal monies despite state governments that may be unwilling or incapable of providing needed leadership and funding.

**Thomas Bailey and Davis Jenkins:** The two-phase logic of the House bill—in which colleges and other partners would first test program innovations, and then states would work to disseminate programs and policies shown to be effective in the first phase—needs to be rethought. We believe that the proposed legislation would have a greater, more lasting impact if testing of promising practices by colleges and others were carried out in concert with efforts by states to implement systemic reforms. States can play an important role in setting priorities and providing incentives and support for colleges to meet them. We suggest a more interactive process in which states and colleges work together to improve college practice and strengthen state legislation, regulation, research, and technical assistance that support innovation in practice at the college level. This would help ensure that experimentation by colleges is done with a view toward furthering state goals and would capitalize on the potential of states—as a primary funder of community colleges—to provide incentives for systemic change among all of their colleges, not just the few that would be direct recipients of funding under the legislation.

**John Morton:** The “capital projects” component of the bill does not really add much value or give us anything we can’t already do ourselves. While certainly there is not enough money in Washington to address all of our capital needs, focusing the limited funds toward critical renovations or deferred maintenance could make an important dent in a real problem.

**Jim Purcell:** As I have shared with Arkansas’s congressional delegation, there is a lot to like about the legislation. With that said, my greatest concern is the apparent disconnect between the institutional and state grants. We have learned from Achieving the Dream that best practices



come from a strong relationship between state and local higher education entities. For decades, we have seen little broad progress from isolated institutional grants, and I am concerned that the two separate phases of funding—first to institutions and later to states—will perpetuate the past.

**Diane Bosak:** While we strongly support the proposals, we would like to see the language strengthened to clearly direct the initiative and funding to public community colleges. Community colleges have traditionally been left behind under fed-

eral funding over the years, receiving “less than one-third the level of direct federal government support as do public four-year colleges,” according to the Brookings Institute report on Transforming America’s Community Colleges. The other key provisions—community college reform and systematic reform—should also be strengthened to offer priority for funding to consortia of community colleges (with or without the state partner) rather than the range of eligible entities in the current legislative proposal.



Jim Purcell

“We have learned from Achieving the Dream that best practices come from a strong relationship between state and local higher education entities.”

-Jim Purcell

## DEVELOPMENTAL EDUCATION INITIATIVE: SIX STATES SELECTED TO PARTICIPATE IN THREE-YEAR INITIATIVE

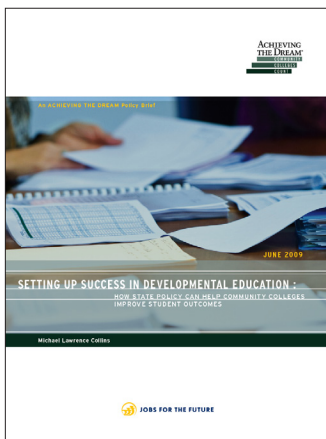
The Spring 2009 issue of *Achieving Success* introduced the Developmental Education Initiative (DEI), an ambitious three-year project designed to help states and institutions dramatically improve student success in developmental education. As with Achieving the Dream, Jobs for the Future will manage the state policy work under this initiative, which is jointly funded by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation and Lumina Foundation for Education.

We are pleased to announce that Connecticut, Florida, North Carolina, Ohio, Texas, and Virginia have been approved to participate in the state-policy component of the initiative. These states will identify and implement policies that have the greatest potential to support increased success rates for community college students who test into developmental education.

The policy approaches that will inform these states’ work are discussed in greater detail in a recent Jobs for the Future policy brief. *Setting Up Success in Developmental Education: How State Policy Can Help Community Colleges to Improve Outcomes* describes how Achieving the Dream states have approached improving outcomes for students who test into developmental education. The states have concentrated their efforts in four key areas: prevention; assessment and placement; experimentation and innova-

tion; and performance measurement and incentives. Each state selected for DEI will expand on successful policy reform efforts accomplished during their participation in Achieving the Dream:

- Connecticut is phasing in common statewide placement standards and aligning developmental education with credit-bearing courses in order to accelerate students’ transition to college-level coursework.
- Florida is collaborating with the secondary sector to accelerate student progression to credentials by reducing the need for developmental education.
- North Carolina has instituted a statewide policy to standardize student placement in developmental education and is using its strong state-level data system to track student outcomes in these courses.
- Ohio is developing a new performance-based funding system that would reward community colleges for helping students progress through developmental education and subsequent college-level courses.
- Texas has appropriated \$5 million for demonstration projects at community colleges and public technical institutions to develop and demonstrate new effective models for developmental



education. The programs must use technology and diagnostic assessments to determine students' needs and use educational methods, both course and non-course based, that would improve outcomes.

- Virginia has commissioned research to identify obstacles to developmental-education sequence completion, factors that correlate with student success, and the variations among high- and low-performing institutions to inform statewide strategic planning for community colleges.

In addition to the state policy work, a group of fifteen community colleges from the six participating states were selected to join the institutional component of the initiative. These colleges will work to scale up promising practices over the next three years in order to significantly increase the impact on student outcomes. The following institutions were selected in each DEI state:

- Connecticut: Housatonic Community College, Norwalk Community College
- Florida: Valencia Community College
- North Carolina: Guilford Technical Community College
- Ohio: Cuyahoga Community College, Jefferson Community College, North Central State College, Sinclair Community College, Zane State College
- Texas: Coastal Bend College, El Paso Community College District, Houston Community College System, South Texas College
- Virginia: Danville Community College, Patrick Henry Community College

Each DEI state will design and implement a three-year policy agenda that will dramatically increase outcomes for community college students who test into developmental education. Each agenda will include:

- A performance measurement system that tracks and rewards institutional improvements in intermediate and final success rates of students entering with developmental education needs;

- A state-led benchmarking and data-driven continuous improvement process that identify the institutions achieving the highest success rates with developmental education students and promote the sharing and spread of these practices to all institutions;
- The adoption of other state-level policies to incent the adoption and scaling up of successful practices, as well as the removal of funding and administrative barriers that prevent institutions from implementing more efficient remedial strategies; and
- The engagement of influential stakeholder groups that advocate for and support efforts to improve outcomes in developmental education.

The process of developing these ambitious state-level agendas has begun. In July, state-level leadership and policy team members from each of the six participating states attended the DEI State Policy Kick-Off in Sunny Isles, Florida. The states discussed strategies to increase the ambition and visibility of their policy agendas, ways to leverage the developmental education policy improvements made during their participation in Achieving the Dream, and the core components of a robust, state-level peer-learning platform for the continuous improvement of developmental education outcomes. States will build out three-year workplans for their participation in the initiative during the second half of 2009. We look forward to sharing their policy priorities and developments in future issues of *Achieving Success*.



## INDIANA, 20 NEW COLLEGES JOIN ACHIEVING THE DREAM

Indiana has joined the Achieving the Dream initiative's state policy consortium, effective July 2009. Indiana is the 16th state to participate in the state policy component of Achieving the Dream. Ivy Tech Community College will serve as state lead for the policy efforts. Ivy Tech is unique in that it is the country's largest centrally accredited statewide community college system. More than 130,000 Indiana residents are educated each year through Ivy Tech's 23 campuses. Indiana's participation in Achieving the Dream is supported by the Lumina Foundation for Education.

Indiana already has assembled a team to advance its student success policy agenda. This team will focus on identifying, scaling up, and advocating for policy changes that improve student success in developmental education and enrollment in college-level coursework, student persistence and course completion, and the rate at which students earn degrees, certificates, and transfer to four-year institutions.

Indiana kicked off its participation in Achieving the Dream at the initiative's State Policy Meeting in July. A team of institutional and state-level representatives met with their colleagues in other Achieving the Dream states and learned firsthand about those states' strategies and accomplishments. The team included senior leadership from Ivy Tech Community College, as well as representatives from Governor Mitch Daniels's office, the state legislature, the Commission for Higher Education, the Department of Higher Education, and Indiana University.

Ivy Tech is one of 20 community colleges to join Achieving the Dream this summer. The institutional component of Achieving the Dream now includes 102 institutions in 22 states. This incoming group is remarkable in part for its geographic diversity—10 states are represented, including 7 in which Achieving the Dream had not previously been engaged.

- California: College of the Sequoias, San Jose City College, Evergreen Valley College
- Illinois: Danville Area Community College, Elgin Community College, Morton College, Triton College, Harper Community College
- Indiana: Ivy Tech Community College
- Kansas: Johnson County Community College
- Maryland: The Community College of Baltimore County
- Michigan: Macomb Community College
- New York: LaGuardia Community College
- South Carolina: Greenville Technical College
- Texas: Austin Community College District, Blinn College, Odessa College, Richland College, Temple College
- Vermont: Community College of Vermont

Each new Achieving the Dream institution has made a two-year initial commitment to the initiative and will undertake highly focused efforts to close performance gaps among students in targeted populations. Collectively, the commitments made by this cohort represent a pilot for an expanded Achieving the Dream initiative, which is currently in development. We look forward to sharing more information on the expansion of Achieving the Dream in future issues of *Achieving Success*.

## Arkansas

In April 2009, the Arkansas Legislature passed Act 971, which requires the state to establish common exit standards for all developmental education courses at public colleges and universities. The Act stipulates that the state must work with public institutions to develop standards that are comparable to the equivalent ACT or SAT score indicating college readiness in English composition, reading, and mathematics by the fall semester of 2010. Act 971 is a critical step in Arkansas's student success policy agenda. It builds on previous legislation requiring that students be assessed for college readiness using a common test and placed in developmental education should they fail to meet a common statewide cut score indicating academic proficiency. Act 971 also requires the state to collaborate with two- and four-year institutions to develop alternative methods of delivering developmental education, and to provide professional opportunities so that faculty can improve their pedagogical skills in this area.

<http://www.arkleg.state.ar.us/assembly/2009/R/Pages/BillInformation.aspx?measureno=HB1990>

## Connecticut

This spring, Connecticut Community Colleges formally signed a transfer and articulation agreement with the Connecticut State University System which guarantees that students completing an Associate's degree at one of the state's community colleges can transfer all of their credits to the four-year system. The chancellors of both systems signed the agreement, as did the presidents of the four Connecticut State University campuses and twelve community colleges. The transfer agreement includes a stipulation that both systems provide academic advising to help students make the transition from Associate's to Bachelor's programs. This formal cooperation between the two systems is a crucial step in Connecticut's effort to expand access to educational opportunities through

partnerships—a priority in the state's Achieving the Dream workplan.

<http://www.comnet.edu/services/transfers.asp>

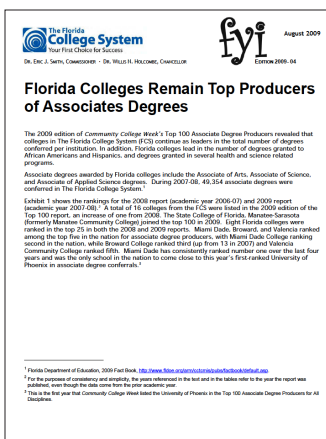
## Florida

The latest edition of the Florida College System's FYI Newsletter, entitled "Florida Colleges Remain Top Producers of Associates Degrees," profiles the high rankings that Florida's community colleges achieved in Community College Week's annual national analysis of Associate's degree production. More than half of Florida's 16 community colleges placed in the top 100 nationally in terms of total Associate's degrees produced. Miami Dade, Broward, and Valencia all ranked in the top five. The survey also highlighted the valuable role that Florida's colleges are playing in educating minority students. Nine Florida colleges were in the top 100 nationally in awarding Associate's degrees to African Americans, and six were in the top 100 in awarding Associate's degrees to Hispanics. The survey also highlights the contribution that Florida's transfer and articulation agreements are making to degree production in specific subject areas. In the categories of Liberal Arts and Science, General Students, and Humanities, the top ten institutions nationally in Associate's-degree production were all Florida colleges, an accomplishment credited to the programmatic alignment guaranteed by statewide transfer and articulation agreements. Florida's institutions were also well represented in the high-demand areas of nursing and health professions.

<http://www.fldoe.org/cc/OSAS/Evaluations/>

## Massachusetts

The Massachusetts Department of Higher Education took a big step toward improving the transparency of credit transfer among the state's two- and four-year institutions. In August 2009, the DHE unveiled the MassTransfer Web site, a comprehensive tool designed to help students, their families, faculty, and



<sup>1</sup> Florida Department of Education, 2009 Fact Book, <http://www.flstate.gov/education/factbook/factbook09.pdf>

<sup>2</sup> For the purposes of consistency and brevity, the names mentioned in the list and in the tables refer to the year the report was published, even though the data come from the prior academic year.

<sup>3</sup> This is the first year that Community College Week listed the University of Phoenix in the Top 100 Associate Degree Producers for All Disciplines.



advisors navigate the transfer process. The DHE has identified the facilitation of student transfer as a critical element in improving retention and graduation rates statewide, and has made transfer policy reform a key element of the state's Achieving the Dream workplan. In June 2008, a statewide task force recommended the creation of a centralized transfer Web site to provide clear and accurate information on transfer policies and processes. The new site includes relevant information on statewide transfer policy, including: how to plan for, apply to, and enroll in college; how to transfer financial aid; contact information for campus-based transfer professionals; and information on the transfer appeals process. The MassTransfer Web site also includes a variety of tools designed to help guide students through the transfer process, including a quiz to help identify appropriate transfer pathways and a "Program Finder" with information on more than 1,000 linked Associate's and Bachelor's degree programs in the state.

<http://www.mass.edu/masstransfer>

surface prominent policy obstacles or opportunities.

## New Mexico

In its 2009 session, the New Mexico Legislature made a significant change to the amount of need-based financial aid available to students attending the state's public colleges and universities. Senate Bill 28 requires that the proportion of statewide President's Scholarships awarded based on need double over the next two years. Currently, one-third of these scholarships, which are awarded to three percent of all students at public colleges and universities, must be need-based. Under Senate Bill 28, this percentage must increase to one-half by fall 2010 and to two-thirds by fall 2011. In their summary of the bill, the Legislative Education Study Committee cites evidence of the connection between need-based aid and student success as one of the motivating factors behind its enactment. This increase is an important step in the New Mexico Higher Education Department's efforts to expand need-based assistance available to students, a key goal in the state's Achieving the Dream policy agenda.

[nmlegis.gov/lcs/\\_session.aspx?Chamber=S&LegType=B&LegNo=28&year=09](http://nmlegis.gov/lcs/_session.aspx?Chamber=S&LegType=B&LegNo=28&year=09)

[www.nmlegis.gov/Sessions/09%20Regular/LESC-Analysis/SB0028.pdf](http://www.nmlegis.gov/Sessions/09%20Regular/LESC-Analysis/SB0028.pdf)

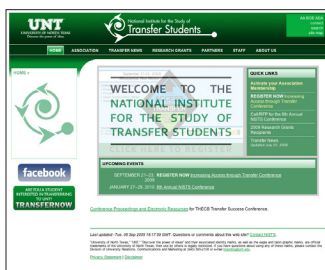
## Ohio

The Ohio Legislature has approved a new performance funding system for the state's public colleges and universities that rewards institutions for achieving key student success factors and includes a dedicated student success funding formula for community colleges. The system was included in the state's budget for fiscal years 2010-2011, also known as House Bill 1. HB1 commissions a study by the office of the Chancellor of the Ohio Board of Regents and the state's community colleges on the use of student success measures in funding these institutions. The results of the study, which are due to the chancellor in April



## Michigan

The Michigan Association of Community Colleges (MCCA) convened its first annual Achieving the Dream Student Success Summit on June 11. The event featured presentations from six of the state's Achieving the Dream colleges, a roundtable discussion with Achieving the Dream college presidents, and a briefing with state legislators on the initiative's national activities. It also included topical sessions for participants on alternative approaches to developmental education; learning communities and supplemental instruction; advising and student success courses; and professional development for faculty. Participants included members of the Michigan Community College Caucus, legislative leadership, representatives from the governor's office and key departments, as well as representatives from all 28 of the state's community colleges. MCCA plans to make this an annual event to highlight best practices at Achieving the Dream colleges and to



2010, will include a list of recommended student success factors for Ohio’s community colleges. With the chancellor’s approval, these factors will then be used to guide the allocation of 5 percent of state funding for community colleges for fiscal year 2011. Student success factors and a timeline for phasing in the performance funding system that was proposed by the Ohio Association of Community Colleges in 2008 will directly inform this process. Under the association’s proposal, the proportion of public funding allocated according to these factors would increase to 20 percent by fiscal year 2015, with the allocation of an additional 10 percent of public funding based on an institution-specific goal negotiated with the chancellor’s office.

[http://www.legislature.state.oh.us/bills.cfm?ID=128\\_HB\\_1](http://www.legislature.state.oh.us/bills.cfm?ID=128_HB_1)

## Oklahoma

The Oklahoma Legislature recently passed two bills to support key elements of the state’s student success policy agenda. In May, the Legislature passed Senate Bill 222, which addresses the availability and use of student achievement data. The bill provides funding for the creation of a statewide student database and for a P-20 task force that will oversee the use of this information and compare Oklahoma’s student success standards with those of other states. The legislature also addressed dual enrollment in Oklahoma’s secondary and postsecondary institutions through Senate Bill 290. The bill requires high schools to allow student participation in dual enrollment and to grant academic credit for these courses. It also requires public colleges and universities to enroll qualified students in credit-bearing courses. Under the terms of the bill, students participating in dual enrollment are entitled to a tuition waiver for up to six credit hours per semester.

[http://oksenate.gov/news/press\\_releases/press\\_releases\\_2009/pr20090522f.html](http://oksenate.gov/news/press_releases/press_releases_2009/pr20090522f.html)

[http://oksenate.gov/news/week\\_in\\_review/week\\_in\\_review\\_2009/wir2009042730.html](http://oksenate.gov/news/week_in_review/week_in_review_2009/wir2009042730.html)

## Texas

On May 22, the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board sponsored the first annual Texas Transfer Success Conference. The event was organized by the University of North Texas’s National Institute for the Study of Transfer Students and Center for Higher Education. During the event, three colleges received STEP (Successful Transfer Enhancement Program) Awards for institutional practices that are highly effective in promoting student transfer:

- The University of Texas at Dallas’s Comet Connection program offers potential community college transfer students the opportunity to familiarize themselves with campus services prior to transferring.
- The University of Houston at Clear Lake’s Transfer Student Scholarship program ensures that incoming community college transfer students are automatically eligible for the scholarship when they apply and that the scholarship is automatically renewed for a second year for students completing at least 18 credits and maintaining their community college GPA.
- El Paso Community College has worked with the University of Texas at El Paso to provide reverse transfer students with counseling and academic advising, and to award Associate’s degrees to the significant portion of them that have completed sufficient credits prior to transfer.

<http://web3.unt.edu/news/story.cfm?story=11484>

## Virginia

The latest issue of the Virginia Community College System’s Student Success Snapshot series outlines the valuable role of dual enrollment in helping students reach postsecondary outcomes. Dual enrollment programs are playing a rapidly growing role in helping students make the transition to postsecondary education. From 2003-04 to 2007-08, the number of students taking advantage of dual enrollment statewide nearly doubled, as did the

proportion of community college graduates who had previously participated in dual enrollment. On average, more than two-thirds of dually enrolled high school seniors went on to enroll in postsecondary education, with the percentage enrolling in community colleges doubling to more than 20 percent over that period. These students have been successful in Virginia’s community colleges. An analysis of the 2004-05 cohort revealed that approximately 60 percent of the dually enrolled students in community colleges earned an Associate’s degree or certificate; more than 40 percent transferred to four-year colleges and earned their Bachelor’s degree.

<http://www.vccs.edu/Academics/StudentSuccess/tabid/622/Default.aspx>

### Washington

The Washington State Legislature took steps to broaden the array of postsecondary opportunities available to students during its 2009 session. It passed House Bill 1328, which granted the state’s

technical colleges the authority to offer academic transfer degrees. Previously, Washington’s technical colleges could only offer technical degrees designed for direct entry in to the workforce, and had reserved academic transfer degrees for community colleges. The state’s new regulations allow technical colleges to offer select academic transfer degrees that align with specified Bachelor’s of Applied Science programs at four-year institutions. The legislature also approved applied Bachelor’s degree programs in high-demand fields of study at three additional community colleges. Seven Washington community colleges now have the authority to offer at least one Bachelor’s degree program. Both reforms guarantee that prospective students will have more postsecondary educational options available to them in the coming years.

<http://apps.leg.wa.gov/billinfo/summary.aspx?bill=1328&year=2009>

## RESOURCES

### Workforce Alignment

#### White House Report Cites Achieving the Dream States as Models for College-Employer Alignment

*Preparing the Workers of Today for the Jobs of Tomorrow*, a new report by President Barack Obama’s Council of Economic Advisers, uses projections from the Department of Labor’s Bureau of Labor Statistics to underscore the need for improved alignment between community colleges and employers. These projections draw parallels between current job market needs and projected needs for the year 2016 while highlighting important coming changes, including a continued increase in health care jobs, an increase in construction jobs, and a less dramatic decline in manufacturing jobs. The report cites the corresponding need for more workers with Associate’s degrees or certificates to take advantage of these opportunities, and advocates for the development of flexible

programs that can be more readily accessed by nontraditional students. It highlights “model programs” in two Achieving the Dream states: the Integrated Basic Education and Skills Training (I-BEST) initiative in Washington and the No Worker Left Behind program in Michigan. The report also points out that the separation of federal funding streams for basic skills and occupational training has been an obstacle to the establishment of these kinds of programs in other states.

[http://www.whitehouse.gov/assets/documents/Jobs\\_of\\_the\\_Future.pdf](http://www.whitehouse.gov/assets/documents/Jobs_of_the_Future.pdf)

### Developmental Education

#### Dramatically Reforming Developmental Education at Cleveland State

In a piece for the *Chronicle of Higher Education*, “Introducing a Remedial Program That Actually Works,” author Kevin Carey profiles the work that





Connecticut Community Colleges Chancellor Marc Herzog and Tom Bradham, Director of Financial Aid Services.

©2009 *The Chronicle of Higher Education*. “A 2-Year-College System Streamlines Student Aid so Campuses Can Focus on Counseling”

Cleveland State Community College in Cleveland, Tennessee, has done to improve student outcomes in developmental education. In response to relatively low pass rates in developmental math courses, Cleveland State and the Tennessee Board of Regents, working with the National Center for Academic Transformation, have implemented an “emporium model.” Instead of semester-length lecture courses, the model allows students to work through a series of one-week math modules in a computer lab with assistance from faculty and tutors. In little more than a year, the model has generated striking results: the proportion of developmental math students completing three courses with a C or better has increased from 55 to 72 percent, and these students’ subsequent success rate in college-level math has increased from 71 to 81 percent. This model has also proven to be cheaper for the college than traditional instruction, leading Cleveland State to consider expanding it to developmental English and college-level math.

<http://chronicle.com/article/Introducing-a-Remedial-Prog/44409/>

## Financial Aid

### Connecticut Financial Aid Reforms in the Spotlight

“A 2-Year-College System Streamlines Student Aid so Campuses Can Focus on Counseling,” in the June 29 *Chronicle of Higher Education*, details the efforts that Connecticut Community Colleges have made to encourage their students to apply for financial aid. In 2000, the system created a central financial aid office to handle the processes of packaging, distributing, managing regulations and audits, and verifying information for financial aid applications. The office has provided the system with a means of assuring consistent practices, including prioritizing students’ direct costs and providing all students with an estimate of their aid if they enroll full-time. It has also shifted a substantial administrative burden away from the campuses; financial aid professionals are now able to provide entrance counseling to all incoming students. These two changes have had a remarkable impact; the system has seen the number of students applying for aid and the number of students receiving aid more than double since 2000. Additionally, Chancellor Marc Herzog estimates that the move annually saves the system nearly \$2

million in salaries alone, as well as significant licensing fees for financial aid software.

<http://chronicle.com/article/Student-Aid-Streamlined/46959/>

## Accountability

### Ed Sector Report Grades States’ Accountability Efforts

*Ready to Assemble: Grading State Higher Education Accountability Systems*, a new report by Education Sector, takes a comparative approach to higher education assessment by scoring states’ collection and use of accountability information. As part of their research, the authors analyzed state policies and produced state-by-state accountability system scorecards that measure demonstrated ability to gather: information on student outcomes, institutional practices, economic and community development; the overall quality and scope of the information gathered; and the use of information for governance, strategic planning, funding and transparency. For each state, a set of 21 elements within these categories was rated as either “best practice,” “in progress,” or “needs improvement.” States were then given a cumulative rating for accountability. On the whole, the report found that a number of promising practices exist across states, though no state had put all of these pieces together to create a model system. Ten states received cumulative “best practice” ratings, including three Achieving the Dream states—Florida, Texas, and Virginia. The report, released in June 2009, is a follow-up to a Education Sector’s December 2008 report, *Ready to Assemble: A Model State Higher Education Accountability System*.

[http://www.educationsector.org/research/research\\_show.htm?doc\\_id=934393](http://www.educationsector.org/research/research_show.htm?doc_id=934393)

## Funding

### CCRC Paper Examines the Rise and Fall of Performance Funding

A new Community College Research Center working paper, *The Demise of Higher Education Performance Funding Systems in Three States*, addresses why performance-based funding systems continue to generate significant interest among higher education policymakers in spite of the fact that they have historically had relatively short shelf-lives. The authors point out that more than



half of the states that put performance-funding systems in place between 1979 and 2007 eventually discontinued these systems. They conducted interviews and policy analyses of these efforts in three states: Florida, Illinois, and Washington. They found that, as the systems altered the distribution of base funding that institutions were already receiving, they eroded institutional support by stoking fiscal uncertainty. Subsequent declines in revenue in two of these states exacerbated these fears. Additionally, the authors found that legislative support for performance funding systems was often flimsy. These systems were often championed by a single leader or small group of leaders who could not maintain support after their implementation. Also, they were enacted through a budget process and not legislation, which would have made them harder to discontinue. The report concludes that advocates for performance funding must ensure fiscal stability for institutions and have broad support—particularly among legislators and institutions—before attempting to implement such a system.

<http://ccrc.tc.columbia.edu/Publication.asp?UID=693>

### NYC Mayor Calls for Increased Community College Funding

According to “Mayor Plans Millions More to Aid Community Colleges,” in the August 13 *New York Times*, New York City Mayor Michael Bloomberg is making increased support for community colleges a key plank in his reelection campaign. Speaking at the Borough of Manhattan Community College, Mayor Bloomberg proposed to help the city’s six colleges graduate 43 percent more students by the year 2020. He pledged to spend an additional \$50 million to bolster the city’s system of community colleges with an eye toward high-demand fields. The mayor also promised to play a leading role in the establishment of an innovatively-designed seventh community college in New York City (see the Spring 2009 *Achieving Success* for more information). During a Q&A session at the event, Mayor Bloomberg said he supported an expansion of financial aid to part-time students, increased city contributions to child care for community college students, and other reforms designed to ensure that students can remain enrolled and succeed in community college.

<http://www.nytimes.com/2009/08/14/education/14college.html?scp=1&sq=mayor%20>

[plans%20millions%20more%20to%20aid%20community%20colleges&st=cse](#)

### Online Resources for Students

#### Virginia Chancellor Unveils Education Wizard

Virginia Community College System Chancellor Glenn DuBois contributed a column to the *Richmond Times-Dispatch* on March 8, 2009 to publicize one of the system’s newest innovations: the Virginia Education Wizard. The Wizard is a Web-based career and educational planning tool designed to serve both current and prospective students at Virginia’s 23 community colleges. It allows users to find information on career opportunities and to learn more about the academic programs that can help them access these opportunities. It also includes a college-cost calculator and financial aid estimator to help students gauge affordability, an application tool to help students manage deadlines, and a transfer planner to help students build on the credits they have earned. Chancellor DuBois points to the Wizard as an example of how Virginia’s community colleges, which serve more than two-thirds of the undergraduates in the state’s public higher education system, can use innovation to continue reaching out to a broad cross-section of students.

[http://www2.timesdispatch.com/rtd/news/opinion/commentary/article/COLLS308\\_20090306-220812/223949/](http://www2.timesdispatch.com/rtd/news/opinion/commentary/article/COLLS308_20090306-220812/223949/)

<https://www.vawizard.org/vccs/Main.action>

