



California Community Colleges

November 5, 2018

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TO: Chief Executive Officers
Chief Instructional Officers
Chief Student Services Officers
Chief Business Officers
Academic Senate Presidents
Research and Planning Directors

FROM: Laura L. Hope
Executive Vice Chancellor, Educational Services and Support

RE: Local Goal-Setting Guidance

BACKGROUND

In July 2017, the California Community Colleges (CCC) Chancellor's Office released *Vision for Success: Strengthening the California Community Colleges to Meet California's Needs*. Citing the economic and educational needs of California, this document established a vision for improvement, including clear goals and a set of commitments needed to reach those goals.

The *Vision for Success* deliberately included just a handful of concrete student outcome goals in order to establish a clear message about what matters most, and a clear and simple focus for the system as a whole. The ultimate aim of the CCCs is to help students complete their educational goals—whether a degree, certificate, transfer, or good job. The *Vision for Success* goals reflect this ultimate mission, as well as the need to serve the State of California efficiently and equitably.

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The goals of the Vision for Success are summarized as follows:

GOAL 1: Completion

Systemwide, increase by at least 20 percent the number of CCC students annually who acquire associate degrees, credentials, certificates, or specific job skill sets that prepare them for in-demand jobs by 2021-22.

GOAL 2: Transfer

Systemwide, increase by 35 percent the number of CCC students transferring annually to a UC or CSU by 2021-22.

GOAL 3: Unit Accumulation

Systemwide, decrease the number of units accumulated by CCC students earning associate degrees, from an average of approximately 87 total units to an average of 79 total units by 2021-22.

GOAL 4: Workforce

Systemwide, increase the percent of exiting CTE students who report being employed in their field of study, from the most recent statewide average of 69% to 76% by 2021-22.

GOAL 5: Equity

Systemwide, reduce equity gaps across all of the above measures through faster improvements among traditionally underrepresented student groups, with the goal of cutting achievement gaps by 40 percent by 2021-22 and fully closing those achievement gaps for good by 2026-27.

In July 2018, the Governor and the Legislature established a new funding formula for the CCCs [[AB 1809](#), Chapter 33, Statutes of 2018]. That legislation also sought to more strongly link financial planning with broader educational planning. Specifically, it established that districts must take certain actions, including the adoption of college-level performance goals that:

- 1) Are aligned with the systemwide goals in the Vision for Success,
- 2) Are measurable numerically, and
- 3) Specify the timeline for improvement.

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Additionally, the law specified that local community college boards of trustees must:

- 1) Adopt the goals at a board meeting,
- 2) Include in that meeting's agenda an explanation of how the goals are consistent and aligned with the systemwide goals, and
- 3) Provide the written agenda item and summary of action to the Chancellor's Office.

Finally, the law requires that each local board:

- 1) Align its comprehensive plan to its local goals and
- 2) Align its budget with the comprehensive plan.

The remainder of this document explains what districts should do to meet the requirements of the new law and provides guidance on how to take advantage of this unique opportunity to review data, establish or reaffirm college priorities, and set ambitious goals for the future. Consistent with the Vision goals, local goals must be aggressive and aspirational if we are to meet the State's needs.

PROCESS AND TIMELINE

There are two firm deadlines associated with the local goal-setting process:

- By December 15, 2018: Colleges must certify to the Chancellor's Office that a process is underway to set measurable, aligned goals. This will be a simple certification process that can be done online.
- By May 31, 2019: District boards must adopt goals and submit them to the Chancellor's Office. This will be done using the online Local Goals Reporting Form that will be available by the end of 2018 and must be signed by the Board President, Chief Executive Officer, and Academic Senate President.

In order to meet the May 31 deadline, the Chancellor's Office suggests the following approach and timeline:

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Review of Baseline Data

Recommended Timing: November-December, 2018

Every year, districts should review the most recent data on their colleges' performance. From this year forward, districts should specifically use the new Student Success Metrics (formerly known as the Simplified Metrics) available on the Launchboard for this activity. The first version of this dashboard will be available by late October 2018 and will only include high-level data. By February 15, 2019, the dashboard will have the complete set of metrics and all the drill-downs for equity purposes. Compared to the Student Success Scorecard, the Student Success Metrics provide a narrower set of indicators specifically designed to be aligned with the systemwide goals in the Vision for Success. In preparation for setting local goals, districts should especially focus on the following indicators:

Completion Indicators:

- Completed associate degrees
- Completed CCCCCO-approved certificates

Transfer Indicators:

- Completed Associate Degrees for Transfer (ADT)
- Transfers to UC/CSU

Unit Accumulation indicator:

- Average units earned per completed associate degree

Workforce Indicators:

- Median annual earnings of exiting students
- Number of exiting students earning a living wage
- Percent of exiting CTE students who report being employed in their field of study

Equity Indicators:

- All of the above indicators disaggregated for those student groups identified as disproportionately impacted in your annual Equity Plan and available in the Student Success Metrics on the Launchboard

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Certify to Chancellor's Office that a Goal-Setting Process is Underway

Required by December 15, 2018

College Chief Executive Officers (CEOs) will certify that a goal-setting process is underway or completed at their college using a simple template that the Chancellor's Office will provide in November 2018 through a survey instrument. College CEOs will communicate to the Board President that this certification has occurred.

Review of Existing Plans and Priorities

Recommended timing: January, 2019

Districts do not need to start this process with a blank slate. Virtually all colleges will have an existing strategic plan or educational master plan. These plans may also exist at the district level. Working together, district and college leaders should look to these plans to identify current improvement priorities as a starting point for developing local goals that comply with the requirements of the new law.

If existing plans already include numeric goals to improve degree/certificate attainment, transfer attainment, job placement, or wage gains, then district and college leaders should use those as a starting point, but they should review them in light of the most current data and the systemwide Vision for Success goals to evaluate if more ambitious goals are appropriate and necessary.

If existing plans have improvement goals but they are not stated in numeric terms and/or do not specify a timeline for achieving the goals, district and college leaders should use the local goal-setting process to develop those features and incorporate them into their strategic plans or educational master plans moving forward.

Setting Goals

Recommended Timing: February-April, 2019

The Chancellor's Office strongly encourages colleges to use the process of setting local goals as an opportunity for community dialogue about the priorities and performance of the college. Community forums, student focus groups, and the college's standard consultative practices are all sources of input for determining what the college aims to accomplish over the coming three years. Many colleges already have established processes and forums for identifying goals for the Institutional Effectiveness Partnership

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Initiative or other initiatives. These can be re-purposed for the work of local goal setting as well.

As districts and colleges begin work on setting goals, the following discussion questions can be used to elicit feedback from a variety of stakeholders:

- 1) All CCCs are different. How is this one unique?
- 2) Strengths: Is this college strongest at helping students complete AA degrees and certificates? Transferring to a 4-year college? Reaching a workforce goal? In which of these areas can we build on our previous successes over the next three years? What is an ambitious target for excelling beyond our current performance by the year 2021-22?
- 3) Areas for improvement: Where could we be doing a better job in helping students reach their end goals? What is an ambitious but achievable target for improvement in these areas by the year 2021-22?
- 4) Our students on average take ___ units to complete a degree or transfer. Why is this? What is the impact on students and our college? How much can we improve in this area by the year 2021-22?
- 5) ___ percent of our CTE graduates find a job in their field of study. Is this a success story that we can build on or an area that needs improvement? How much could we improve by the year 2021-22?
- 6) Which of our student groups are most in need of support and assistance to reach their degree, transfer, or workforce goals? Where should we particularly focus our efforts to help them? What is an ambitious but achievable target for doing so by the year 2021-22?

Following their activities to gather input, college officials will need to work together with their district leadership to set a handful of specific, measurable goals for the following set of indicators:

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Completion Indicators:

- Completed associate degrees AND
- Completed CCCCCO-approved certificates

Transfer Indicators:

- Completed ADT degrees OR
- Transfers to UC/CSU

Unit Accumulation Indicator:

- Average units earned per completed associate degree

Workforce Indicators:

- Median annual earnings of exiting students OR
- Number of exiting students earning a living wage OR
- Percent of exiting CTE students who report being employed in their field of study

Equity Indicators:

- Each selected indicator from the above list, disaggregated for those student groups identified as disproportionately impacted in your annual Equity Plan and available in the Student Success Metrics on the Launchboard

Choosing from the above set of indicators, as specified, will ensure that districts and colleges are in compliance with the law. Of course, districts and colleges may choose to set more goals than the minimum required (e.g. choosing more than one workforce indicator listed above, or adding additional indicators from the Student Success Metrics, or adding other metrics that are important in the local context of the college). Districts may choose to report these additional metrics to the Chancellor's Office or to simply incorporate their additional goals into local plans and communications. However, since they are not required, additional goals and metrics will not be included in the system's reports on local goals. Ideally, a district's final set of goals will be narrow and targeted enough to help focus the entire college community on a plan of action.

Adopting Goals and Role of Local Boards

Although colleges will lead the process of setting local goals, local boards of trustees will formally adopt each college's goals. To ensure that the goals being set are appropriate and in line with district needs and priorities, trustees should be seriously engaged in the

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entire goal-setting process. Local board members may attend community forums and student groups as well as participate in standard consultative practices with stakeholder groups on campuses. It is the role of the board to balance the interests of many groups and approve goals that are best for students and the community at large. For this reason, boards should ensure that student voice is included in a meaningful way in the goal-setting process. Boards should also strive to approve goals that are equal in ambition to those established for the entire system in the Vision for Success. If there is a change in board leadership during this process, it is the CEO's responsibility to engage the new leadership in the goal-setting process.

Once goals are finalized in collaboration with district and college leadership, boards must include them in a written board meeting agenda and formally adopt them at a public meeting (as required by law). The written agenda item should include an explanation of how the goals are consistent and aligned with the systemwide goals articulated in the Vision for Success. By using the Local Goals Reporting Form that the Chancellor's Office will provide in December and the timeline outlined here, boards can be assured that the colleges are in compliance with this requirement.

Reporting Local Goals

Required by May 31, 2019

The Chancellor's Office will provide a Local Goals Reporting Form—a fillable, online template to assist districts in reporting their goals in compliance with state requirements. This template will ask districts to express their goals using specified indicators from the Student Success Metrics on the Launchboard. For the purpose of uniformity, all goals should be reported with an endpoint of 2021-22.

When reporting their goals to the Chancellor's Office, boards should also submit the written agenda item regarding local goal setting and a summary of the board's action on the item (as required by law).

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ASSISTANCE FOR DISTRICTS AND COLLEGES

In addition to the process certification form and this accompanying guidance, the Chancellor's Office will develop the following resources by November, 2018 in order to assist districts in setting local goals:

- A one-stop shop on the Vision Resource Center that compiles all resources related to local goal setting,
- The Student Success Metrics data on the Launchboard for reviewing baseline data for the specific indicators that will be used in the goal-setting process,
- A Frequently Asked Questions document,
- An infographic and PowerPoint for explaining the goal-setting process to various audiences,
- An example of the Local Goals Reporting Form so colleges can start their work (a fillable, online version of this Form will be available in December).

PLAN AND BUDGET ALIGNMENT

The law establishing the funding formula and local goal-setting process also requires that each district ultimately align its "comprehensive plan" with its adopted local goals and align its budget with the "comprehensive plan."

By May 31, 2019, all CCCs will have established local goals in alignment with the systemwide goals established in the Vision for Success. Districts should consider incorporating their newly adopted local goals into their educational master plans, strategic plans, and other districtwide planning documents. The process of aligning the local goals to plans should be visible to the public and should also align with the district's budget allocation process.

Throughout 2019, the Chancellor's Office will be working to revise and combine reporting requirements for Guided Pathways, Student Equity, and other major reports to assist districts in fully complying with the requirement to align their comprehensive plans with local goals. The Chancellor's Office will also provide guidance around aligning budgets with comprehensive plans. Colleges will not be expected to submit their comprehensive plans and aligned budgets until May 31, 2020.

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TIMELINE

2018

November: Release of guidance

Goal Process Certification sent to CEOs via survey instrument

Aggregate Student Success Metrics data available on the Launchboard for reviewing baseline data for the specific indicators that will be used in the goal-setting process

Following materials available on the Vision Resource Center:

- Guidance
- Link to the Student Success Metrics (formerly known as the Simplified Metrics) data on the Launchboard
- A Frequently Asked Questions document
- An infographic and PowerPoint for explaining the goal-setting process to various audiences
- An example of the Local Goals Reporting Form so colleges can start their work

December: Online, fillable Local Goals Reporting Form available on Vision Resource Center

December 15: Deadline for CEOs to submit Goal Process Certification to Chancellor's Office

2019

February 15: The Launchboard will have the complete set of Student Success Metrics and all the drill-downs for equity purposes

May 31: Deadline for districts and colleges to submit the completed Local Goals Reporting Form to the Chancellor's Office

Summer: Chancellor's Office releases streamlined reporting requirements

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CONCLUSION

The Chancellor's Office encourages all colleges to treat the new local goal-setting requirement as much more than a compliance exercise. It is an opportunity to bring together college personnel, district leaders, students, and communities to ensure that every college has a clear, shared vision for student success. Once established, this shared vision can provide a foundation for planning, prioritizing, and making decisions, improvements, and adjustments along the way. Beyond these internal benefits, the local goal-setting process is an opportunity for the CCC system to show California that it is committed to their mission of helping all students reach their educational goals. Working together as a system, we can meet our ambitious systemwide goals for improvement.

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