



# *STUDENTS FIRST*

**STRATEGIC PLAN 2019-2024 | VERSION 2.1**

REVISED ON SEPTEMBER 2022







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## MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Two years after the adoption of the *STUDENTS FIRST: Strategic Plan 2019-2024*, the Essex County College community finds itself facing new and unforeseen challenges and realities propelled by the global Covid-19 pandemic. We remember those we have lost and wish comfort to those who have lost a family member, friend, co-worker or experienced the ravaging effects of the virus. While we are hopeful that the worst is behind us, we are also diligently preparing for all possible scenarios as we move forward. We are focused on doing everything we can to help each student get back on track to meet their academic goals.

Throughout these difficult times, our *STUDENTS FIRST* Strategic Plan directed our institution to focus on what matters most - our students. Countless examples exist of how we successfully lived our mission, held tight to our values and strengthened our support for students and the community by taking immediate action. Our faculty quickly transitioned to remote instruction, our employees embraced “shared sacrifice”, our students adapted to learning in new modalities and our visionary Board of Trustees provided guidance and support. These efforts affirm that the goals and objectives of our *STUDENTS FIRST* Strategic Plan remain relevant and continue to accurately define who we are as an institution in spite of the seismic shift in higher education and the global economic landscape.

It has always been the intent of the College that our *STUDENTS FIRST* Strategic Plan would be updated throughout its five-year lifespan as priorities shift to ensure that our structure remains aligned with the objectives of *STUDENTS FIRST*.

This updated version focuses on our vision, as we chart a proactive path that recognizes the importance of our credit as well as non-credit programs in support of providing access to success in a learning to employment environment.

Finally, to the valued members of our vibrant campus community, please note that these revisions are a direct reflection of your voice. Since becoming our Acting/Interim President in July, 2020 and now as your President, I have made it a priority to have meaningful dialogue with as many members of our community as possible. I have had the privilege of meeting with the administrative units, the academic divisions, bargaining units, student and alumni groups and community stakeholders. Just as important, I have used my regular campus walk-arounds to directly ask individuals about their concerns and possible remedies. The purpose of these interactions was and will continue to be an opportunity for me to listen actively to you so that my actions may represent the true voice of the ECC community.

Dr. Augustine A. Boakye  
President





# STUDENT SUCCESS CENTER

## MISSION

Essex County College is an open access community college that serves the diverse needs of students through comprehensive educational programs, training and continuing education. Essex County College is dedicated to academic excellence and the success of its students.

## VISION

A Beacon for Education and Knowledge, Essex County College attracts people who seek a better life through education. We transform lives, broaden learning and empower students to achieve their full potential. Our College community and graduates are change agents and leaders who contribute to the health, vitality and advancement of society.

## VALUES

Essex County College affirms the following principles, values and beliefs:

**Teaching and Learning:** We affirm teaching and learning as our primary purpose. The College seeks to instill in students general and specialized knowledge, the ability to think critically, and a commitment to civic responsibility. We value academic freedom and support the open exchange of ideas and experiences.

**Excellence and Accountability:** We believe in creating a learning environment that fosters high expectations for achievement. The College is committed to rigorous academic standards, faculty excellence, and responsive support services that enable students to reach their full academic, professional and personal potential. We provide excellent programs that utilize technology, demonstrate innovation, and undergo evaluation to ensure consistent and outstanding performance.

**Community and Engagement:** We support programs that enhance the economic and social development of Essex County. We value our role as a vital community resource and are dedicated to forging effective partnerships with our many constituencies.



**Diversity and Access:** We embrace the rich diversity of our student population and our employees. We recognize the historical, intellectual, and artistic contributions of all cultures, and promote an atmosphere in which critical examination of perspectives is accepted and encouraged. We believe all people should have access to affordable, quality higher education that will prepare them to succeed in a dynamic world.

**Legacy and Transformation:** We honor our history and valued traditions of Essex County College, the City of Newark and the County of Essex. We also welcome the transformative power of education to change lives. Building upon our past achievements, we eagerly embrace the future by pursuing innovations in teaching, administration, and student services.



# GOAL I

**Re-establish financial stability to ensure a sustainable future for Essex County College.**

## ANNUAL TARGETS

- Build an additional financial reserve of \$5,000,000 over the prior year, by the close of FY 2023.
- Build an additional financial reserve of \$5,000,000 over the prior year, by the close of FY 2024.

## OBJECTIVES & ANNUAL ACTIVITIES:

**A. Strengthen the institution's budgetary system to better support the achievement of our strategic projects and activities.**

*Related FY 2023 activities*

- i. Develop and implement a step-by-step plan and ongoing initiatives to better track and monitor the budget in alignment with the College's resources.

**B. Develop an organized grant application and grant management process.**

*Related FY 2023 activities*

- i. Design and implement a process for identifying and evaluating grant opportunities.
- ii. Coordinate a process for the timely submission of grant applications.
- iii. Coordinate with Finance to ensure fund utilization is in accordance with Grant guidelines.
- iv. Develop a systematic process for execution of the Perkins grant with Academic Affairs.





### **C. Coordinate with the Foundation Board and the Alumni Association to raise funds for the institution.**

#### *Related FY 2023 activities*

- i. Coordinate with the Foundation Board to identify, develop, and pursue fund raising opportunities.
- ii. Coordinate with Alumni to increase active membership.
- iii. Coordinate with alumni to develop strategies for increased scholarship fundraising.

### **D. Develop and implement streamlined and efficient accounting practices with enhanced internal controls.**

#### *Related FY 2023 activities*

- i. Monitor and report on the reconciliation of G5, Bursar's and Financial Aid on a monthly basis.
- ii. Monitor and report a mini audit, including a balance sheet, income statement, and statement of sources and uses of funds, on a quarterly basis.
- iii. Ensure the audited financial statements for the year ending June 30, 2022 are completed and ready for the Board of Trustees in time for the December Board Meeting.
- iv. Review, design, and implement a time and attendance process to track and optimize employee productivity.
- v. Develop and implement a succession planning process that will help the institution better identify, fill, and train for key positions while fostering a culture of commitment and long-term planning in all areas of the College.



## GOAL II

**Maximize the impact of our academic and non-credit workforce development programs on the local community and labor market by increasing the number of students served.**

- Increase enrollment yield by 3 percent over Fall 2022 in Fall 2023.
- Increase Student Credit Hours by 3 percent over FY 2023 in FY 2024.
- Increase total non-credit clock hours\* by 3 percent over FY 2023.

*\* Non-credit clock hours include non-credit open enrollment and customized training clock hours combined.*

### ANNUAL TARGETS

- Increase enrollment yield by 3 percent over Fall 2021 in Fall 2022
- Increase Student Credit Hours by 3 percent over FY 2022 in FY 2023
- Increase total non-credit clock hours\* by 3 percent over FY 2022 in FY 2023





# OBJECTIVES & ANNUAL ACTIVITIES:

## A. Improve communication and outreach to current students, prospective students, and the community at large.

*Related FY 2023 activities*

- i. Find innovative ways to reach all market segments and create targeted marketing initiatives.
- ii. Continue to improve the 3-year dynamic Marketing Plan and execute the plan accordingly.
- iii. Continue to improve the newly designed College's Website.
- iv. Develop a leadership team with representatives from all areas of the College to ensure that all practices and policies involving our interactions with students, prospective students, employees, and the community at large are in alignment with the institution's values of diversity, equity, and inclusion.
- v. Expand and build upon the current mailing to County residents which is currently coordinated by Community, Continuing Education, and Workforce Development to include information on Associate and Certificate programs as well as institutional resources such as CCOG and Recruiting Fairs.

## B. Expand recruitment initiatives targeting all prospective markets.

*Related FY 2023 activities*

- i. Complete a 3-year dynamic Enrollment Management Plan and execute the plan accordingly.
- ii. Design recruitment activities targeting both local high school graduates and adult learners.
- iii. Coordinate with the local high schools to engage students with college readiness into our dual enrollment program.
- iv. Design a recruitment strategy to increase enrollment at the West Essex Campus that will be rolled out in concert with the completion of the new structure.
- v. Design a recruitment strategy to increase enrollment at the FOCUS and Essex County School of Technology - West Essex Technology High School extension centers during the construction of the branch campus.
- vi. Develop linkages between credit and non-credit offerings for the purpose of creating learner centered pathways
- vii. Develop and implement a marketing strategy to increase out-of-county online and virtual enrollment.

## C. Streamline and revise the student onboarding process to ensure equitable access and a smooth transition to Essex County College.

*Related FY 2023 activities*

- i. Design and implement new onboarding processes and provide cross-functional training to improve the enrollment yield.

## D. Conduct a thorough analysis of current and prospective programs to ensure our academic and non-credit workforce development offerings are reflective of labor market demands and position our students for success.

*Related FY 2023 activities*

- i. Disseminate and discuss recommendations for program improvement using data sourced from Terra Firma, EMSI, The National Student Clearinghouse, and other assessments with the relevant stakeholders at the College.
- ii. Disseminate and discuss recommendations for new program offerings using data sources from Terra Firma, EMSI, and other assessments with the relevant stakeholders at the College.
- iii. Continue to implement an effective and sustainable multi-year academic program review process to ensure existing program continue to adapt and evolve as necessary.





## GOAL III

**Continue to innovate our academic and student support programs to improve student persistence and on-time completion.**

### ANNUAL TARGETS

- Increase 1-year retention rate by 2% over the Fall 2020 cohort, for the Fall 2021 cohort.
- Increase 3-year graduation rate by 0.5% over the Fall 2018 cohort, for the Fall 2019 cohort.
- Increase 1-year retention rate by 2% over the Fall 2021 cohort, for the Fall 2022 cohort.
- Increase 3-year graduation rate by 0.5% over the Fall 2019 cohort, for the Fall 2020 cohort.

## OBJECTIVES & ANNUAL ACTIVITIES:

### **A. Develop and implement strategic retention initiatives.**

#### *Related FY 2023 activities*

- i. Increase the college-wide academic advisement/mentorship activities incorporating the Progressive Retention Initiative.
- ii. Implement our new First-Year Experience course to improve student acclimation and increase retention.
- iii. Strategically expand our capacity to offer multiple learning modalities including online education to best accommodate all learners.
- iv. Continue to evaluate the efficacy of the newly designed accelerated developmental English and Mathematics courses.



## **B. Enhance learning support systems and wraparound services to promote student success.**

### *Related FY 2023 activities*

- i. Design a holistic, wrap-around support system that will meet the needs of students during their educational journey.
- ii. Provide effective orientations and tutorials to help students navigate the College's online student support systems.
- iii. Design student support services at the West Essex Campus that will be rolled out in concert with the completion of the new structure.
- iv. Design and implement student support services at the FOCUS and the West Caldwell School of Technology extension centers.

## **C. Design and implement professional development and training for faculty and staff.**

### *Related FY 2023 activities*

- i. Continue to build on the implemented customer service training program
- ii. Implement a comprehensive safety compliance training program.
- iii. Implement a comprehensive classroom technology and management program to support faculty.

## **D. Full implementation, including provision of appropriate training, of software platforms that will enhance student services and retention.**

### *Related FY 2023 activities*

- i. Implementation of Qless.
- ii. Implementation of a Customer Relationship Manager (CRM) platform.
- iii. Development a workflow/process, including a communication process, regarding the handling of approved course and program changes and the sequential update of the various information systems (Online Catalog, DegreeWorks, Banner Catalog).
- iv. Develop a workshop/process, including communication and training on the use of DegreeWorks for the degree auditing process.
- v. Implementation of Softdocs.
- vi. Implementation of Elevate.
- vii. Upgrade of Touchnet.
- viii. Implementation of the Ready App.

## **E. Develop processes and activities that promote student transfer and articulation.**

### *Related FY 2023 activities*

- i. Redesign advisement processes to ensure a smooth transfer process from ECC to four-year institutions.
- ii. Coordinate and renew articulation agreements between ECC and four-year institutions.
- iii. Develop a sustainable system for tracking ECC graduates, beginning with the Fall 2021 FTFTDS Cohort.
- iv. Develop and implement annual transfer events which include transfer fairs and opportunities for individual consultations.

## **F. Foster institutional improvement through assessment, evaluation, and evidence-based planning.**

### *Related FY 2023 activities*

- i. Complete the implementation of the revised Program Assessment process by onboarding the General Science, Health Science, and Social Science to an effective portfolio assessment process.
- ii. Fully implement the newly revised process for the assessment of the ECC Competencies and the General Education Goals and Objectives.



## GOAL IV

**Continue to improve the physical infrastructure of Essex County College to better meet the needs of our students and enhance the student learning experience.**

### ANNUAL TARGETS

**Complete the following phases/renovations/projects by close of FY 2023**

- West Essex Campus - New Parking lot Construction
- West Essex Campus - New Soccer field Construction
- West Essex Campus - Construction of the main classroom block
- Gymnasium Renovation Phase III - Complete the gym showers and storages: walls, lights, ceiling, floor, etc.
- Create a new Learning Center
- Renovate the Library 3- floor
- LED lighting fixtures Retrofit - Phase I Classrooms, Science Labs, Computer labs, Lecture Halls and some Offices
- LED Lighting fixtures Retrofit - Phase II Hallways, Offices and remaining areas in need of fixture and light updates
- Fire alarm System and equipment upgrade - Newark Campus



## Complete the following projects by close of FY 2024

- Completion of “One Stop Student Services” for the Newark campus.
- Layout update, Renovation and Technology Upgrade of the Center for Technology
- Renovation of the 5th and 6th floor



## OBJECTIVES & ANNUAL ACTIVITIES:

### A. Renovation of the West Essex Campus.

#### *Related FY 2023 activities*

- Phase III - Begin the main construction.
- West Essex - New Parking Lot construction
- New Soccer Field construction

### B. Renovation of the Gymnasium.

#### *Related FY 2023 activities*

- Gymnasium Renovation Phase II - Complete the gym hallway: walls, lights, ceiling, floor etc.
- Gymnasium Renovation Phase III - Complete the gym showers and storages: walls, lights, ceiling, floor, etc.



### C. Complete all necessary capital projects to ensure a safe, effective, and welcoming learning environment for our students.

#### *Related FY 2023 activities*

- Renovate Public Safety Headquarters.
- Create an English Lab.
- Renovate the Cafeteria serving area.
- Refurbish the main doors.
- Complete the dining area renovation of the Center for Teaching and Learning Excellence (CTLE).
- Revise and fully implement the College's Facilities Management & Maintenance Plan.
- Outline a plan for implementation of “One Stop Student Services” for the Newark campus.
- Outline a plan for implementation of a new Learning Center.
- Outline a plan for the renovation of the Library, 3rd floor.
- Develop and implement a Transportation Management Plan.
- LED lighting fixtures Retrofit - Phase I Classrooms, Science Labs, Computer labs, Lecture Halls and some offices
- LED Lighting fixtures Retrofit - Phase II Hallways, Offices and remaining areas in need of fixture and light updates
- Fire Alarm System and equipment upgrade - Newark Campus



# KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

The goals and objectives of *STUDENTS FIRST* outline what Essex County College will be working to achieve over the next five years. The 7 Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) on the following pages will help us measure the effectiveness of our strategic planning efforts.

These KPIs not only serve as overarching measures of our institution's health, but will also be used to quantify the degree to which our planning efforts make an impact. The success of *STUDENTS FIRST* will be defined as improvement in these metrics over the course

of the five-year plan. Since KPIs are broad in nature and touch on multiple facets of the institution's operations, they span multiple goals and objectives allowing for a broad overall evaluation of institutional success.

In the 2021 update of the Strategic Plan, the goals and objectives were revised and refocused. Therefore, the Key Performance Indicators were updated to reflect the annual measurable targets set forth under the revised goals for the remaining three years of the Plan.







### GOAL I - Re-establish financial stability to ensure a sustainable future for Essex County College.

Key Performance Indicator	FY 2023 Target	FY 2024 Target
Financial Reserve Amount	\$5,000,000 increase over prior year	\$5,000,000 increase over prior year

### GOAL II - Maximize the impact on our local community and labor market by increasing the number of students served and strategically expanding our capacity.

Key Performance Indicator	FY 2023 Target	FY 2024 Target
Total Student Credit Hours	146,251.25	3% increase over prior year
Total Non-Credit Clock Hours*	156,256	3% increase over prior year

*\* Includes both non-credit open enrollment clock hours and customized training clock hours combined.*

### GOAL III - Continue to innovate our academic and student support programs to improve student onboarding, persistence and on-time completion.

Key Performance Indicator	FY 2023 Target	FY 2024 Target
Enrollment Yield	49.3%	3% increase over prior year
One-Year Retention Rate	62.2%	2% increase over prior year
Three-Year Graduation Rate	16.8%	0.5% increase over prior year

**GOAL IV - Continue to improve the physical infrastructure of Essex County College to better meet the needs of our students and enhance the student learning experience.**

**Key Performance Indicator**

*Successful completion of the following capital projects by the close of the indicated fiscal year.*

**Completion by  
Close of FY 2023**

**Completion  
by Close of FY  
2024**

West Essex Campus - Phase 3. - Begin the main construction.

X

West Essex Campus - New Parking lot Construction.

X

West Essex Campus - New Soccer field construction.

X

Gymnasium - Renovation Phase II - Complete the gym hallway: walls, lights, ceiling, floor, etc.

X

Gymnasium - Renovation Phase III - Complete the gym showers and storages: walls, lights, ceiling, floor, etc.

X

Renovate Public Safety Headquarters.

X

Create English Lab.

X

Renovate the Cafeteria serving area.

X

Refurbish the main doors.

X

Complete the dining area renovation of the Center for Teaching and Learning Excellence (CTLE).

X

Revise and fully implement the College's Facility Management & Maintenance Plan.

X

Outline a plan for implementation of a "One Stop Student Services" center for the Newark campus.

X

Outline a plan for implementation of a new Learning Center.

X





Key Performance Indicator	Completion by Close of FY 2023	Completion by Close of FY 2024
Outline a plan for the renovation of the Library - 3 floor.	X	
Develop and implement a Transportation Management Plan.	X	
LED Lighting fixtures Retrofit – Phase I Classrooms, Science Labs, Computer labs, Lecture Halls and Some Offices.	X	
LED Lighting Fixtures Retrofit – Phase II Hallways, Offices and remaining areas in need of fixture and light updates.	X	
Fire alarm System and equipment upgrade – Newark Campus.	X	
Completion of a “One Stop Student Services” for the Newark campus		X
Layout update, Renovation and Technology Upgrade of the Center for Technology		X
Renovation of the 5th and 6th Floor		X

# IMPLEMENTATION OF *STUDENTS FIRST*

As with any plan, the success of *STUDENTS FIRST* is contingent upon the ability to implement it. While *STUDENTS FIRST* was initially developed with an implementation plan that would be coordinated by a Strategic Planning Committee made up of over twenty-five members of the College, the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic necessitated a more efficient and effective means for oversight of the implementation process. Under the President, Dr. Augustine Boakye, the Strategic Planning process was reorganized and the goals and objectives of the Plan were updated and refocused.

Under the version 2.0 of *STUDENTS FIRST*, annual activities are identified by the President and Cabinet to chart a clear, transparent course for how the institution intends to meet its vision. For each annual activity, designated reporting officers are identified and using Strategic Planning Online (SPOL), the College's planning and assessment software platform, a budgeting plan, targets, and quarterly updates are captured. In addition to these quarterly reports, area heads (Cabinet members) and unit leaders (Deans, Chairs, and Directors) are asked to include updates on these strategic activities in their monthly reporting, as part of our Administrative Unit Assessment process which is also housed in SPOL. A sample of this form, known as the "Strategic Activity Report" can be found in Appendix B of this report.

When *STUDENTS FIRST* was updated in August, 2021, the decision was made to include the annual activities directly into the Plan. In August of 2022 and 2023, the Plan will be updated again, to reflect the new annual activities for those fiscal years.

Results of our planning efforts are released in an annual report and presented to the College community at our annual Strategic Planning Retreat. This summative, end-of-year report delivers the results of the Annual Operational

Plan and includes a dashboard report of our Key Performance Indicators (KPIs).

The annual retreat allows the College community to reflect on the results of our planning, our institutional strengths, and the areas where we should concentrate our improvement efforts. These results-based conversations, centering around improvement, serve as the first step in the action-planning process.

The strategic planning calendar has been developed in concert with the annual budgeting cycle so that cabinet officials can ensure their budget requests are aligned with strategic priorities and action-plans for the upcoming year. The annual planning calendar is also designed to inform the budget adjustment and reallocation process so resources can be strategically deployed with formally identified institutional priorities in mind. The integration of the strategic planning cycle and the annual budgeting calendar is detailed on the following page:





# STRATEGIC PLANNING CALENDAR\*

<b>July</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The Strategic Plan is re-printed and re-published with the updated annual strategic activities for the upcoming fiscal year.</li><li>• Area heads submit Q4 report on annual strategic activities.</li></ul>
<b>September</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Annual Report on the Strategic Plan Implementation is submitted to the President</li></ul>
<b>October</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Area heads submit their Q1 report on annual strategic activities as well as the targets, timelines, and approved budget for their annual strategic activities in SPOL.</li></ul>
<b>January</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Area heads submit their Q2 report on annual strategic activities.</li></ul>
<b>March</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Board Annual Strategic Planning Retreat</li></ul>
<b>April</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Executive Director of IEPA meets individually with area heads to update annual strategic activities for the upcoming fiscal year.</li><li>• Area heads submit their Q3 report on annual strategic activities.</li></ul>
<b>May</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• IEPA presents institutional assessment results to President and Cabinet.</li><li>• Executive Director of IEPA meets with the President to finalize updated strategic activities for the upcoming fiscal year.</li></ul>

\* Note: This calendar is for a single fiscal year and fiscal year planning will overlap.



## APPENDICES

- A. Development of *STUDENTS FIRST*
- B. Strategic Activity Report
- C. Essex County College Leadership



## APPENDIX A

# DEVELOPMENT OF *STUDENTS FIRST*

**Phase I** of the Essex County College strategic planning process kicked off in July 2017 with a Board of Trustees-Cabinet Strategic Planning Retreat. This meeting brought Trustees together with Cabinet Officers and senior administrators for dialogue about the state of the College and the need for a strategic plan that would move the College towards sustainable prosperity. In this day-long series of meetings, the College employed an Appreciative Inquiry approach, using a collaborative, strengths-based dialogue and an environmental scanning methodology to determine the institution's Strengths, Opportunities, Aspirations and Results/Resources (SOAR). The event featured keynote speaker Dr. Christine Harrington, Executive Director of the New Jersey Council of County Colleges (NJCCC), Center for Student Success. Dr. Harrington discussed supporting student success through the use of *Guided Pathways*.

In November 2017, the College moved to **Phase II** of its strategic planning process with its second Board of Trustees-Cabinet Retreat. Trustees, Cabinet Officers and senior administrators joined with select knowledge leaders including Dr. A. Zachary Yamba, Essex County College President Emeritus, Dr. Edward J. Yaw, County College of Morris President Emeritus, and Lawrence A. Nespoli, President of the New Jersey Council of County Colleges (NJCCC). Discussions revolved around development of a plan that would move the College forward in its mission. The College again utilized the Appreciative Inquiry SOAR approach and gathered insights on the strategic directions the College should pursue.

In March 2018, the College further built upon the foundational work done in the first two phases and entered **Phase III**. This phase

focused on ensuring that all members of the college community were able to participate in the planning process and that the voices of all constituencies were represented. Under the leadership of the President, a steering committee was created, and members conducted meetings with their respective areas to solicit input on the direction of the College. The President facilitated a series of critical strategic planning meetings with several constituent groups, including Academic Division Chairs and Governance Committee Chairs. In May, a student focus group was held to gather student input and the College held its Phase III Strategic Planning Retreat. Participants included the Board of Trustees, the Foundation Board, Cabinet Officers, Associate Deans, Directors, Academic Division Chairs, Governance Council Chairs, and union leaders. Finally, in June 2018, a Strategic Planning Survey was sent to faculty, adjuncts, and 39 external stakeholders to gather input from the instructional side of the house and the business and donor community.

**Phase IV**, the fourth phase in the Plan's development, began in March 2019 with the reconvening of the Strategic Planning Committee. The focus of Phase IV was to incorporate the foundational work from the first three phases into a formally structured plan. It was seen as essential throughout this process to capture the richness of ideas that were developed in the earlier phases. Working groups led by members of the Strategic Planning Committee developed five strategic goals and 21 strategic objectives, directly derived from the five topical themes that emerged in the first three phases. These working groups, the Committee at large, and a group of editors worked together to produce a final draft of the Plan which was named *STUDENTS FIRST*.

In addition to the five strategic goals and 21 strategic objectives, the Committee established 16 Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) and an implementation plan that includes a process for the creation of annual operational plans to be developed and monitored by the Committee. As part of this implementation plan, the Committee integrated the annual strategic planning calendar with the annual budgeting cycle to ensure that the process of allocating resources is aligned with the strategic initiatives of the College.

**Phase V.** Two years into the Plan, the first major reexamination of *STUDENTS FIRST* took place over the summer of 2021. The primary objectives for the update was to take several developments into consideration that had occurred after the inaugural release of the Plan. Some of the major developments that necessitated a thorough review included:

- The COVID-19 pandemic affected every aspect of College operations. This included a major shift in teaching modality and measures to ensure a safe and healthy environment such as contact tracing, extensive cleaning protocols, social distancing, and a face covering mandate. Additionally, student support services adapted quickly to meet student needs with initiatives such as the computer loaner program, expanded food pantry services, and the provision of COVID Relief Grants for enrolled students as per the Higher Education Emergency Relief Acts I, II, and III (HEERF).
- A national economic crisis that necessitated an ongoing reexamination of internal budgeting and resource allocations, as well as a thorough environmental scan of the shifting labor market to ensure the program offerings of Essex County College best serve our community and the local region's economic needs.
- A change in leadership including the College President, Chief Academic Officer, several Cabinet leadership positions, and the addition of a new Chief Financial Officer.

- A major College reorganization necessitated by fiscal realities resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Examination of strategic alignment with other major planning documents issued after the inaugural version of *STUDENTS FIRST*. These documents include:
  - The College's Self-Study Design (SSD) with a focus on the design's four institutional priorities. The SSD was approved by the Middle States Commission on Higher Education in April of 2021.
  - The newly written Enrollment Management Plan, scheduled to be finalized in FY2022
  - The newly written Academic Master Plan, scheduled to be finalized in FY2022

Phase V resulted in *STUDENTS FIRST: Strategic Plan 2019-2024, Version 2.0*. The original 5 goals and 21 objectives were reorganized into 4 goals and 22 objectives. Other changes included a shift in implementation oversight from a large Strategic Planning Committee to the area heads (Cabinet) to improve efficiency and streamline the process in a manner reflective of institutional restructuring. The Plan will be updated with FY 2023 strategic activities in September 2022 (Version 2.1) and with FY 2024 strategic activities in September 2023 (Version 2.2).

Throughout Phase V, President, Dr. Augustine A. Boakye held multiple meetings to engage in meaningful dialogue with every administrative unit, academic division, bargaining unit, student and alumni groups, the College Board of Trustees, and community partners. These conversations played a large role in directly shaping and influencing this plan and strategic direction of the College.



## APPENDIX B

### SPOL Strategic Activity Report

**Strategic Activity Name:**

(Goal/Objective/Activity –  
Refer to Strategic Plan)

II, A, III

**Strategic Activity****Description:**

(Enter as stated on the  
Strategic Plan)

Complete the redesign of the College's Website

**Lead Officer:**

(The main coordinator of this  
project who will be responsible  
for completing this form  
throughout the year)

**Additional Contributors:**

(List additional officers who will  
play a major contributing role  
towards the completion of this  
activity)

**Major Targets with Timeline:**

(Add the major deliverables  
along with the expected  
completion timeline)

Examples:

Hire XYZ by <DATE, MONTH, OR SEMESTER>

Conduct analysis of XYZ by <DATE, MONTH, OR SEMESTER>

Deploy XYZ by <DATE, MONTH, OR SEMESTER>

**Budgeting Plan:**

(must be approved by  
President and CFO)

Example:

Total cost of this project will be \$XYZ. Of this amount, \$XYZ is available in my areas current FY 22 budget in line XYZ which was originally allotted for XYZ which is no longer taking place and can be reallocated to help fund this project. An additional amount of \$XYZ will need to be approved to be added to our budget to fully fund this project.

**Q1 Update**

(due by October 1st)

**Q2 Update**

(due by January 1st)

**Q3 Update**

(due by April 1st)

**Q4 Update**

(due by July 1st)

## APPENDIX C

# ESSEX COUNTY COLLEGE LEADERSHIP

### Board of Trustees

Ms. Marion Bolden, Chair

Dr. Arnold C. Lewis, Vice Chair

Mrs. Jeweline Grimes, Secretary

Mr. Joseph Zarra, Treasurer

Ms. Carmen T. Morales

Ms. Beth Robinson

Ms. Isabel Cruz

Ms. Johanna L. Wright

Rev. Dr. Lanel D. Guyton





## **Dr. Augustine A. Boakye**

President

### **Cabinet Members**

#### **Dr. Aylin Brandon**

Executive Director of Enrollment Management

#### **Mr. Alfred Bundy**

Executive Director of Institutional Advancement

#### **Ms. Yvette Henry**

Executive Director of Human Resources

#### **Ms. Kiswendsida Kaprou**

Senior Comptroller

#### **Dr. Keith Kirkland**

Dean of Student Affairs

#### **Mr. John Runfeldt**

Executive Director of Institutional Effectiveness, Planning, and Assessment

#### **Mr. Mohamed Seddiki**

Executive Dean of Administrative & Learning Technologies/Chief Information Officer (CIO)

#### **Ms. Christine Soto**

General Counsel

#### **Dr. Elvira M. Vieira**

Dean of Community, Continuing Education, and Workforce Development

#### **Dr. Alvin Williams**

Executive Dean of Faculty and Academics



## NOTES

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