

**BOARD OF REGENTS FOR HIGHER EDUCATION  
CT STATE COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES (CSCU)  
MINUTES – REGULAR MEETING – THURSDAY, JUNE 18, 2020  
CONDUCTED VIA REMOTE PARTICIPATION**

<b>REGENTS – PARTICIPATING (Y = yes / N = no)</b>	
Matt Fleury, Chair	Y
Merle Harris, Vice Chair	Y
Richard J. Balducci	Y
Aviva D. Budd	Y
Naomi K. Cohen	N
Felice Gray-Kemp	Y
Holly Howery	Y
David R. Jimenez	Y
JoAnn Ryan	Y
Elease E. Wright	Y
Monica Maldonado, SAC Chair	Y
Elena Ruiz, SAC Vice Chair	Y
*David Blitz, FAC Chair	Y
*Colena Sesanker, FAC Vice Chair	Y
*Kurt Westby, Labor Commissioner	N
*Deidra Gifford, Public Health Commissioner	Y
*David Lehman, DECD Commissioner	N
*Miguel A. Cardona, Education Commissioner	N
<i>*ex-officio, non-voting member</i>	

**CSCU STAFF**

Alice Pritchard, Chief of Staff  
Jane Gates, SVP & Provost, Academic & Student Affairs  
Andrew Kripp, VP Human Resources & Labor Relations  
Ernestine Y. Weaver, Counsel  
Greg DeSantis, Associate Vice President of Student Success and Academic Initiatives  
Erin A. Fitzgerald, Director of Board Affairs / Secretary of the Board of Regents

**CALL TO ORDER**

Chair Fleury called the meeting to order at 10:05am and, following roll call, declared a quorum present.

**ADOPT AGENDA**

Chair Fleury called for a motion to adopt the meeting agenda as submitted; **on a motion by Regent Wright, seconded by Regent Balducci, the Agenda was unanimously adopted as presented.**

### **OPPORTUNITY TO ADDRESS THE BOARD**

See **Attachment A** hereto for communication(s) received. In accordance with FOI guidelines as amended during the pandemic, the communication(s) in Attachment A were posted on the CSCU website immediately prior to the meeting start time and distributed to all Board members in advance of the meeting.

See **Attachment F** hereto for a communication to NECHE from President Mark Ojakian and President David Levinson responding to public comments NECHE received regarding the ongoing implementation of Students First.

### **BOR CHAIR MATT FLEURY’S REMARKS**

Noting his personal and deep sadness at the unexpected sudden passing of President Ojakian’s sister, Chair Fleury indicated information would be sent to all Regents for those who may wish to extend expressions of sympathy at this sad time.

Chair Fleury indicated that he, along with President Ojakian and members of his team, including President Levinson, would be meeting with NECHE the following week in continuation of ongoing efforts to keep the accreditation agency informed of progress in regards to Students First.

Chair Fleury expressed his appreciation and best wishes to Erin Fitzgerald, Director of Board Affairs, and NVCC President Daisy De Filippis upon their upcoming retirement. In particular, he noted that President Ojakian would be recognizing President De Filippis for her outstanding leadership.

Chair Fleury asked Dr. Alice Pritchard, CSCU Chief of Staff, to offer a synopsis of **President Ojakian’s** prepared remarks. Those prepared remarks are attached hereto as **Attachment B**.

### **APPROVAL OF PREVIOUS MEETING MINUTES**

**On a motion by Regent Balducci, seconded by Regent Cohen, the May 14, 2020 meeting minutes were unanimously approved as submitted.**

## **CONSENT AGENDA**

Chair Fleury called for a motion on the Consent Agenda. **On a motion by Regent Cohen, seconded by Regent Howery, the Consent Agenda was unanimously adopted.**

### **ACADEMIC PROGRAMS**

#### **Discontinuations**

Biology Concentration – BS in General Studies – Charter Oak SC  
Mathematics Concentration – BS in General Studies – Charter Oak SC  
Chemistry Concentration – BS in General Studies – Charter Oak SC  
Technology Studies Concentration – BS in General Studies – Charter Oak SC

#### **Suspensions**

Environmental Sciences – AS – Middlesex CC  
Accounting – OCP – Central CSU  
Music Education – MS - Central CSU

#### **Modifications**

Civil Engineering – BS - Central CSU [Significant Modification of Courses/Course Substitutions]  
English – BA - Central CSU [Significant Modification of Courses/Course Substitutions]  
Mathematics – BA - Central CSU [Significant Modification of Courses/Course Substitutions and Addition of a Concentration in Pure Mathematics]

#### **New Programs**

Counselor Education and Supervision – EdD - Southern CSU  
Health Science – AS – Capital CC

#### **Replication of a College of Technology (COT) Program**

Data Science Option – AS – Capital CC  
Policy: Extension of Teach Out Deadlines for Discontinued Programs in Cases of Student Hardship  
Delegation of Authority for Awarding Emeritus Status to Administrative Faculty

### **RESOLUTIONS APPROVED ON CONSENT**

#### **Discontinuations**

Biology Concentration – BS in General Studies – Charter Oak SC  
RESOLVED: That the Board of Regents for Higher Education approve the immediate discontinuation of a program concentration in General Studies: Biology Concentration (CIP Code: 24.0102 / OHE # 240101) leading to a Bachelor of Science Charter Oak State College.

Mathematics Concentration – BS in General Studies – Charter Oak SC  
RESOLVED: That the Board of Regents for Higher Education approve the immediate discontinuation of a program concentration in General Studies: Mathematics Concentration (CIP Code: 24.0102 / OHE # 240101) leading to a Bachelor of Science Charter Oak State College.

Chemistry Concentration – BS in General Studies – Charter Oak SC

RESOLVED: That the Board of Regents for Higher Education approve the immediate discontinuation of a program concentration in General Studies: Chemistry Concentration (CIP Code: 24.0102 / OHE # 240101) leading to a Bachelor of Science Charter Oak State College.

Technology Studies Concentration – BS in General Studies – Charter Oak SC

RESOLVED: That the Board of Regents for Higher Education approve the immediate discontinuation of a program concentration in General Studies: Technology Studies Concentration (CIP Code: 24.0102 / OHE # 240101) leading to a Bachelor of Science Charter Oak State College.

**Suspensions**

Environmental Sciences – AS – Middlesex CC

RESOLVED: That the Board of Regents for Higher Education approve the suspension of a program in Environmental Sciences (CIP Code: 03.0104 / OHE # 01710) leading to an Associate of Science at Middlesex Community College for a period of 3 years.

Accounting – OCP – Central CSU

RESOLVED: That the Board of Regents for Higher Education approve the suspension of a program in Accounting (CIP Code: 52.0301 / OHE # 19351) leading to an OCP at Central Connecticut State University until May 2023.

Music Education – MS - Central CSU

RESOLVED: That the Board of Regents for Higher Education approve the suspension of a program in Music Education (CIP Code: 13.1312 / OHE # 00063) leading to a Master of Science at Central Connecticut State University until December 1, 2021.

**Modifications**

Civil Engineering – BS - Central CSU [Significant Modification of Courses/Course Substitutions]

RESOLVED: That the Board of Regents for Higher Education approve the modification of a degree program, Civil Engineering (CIP Code: 14.0801 / OHE #15032), leading to a Bachelor of Science at Central Connecticut State University.

English – BA - Central CSU [Significant Modification of Courses/Course Substitutions]

RESOLVED: That the Board of Regents for Higher Education approve the modification of a degree program, English (CIP Code: 23.0101 / OHE #00079), leading to a Bachelor of Arts at Central Connecticut State University.

Mathematics – BA - Central CSU [Significant Modification of Courses/Course Substitutions and Addition of a Concentration in Pure Mathematics]

RESOLVED: That the Board of Regents for Higher Education approve the modification of a degree program, Mathematics (CIP Code: 27.0101 / OHE #00084), leading to a Bachelor of Arts at Central Connecticut State University.

### **New Programs**

Counselor Education and Supervision – EdD - Southern CSU

RESOLVED: That the Board of Regents for Higher Education approve the licensure of a program in Counselor Education and Supervision (CIP Code: 42.2899) – leading to a Doctorate of Education at Southern Connecticut State University; and grant its accreditation for a period of seven semesters beginning with its initiation, such initiation to be determined in compliance with BOR guidelines for new programs approved on or after April 3, 2020.

Health Science – AS – Capital CC

RESOLVED: That the Board of Regents for Higher Education approve the licensure of a program in Health Sciences (CIP Code: 51.0000) – leading to an Associate of Science at Capital Community College; and grant its accreditation for a period of seven semesters beginning with its initiation, such initiation to be determined in compliance with BOR guidelines for new programs approved on or after April 3, 2020.

### **Replication of a College of Technology (COT) Program**

Data Science Option – AS – Capital CC

RESOLVED: That the Board of Regents for Higher Education approve the replication of a College of Technology Program in Technology Studies: Data Science Option (CIP Code: 30.7001) – leading to an Associate of Science at Capital Community College; and grant its accreditation for a period of seven semesters beginning with its initiation, such initiation to be determined in compliance with BOR guidelines for new programs approved on or after April 3, 2020.

### **Policy: Extension of Teach Out Deadlines for Discontinued Programs in Cases of Student Hardship**

WHEREAS, CSCU institutions discontinue programs based upon regular review of their viability;

WHEREAS, As part of the discontinuation of programs, institutions set teach out deadlines to ensure enrolled students can complete;

WHEREAS, There are circumstances in which student hardship and mitigating circumstances prevent a student from completing within the specified teach out timeline, therefore be it

RESOLVED, That the Board of Regents for Higher Education approves that the CSCU Provost and Senior Vice President of Academic Affairs will review and grant extensions to the teach out timeline as originally submitted for programs, as appropriate based on student need.

**Delegation of Authority for Awarding Emeritus Status to Administrative Faculty**

WHEREAS, The Agreement between the Connecticut State University Organization of Administrative Faculty and the Board of Regents of Higher Education (“SUOAF Agreement”) Article 15, specifically section 15.9, provides for emeritus status to be awarded to administrative faculty members holding continuing appointment at the University recommending the title who have retired in accordance with the provisions of the State Statutes; and

WHEREAS, The provision further states that emeritus status is awarded by the Board of Regents upon the recommendation by the University President; and

WHEREAS, The Board of Regents delegates this authority and authorizes the University President to award emeritus status in satisfaction of SUOAF Agreement section 15.9; now therefore, be it

RESOLVED, The University President is authorized to award emeritus status to administrative faculty members.

**ACADEMIC & STUDENT AFFAIRS COMMITTEE**

**Policy on College and Reading Success 101**

BOR Vice Chair and ASA Committee Chair provided an overview of the proposed policy College and Reading Success 101. Following her overview, she asked Dr. Francine Rosselli-Navarra, Professor, Department of Psychology/Anthropology at Manchester Community College to provide some additional detail regarding the development of the policy. Faculty Regents Colena Sesanker and David Blitz raised several point of concern. Both Dr. Harris and Provost Jane Gates responded to those concerns indicating that the Board was not getting involved in the specifics of the curriculum, but, rather, setting policy and leaving that to the appropriate faculty committee for their expertise. Upon hearing Dr. Sesanker’s concerns regarding the diversity component, following Dr. Gates’ input, **Dr. Harris proposed a friendly amendment (see the highlighted section of the resolution below. The amendment was moved by Dr. Harris and seconded by Regent Budd, passing by a unanimous vote. The resolution, as amended, was moved by Dr. Harris with a second by Regent Wright and unanimously adopted.**

### **Policy on College and Reading Success 101**

**WHEREAS** the Board of Regents has endorsed the implementation of Guided Pathways practices and completing a First Year Experience course is consistent with these practices and meets all four Guided Pathways pillars: Clarifying academic and career pathways for students, helping students select a plan of study, keeping students on their plan, and creating meaningful learning experiences,

**WHEREAS** the Association of American Colleges & Universities lists the First Year Seminar as one of several High-Impact Educational Practices, which help students become more actively involved in their education and make a noticeable impact on students' engagement in the college, academic success, and sense of belonging in the campus community,

**WHEREAS** in keeping with the Board of Regents directive regarding the Students First implementation of Guided Pathways, Provost Gates charged the First Year Experience work group to “use guided pathways practices and existing expertise in the CSCU community colleges to design and recommend policies and practices that facilitate student retention and completion through the development of a first year experience that provides opportunity for career exploration and leads to the creation of an academic/career plan,”

**WHEREAS** the FYE work group, led by Guided Pathways managers for the Choice Architecture team and the Holistic Student Support Redesign team, and consisting of faculty, staff, and administrators from all twelve community colleges (<https://www.ct.edu/gp/groups>), developed the foundation for College and Career Success (CCS 101), a course informed by Guided Pathways principles and backward designed to focus on outcomes of college success, career exploration, and the development of core general education competencies.

**WHEREAS** the Advising Leads Council, in January 2019, recommended that CCS 101 should be a required course in the General Education proposal,

**WHEREAS** the FYE work group further recommended, in February 2020, that FYE/Student success departments and faculty move the course through their college curriculum approval process, academic programs include this course in their curriculum, and academic administrators support the scheduling and staffing of the course,

**WHEREAS** the Guided Pathways Holistic Student Support Redesign and Choice Architecture teams (<https://www.ct.edu/gp/groups>) reviewed and supported the CCS 101 course proposal and FYE work group recommendations, in February 2020 and May 2020, respectively,

**WHEREAS** research has established that First Year Experience courses must be taken early in a student's academic career to have the highest impact, that the optimal First Year Experience course is a 3-credit stand-alone class, and that all students, even those who are high-performing or transfer students, benefit from establishing a career path as well as learning the academic and personal skills to be successful students and employees,

**WHEREAS** the Holistic Case Management Advising policy of the Board of Regents requires that all students create a personalized academic and career plan,

**WHEREAS** the General Education Core for Connecticut State Community College has been established to include competency requirements as well as a diversity requirement,

**WHEREAS** the learning outcomes of CCS 101 are designed to promote a successful first year, student success, and equity, which are three of the five goals of the Board of Regents, and

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED:** That the Board of Regents for Higher Education directs Connecticut State Community College, in conjunction with the CSCU System Office through the leadership of the CSCU Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic and Student Affairs, to:

- Require all Connecticut State Community College programs of study to include the three (3) credit CCS 101 which is focused on college success and career exploration.
- Require all degree-seeking students to enroll in CCS 101 within their first nine (9) credits.
- Ensure that CCS 101 includes a component that meets the general education core diversity requirement, with the acknowledgement that diversity topics should ideally be embedded throughout the General Education core and across the curriculum, **with the acknowledgement that diversity topics should ideally be embedded throughout the General Education core and across the curriculum.**
- Ensure that CCS 101 fulfills one of the general education core competencies.
- Make recommendations regarding which programs of study might add CCS 101 as an exception to normalization, in accordance with BOR policy.
- Provide guidance regarding which circumstances allow a student to request exemption from taking CCS 101 with final decisions on exemptions made by campus academic leadership.
- Ensure that CCS 101 is regularly updated to align with the latest research and evidence from the field regarding successful first year experience courses, noting that current research demonstrates that the most successful first year experience courses use pedagogies that promote learning-for-application, use equity-minded pedagogies and inclusive formats, give instructors the tools and structural supports to teach effectively, and substantively link the course to other academic courses to improve transfer of learning.
- Provide administrative oversight of CCS 101 to ensure consistency of delivery and outcomes.

### **Information Item – PA 12-40 Progress Report**

Dr. Harris noted that the Committee received a Progress Report on PA 12-40 (**see Attachment C hereto**) and indicated that the report indicates progress is being made.

### **AUDIT COMMITTEE**

Audit Committee Chair Elise Wright reported that the Committee met on Tuesday, June 2nd. The agenda included an update on the audit of the CT Community Colleges for fiscal year 2019 and planning for the fiscal year 2020 audit for the CT Community Colleges, CT State Universities, and Charter Oak State College.

The Committee's discussion included management and our independent auditors, Grant Thornton, who provided us with an overview of financial statements, results and the audit status. At the time of the Committee meeting, the Community College audit was substantially complete and statements were subsequently issued on June 10.



Grant Thornton identified one item as a significant deficiency, which was: failure to close the books in a timely and accurate manner. Grant Thornton recommends the CT Community Colleges formalize closing processes to ensure institutional knowledge is retained and applied consistently. This finding did not result in a modified opinion on the financial statements.

As previously discussed, the delay in closing the year and issuing financial statements was primarily driven by the uniform chart of account change which was implemented effective July 1, 2018. The chart change required CSCU to make some unforeseen adjustments to closing procedures to ensure the integrity of the financial statements. Staff turnover and IT upgrades occurring near the fiscal year-end also contributed to the delay in the completion of the financial statements.

The accounting team has worked through the challenges and implemented or modified formalized closing procedures as recommended by the auditors. Management does not anticipate delays in next year's audit.

Grant Thornton then discussed planning for the fiscal year 2020 audit and preliminary fieldwork, which is currently underway.

Management discussed that Grant Thornton's contract expires after the fiscal year 2020 audit, and CSCU will issue an RFP for fiscal year 2021.

## **AUDIT COMMITTEE**

No report.

## **FINANCE & INFRASTRUCTURE COMMITTEE**

Finance & Infrastructure Committee Chair Richard J. Balducci noted that the Finance and Infrastructure Committee met on June 10 and covered two items.

The first item was an information item that identified several instances where the system had approved reducing fees pertaining to on-line coursework. These small fee adjustments in favor of students were authorized by the resolution establishing fees for the coming year, and reflect the changed circumstances of the Coronavirus pandemic.

The second item on the agenda was **approval of spending plans for the universities, the community colleges, and Charter Oak.**

Regent Balducci noted spending plans proposed by the institutions reflect the challenging and uncertain times we all face. In particular, these budgets all made major assumptions about

enrollment and operating costs that appear realistic based on what we know today, but may prove wrong. As a result, the staff included in the plan the commitment to return to the Board in October to review actual enrollment and revenue levels for the fall, to identify specific actions being undertaken by campuses to achieve spending reduction targets included in the plans, and to propose deeper contingency plans to the extent that the state of our budget and operations demand.

The spending plans include funding to pay for SEBAC raises of 5.5% for unionized workers. These raises are anticipated to cost a total of \$22 million, including \$12.5 million at the universities, \$9 million at the colleges and \$250,000 at Charter Oak.

The spending plans as approved by the committee will require drawdown of reserves in both the universities -- \$33 million out of \$139 million available -- and the colleges -- \$15 million out of \$32 million available. Charter Oak has proposed a balanced budget.

The Universities' budgets reflect enrollment declines of -10% at three universities and -2% at Eastern. Additionally, the universities have assumed lower occupancy in dormitories than normal, between 71% and 83% of current capacity. The resulting revenue declines are partially offset by spending reductions in a year that includes SEBAC raises of \$12 million, fringe benefit growth, and new and uncertain costs related to social distancing and public health requirements.

The Community College spending plan reflects flat enrollment compared to FY 2020. While this produces flat tuition revenue, state assistance, including fringe benefit support, is rising by about \$30 million in FY 2021, offsetting expenditure growth across the system of \$21 million. This expenditure growth would have been considerably higher in a normal year, with SEBAC wages and fringe benefit increases alone accounting for \$23 million, plus a budgeted increase of \$12 million for COVID-related costs funded with federal funds.

The budget for the colleges also includes changes to reflect the establishment of Connecticut State Community College. This entails reducing the "System Office" budget by \$32 million, establishing a new CSCC budget of \$35.7 million, and reallocating shared services costs to campuses, along with block-grant funds to support those costs. Campus budgets are growing by 4%.

The Community College budget controls spending to this level by requiring a "holdback" from each college budget of 2%, plus a reduction of 7.5% at CSCC. The plans for accomplishing these reductions will be provided to the Board in October.

The Community College budget also includes use of \$3 million in System reserves to support implementation of PACT in the fall. This funding level may require that the campuses reduce minimum grants or otherwise pro-rate, but is expected to cover most or all of the tuition and fees of eligible students. This program will help ensure that enrollment is as strong as possible in the fall.

Following discussion among Board members, including input by CFO Ben Barnes, **the resolution below, was unanimously approved on a motion by Regent Balducci as seconded by Regent Budd.**

### **FY2021 Budget/Spending Plan - Connecticut State Colleges & Universities**

WHEREAS, Pursuant to the provisions of Section 10a-8 of the Connecticut General Statutes, "...the Board of Regents for Higher Education shall be deemed the budgeted agency for the Connecticut State University System, the regional community-technical college system and Charter Oak State College. The Board of Regents for Higher Education shall develop a formula or program-based budgeting system to be used by each institution in preparing operating budgets..."; and

WHEREAS, Each college, university, the System Office and the newly established Connecticut State Community College have all submitted a budget for FY 2021 to the Board of Regents summarized in Attachment A; and

WHEREAS, The Board of Regents approves an overall spending level for all funds except for federal and private grants, bond funds, and intra/inter agency funds; and

WHEREAS, Each institution shall adhere to the approved budget; and

WHEREAS, The FY2021 Budget/Spending has been developed based on the approved state budget and state appropriations to CSCU dated June 5, 2019; and

WHEREAS, The institutional budgets have incorporated information provided by the Governor's office/OPM, the Office of the State Comptroller, legislative pronouncements, and agreements (including provisions of SEBAC); and

WHEREAS, The institutions all face considerable uncertainty, particularly regarding enrollment, revenue levels and the costs of operating under applicable public health restrictions, as a result of the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, and in response the institutions have prepared austere plans built on conservative assumptions; and

WHEREAS, Nonetheless the FY2021 Budget presents a significant loss position for Community Colleges and the four universities; and

WHEREAS, Management continues to implement the Students First plan, which, in conjunction with other anticipated savings and demographic trends, is expected to allow the system to return to sustainable, balanced operations over the next several years; and

WHEREAS, The Board of Regents has reviewed and discussed the budget proposal and determined that the losses reflected in the spending plans submitted by the Community Colleges are so great as to jeopardize the financial viability of the system, particularly if enrollment is unexpectedly lower; and

WHEREAS, The institutions, in recognition of the financial peril from the pandemic, have included spending reduction targets in their spending plans and will provide detailed reductions to meet those targets once campus reopening plans have been approved and enrollment data is available; therefore, be it

RESOLVED THAT, The Board of Regents for Higher Education approves the FY2020 Budget/Spending Plan as summarized in Attachment A; and be it further

RESOLVED THAT, The Board of Regents for Higher Education requires that each institution shall provide to the Finance and Infrastructure Committee, at its October 2020 meeting: (1) a detailed plan describing how each institution will meet any spending reduction targets or holdbacks included in this approved plan; (2) a new projection of revenues and expenses for FY 2021; and (3) further contingency plans that will reduce spending by 5% from the spending levels approved herein.

*Attachment A referenced in the above resolution is attached hereto as Attachment D.*

## **HUMAN RESOURCES & ADMINISTRATION COMMITTEE**

No report.

## **EXECUTIVE SESSION**

**On a motion by Chair Fleury, seconded by Vice Chair Harris, the Board voted unanimously to go into Executive Session at 11:34 am for discussion concerning pending litigation and the appointment or evaluation of a public officer or employee.**

At the request of Chair Fleury, Alice Pritchard, Andrew Kripp, and Ernestine Weaver remained with the Board.

**The Board came out of Executive Session at 12:05 pm at which time** Chair Fleury noted there were not votes taken in executive session and that discussion was limited pending litigation and the evaluation of a public officer or employee.

**ADJOURNMENT**

**Chair Fleury declared the meeting adjourned at 12:05 pm**

Submitted,

Erin A. Fitzgerald, Director of Board Affairs  
Secretary of the CT Board of Regents for Higher Education

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**CT BOARD OF REGENTS FOR HIGHER EDUCATION**  
**REGULAR MEETING – June 18, 2020**  
Remote Participation

# Attachments to Minutes and/or Meeting Handouts/ Presentations

Posted online at <http://www.ct.edu/regents/minutes>

- A. Opportunity to Address the Board** – communication(s) received
- B. President Ojakian’s prepared remarks** (*in his absence, shared by Dr. Alice Pritchard, Chief of Staff*)
- C. 12-40 Progress Report – staff report** information item
- D. Spending Plan (Attachment A to Resolution)**
- E. Fee Reductions in Response to Pandemic –staff report** information item
- F. Communication to NECHE** from President Mark Ojakian and President David Levinson responding to public comments NECHE received regarding the ongoing implementation of Students First.



**From:** [Peter and Patty Cappetta](#)  
**To:** [Fitzgerald, Erin A](#)  
**Subject:** The State of Connecticut Board of Regents meeting this week (online classes/tuition)  
**Date:** Tuesday, June 16, 2020 11:05:06 AM

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To The State of Connecticut Board of Regents,

I would like to air my concern for SCSU's decision to move to online classes for another semester. While I am cognizant of the reasons for the adjustment in the schedule (Covid-19), the University has not addressed tuition in the face of this pandemic. I, for one, believe that the tuition should be adjusted in some way. You must admit that each and every student who attends SCSU and the other state schools is being short changed.

I am a retired parent sending two students to college this fall. I get no assistance for the tuition at SCSU.

I know that I am not the only parent feeling financially victimized by the situation. Others have spoken up about the effects on the learning process. Circumstances being as they may, an adjustment in the tuition is appropriate at this time. I think this Board of Regents has a responsibility to discern what can be done to alleviate some of the burden for parents financially since online classes are not what was originally planned for and paid for.

Please be in touch with me at 203-584-1922 so I can discuss this with you further. I would be interested in your thoughts.

Sincerely,

Peter Cappetta



## **President Ojakian - Comments for June 18, 2020 BOR meeting**

### **Open with Racial Unrest commentary**

- Good morning, I want to start by acknowledging external events, which have a deep and profound impact on our system and institutions.
- Throughout the country, we have seen in recent weeks the effects of generations of systemic racism on individuals, communities, states and our nation. The murders of George Floyd, Rayshard Brooks, and Ahmaud Arbery; are the latest examples of racism that has origins in our nation's founding and has never been rectified.
- We - as a system and as individuals - must redouble our commitment to social justice and recommit to the hard work of fundamental change.
- As the state's public institutions of higher learning, change starts with us. Our community colleges alone serve two thirds of the state's undergraduate students of color.
- Yet even within a system that aims to be an on-ramp to upward mobility, students of color fall behind at a disproportionate rate. The COVID-19 crisis has further magnified the racial and socioeconomic gaps that exists in Connecticut. We can and must do better.
- I know that the commitment to equity runs deep among our faculty and staff and on this Board.
- But the national calls and pleas to increase equity remind of the urgency of our work to improve opportunities for marginalized students.
- That work will continue to be my north star – and I thank the Board for continually making it a top priority.

### **NVCC President DeFilippis' retirement**

- As you are all aware, this is the final Board meeting for President De Filippis. Daisy has served NVCC since 2008 with distinction, steadfast dedication to students, and a sense of humor.
- Naugatuck Valley takes pride in its historic role as an engine for change in the lives of our students and in the communities it serves. Through your strong relationships in the community and the state, you have promoted educational, labor, economic and community development initiatives to better serve your students.
- Daisy, as president of the Connecticut State Colleges and Universities, it is my sincere pleasure and great privilege to bestow upon you the title of President Emeritus with all associated rights and privileges. It is with deep appreciation and respect for your distinguished leadership, that I confer this recognition. Emeritus status is an honor of the highest order and reserved for those whose service is exemplary.
- Daisy, your leadership and your tireless advocacy on behalf of our students, certainly places you in this category. You have served as a role model and a mentor to countless students, faculty and staff. The positive influence you have had on so many individuals, myself included, will be remembered and treasured long after your retirement from the presidency of Naugatuck Valley Community College.
- Congratulations and best wishes to you for many years of a healthy and happy retirement!

## Students First Overview

- On June 5, we submitted our progress report and transition plan to NECHE. The report addresses questions raised in NECHE's July 2019 letter as well as providing a progress report since our last visit in April 2019.
- A final section in the report provides a working timeline that outlines at a high level the steps we are taking to accept our first student application to CSCC in October 2022 and enroll students in the semester starting in August 2023.
- As the report points out, although it is critical that we reduce administrative costs, there is little hope of sustainability if we do not provide better outcomes for our students, which in turn lead to better financial stability.
- We are working to reduce administrative costs, capture the savings from attrition, and establish shared services to centralize, streamline, and improve the efficiency of routine functions across the 12 institutions.
- We are making changes in key areas to address challenges and barriers to student success and build a stronger college for Connecticut. We are implementing nationally proven best practices in student success through initiatives such as Guided Pathways and other strategies recommended by Achieving the Dream to bolster student supports and address our equity gap.
- A single college, rooted in equity, removes persistent barriers to historically underserved students by delivering the wraparound services each student needs to reach their goals when and where they need them, including food security, tutoring, transportation, tech support, childcare, affective engagement, and everything else today's students need to succeed. These services, provided both centrally by the college and locally by the campuses, ensure students have consistent but individualized services.
- We also had an opportunity to respond to public comment that had been submitted to NECHE. Our response focused on 5 topics: the accreditation of the 12 community colleges during the transition, activities undertaken during the pandemic to provide short term relief to students, the scope and authority of the BOR, the future academic and student affairs organizational structure, and the size and complexity of the future college structure. We have provided a copy of that response...
- As I mentioned at the last meeting, Dr. Levinson and the team at the new college are available to meet with interested groups to provide more information, particularly about the draft organizational charts, and to gather input into the future structure. I encourage those who have questions, ideas and concerns to reach out and schedule time for discussion.

## REOPEN CT Update

- It has been a busy month since we met last serving as state lead on the implementation of the higher education ReOpen planning.
- The University Presidents and the Community College Regional Presidents led statewide Steering Committees to review preliminary campus plans, look for opportunities to replicate strategies, identify human resource, fiscal, facilities or other challenges and prepare reports that document our plans for repopulation, monitoring, containment and closure per the Governor's Taskforce.
- These reports along with all of the ReOpen CT higher education reports and updates can be found on our website. In addition, I am issuing weekly updates to our CSCU community in hopes of keeping people informed as we move forward.
- Importantly the guiding framework for reopening in the fall was issued on May 29<sup>th</sup> and all of our schools are working on their plans now for submission by August 1.
- Our colleges and universities must grapple with everything from retrofitting offices and classrooms and determining teaching modalities to determining how and whether athletes will compete this fall and whether childcare centers can be opened to the public.
- Given the uncertainty of the virus, these are not easy plans to make and I want to thank the campus leaders for their hard work and dedication to their students, faculty and staff. In addition, as you will hear later in the Finance Committee report, the virus is having a profound impact on our budgets, particularly at the universities. These will be challenging fiscal times ahead and I trust everyone will be innovative, flexible and understanding as schools make difficult decisions to address their budget shortfalls.
- It is important to note that, while Connecticut is a small state, there is tremendous diversity among our institutions of higher education and the higher education re-open guidelines are not a one-size-fits all approach.
- I know that all of our higher education leaders appreciate the ability to take their own institutional needs into account, while working within a framework developed by public health experts and the information gathered through our Steering Committee process.
- Our goal remains – the health of our students, faculty, staff, and everyone who works on our campuses. At the same time, we must ensure that students and the state gets the high quality educational opportunity they deserve.

# PA12-40 Report

## Spring 2020

### Background/Context

#### Factors Impacting Developmental Education in Connecticut Community Colleges

To understand the impact of PA12-40 on higher education in Connecticut, it is essential to be aware of the factors that led to the enactment of this legislation, especially those factors that impact the effectiveness of the remedial/developmental coursework and support provided by the state's community colleges. There are many factors that have the potential to influence the effectiveness of developmental education for students in Connecticut's community colleges. Some factors likely to impact student success are difficult to measure, such as individual motivation, family expectations, and peer support. Other factors can be accurately measured, and their substantial impact on academic success is well documented. In study after study of college performance, family income and prior academic preparation are two interrelated factors that have been shown to correlate with overall student achievement in postsecondary education. Not surprisingly, these two factors have been shown to have a considerable influence on the academic achievement of students in Connecticut's community colleges. One reason that prior academic preparation is particularly influential is due to the combined effect of the open admission policy of these colleges and the large academic achievement gap between the state's urban and suburban school districts.

#### Open Door Admissions

In 1965, Connecticut's community colleges were established by legislation (PA 65-330) designed to expand educational opportunities for the citizens of Connecticut. A key feature of this expansion of access to higher education was the open-door admission policy of Connecticut's community colleges (see Ct.edu website). The open-door admission policy offers acceptance to anyone with a high school diploma or GED. The significance of an open-door admissions policy is that, unlike most public and private four-year colleges and universities with competitive admissions policies, colleges with an open-door admissions policy have no influence on determining whether applicants are sufficiently prepared to complete a college degree in the areas of study they offer. Many of the measurements of accountability for student progress that make sense at a competitive admissions college do not match well with the

circumstances of the open-door admission college. For example, when students fail to complete degrees at a college with admission requirements, it is fair for an accreditor to expect that the college should have been aware of its entering students' needs and invested in the necessary resources to meet those needs. At an open-door admission institution, however, the college has far less information about the academic preparation of each new student cohort, and – especially at community colleges with limited resources – limited ability to invest in sufficient resources to support students with the least preparation and highest need for support.

### Public School Achievement Gap

For many years, Connecticut has held the unenviable distinction of being a state with one of the largest academic achievement gaps in the nation. The results of standardized tests such as Smarter Balanced, CAPT and CMT provide clear evidence that this achievement gap has persisted for decades. For example, in school year 2010-11, the year before PA12-40 was enacted, less than 11% of high school sophomores in the Hartford Public School system met the State's reading goal on the Connecticut Academic Performance Test (CAPT) while over 68% of students in neighboring West Hartford achieved this level of reading competency. In Bridgeport that year, 11% of students met the reading goal while in neighboring Trumbull the rate of students meeting this goal was 62%. New Haven (16%), Waterbury (14%) and New London (9%) students met the reading goal at considerably lower rates than students in the neighboring school districts of Woodbridge's Region 5 (71%), Watertown (61%) and Waterford (60%). CAPT testing evidence for these intractable gaps stretch back to at least 2001 and continue to be shown by Smarter Balanced results today. This year's Smarter Balanced test results show that Connecticut's achievement gap correlates with income levels, with students from across the state who are eligible for free lunch demonstrating competency in English and math at much lower rates (35% and 26%) compared to students who are not eligible (71% English and 62% math). The inequities in achievement also fall along racial and ethnic lines with Connecticut's white students achieving competency at a rate of 69% in English and 62% in math, African-American students at a rate of 34% in English and 23% in math, and Hispanic/Latinx students at a rate of 36% in English and 27% in math (<http://edsight.ct.gov/SASPortal/main.do>). Compared to students from middle- and high-income families who demonstrate competency in reading, writing and math during high school, underprepared students from lower income families are more likely to attend their local community college. As a result, a disproportionate number and percentage of new students with considerable academic deficiencies enroll in Connecticut community colleges instead of four-year public or private colleges. Evidence for this enrollment pattern includes the high percentage of community college students who are eligible for Pell

Grants and over 30 years of data on placement testing results consistently showing that more than 60% of entering Connecticut community college students require remedial support in reading, writing or math.

### Remedial/Developmental Education

Early in their history, Connecticut community colleges faced the difficult challenge of balancing their responsibility for delivering college-level quality coursework to all students and providing access to higher education for the many entering students who lacked the academic skills required to succeed in college-level work. A college whose mission is to prepare students for transfer and employment has the responsibility to deliver a curriculum that meets regional and national standards for postsecondary education. Therefore, that college cannot maintain its integrity and simply lower the performance standards of its curriculum so that unprepared students can earn credits and graduate. The responsible alternative is to devote institutional resources and expertise to assist unprepared students to develop the skills they need to participate fully in the educational opportunities available in college. In response to the evidence that many entering students lacked the reading comprehension, written communication and quantitative thinking skills to succeed in college-level courses, the community colleges began to offer *remedial or developmental-level* instruction in the skills of reading, writing and math for students who did not develop competency in these essential areas during their 12 years of public education. At first, one level of remedial coursework was sufficient to bring the majority of underprepared students to a level of academic competency that would allow them to be successful in college courses. However, over time increasing numbers of students who lacked even basic reading and arithmetic skills received high school diplomas and began enrolling in their local community colleges. The colleges responded by offering remedial coursework and support over two or more semesters for students who needed extensive academic support.

During the 1980's, Connecticut colleges began testing students' reading, writing, and mathematical competencies at the time of admission to ensure all students were placed into classes that would prepare them to be successful in college-level work. By 1988, the Connecticut Community College System determined that placement testing was an essential part of serving students and convened the Community College Basic Skills Council to recommend uniform testing processes at all community colleges. Initially a paper-and-pencil assessment (NJBST) was used, and when computerized placement testing became available, this group recommended College Board's Accuplacer as the placement instrument for all Connecticut community colleges. Both the NJBST and Accuplacer assessments have consistently shown that the majority of students entering Connecticut's community colleges do not possess the reading, writing, and math skills to begin their studies in college-level English and math coursework.

## Economics & Educational Resources

In 2011, financial pressures related to a nationwide recession led more middle-income families to choose the cost-effective community college option for their children, and unprecedented numbers of students enrolled in Connecticut's community colleges. This increase in enrollment overwhelmed the resources of the colleges and led Higher Education Commissioner Michael Meotti to question whether Connecticut's community colleges should continue to serve underprepared students at all ("Community College Open Door Already Partly Closed" CT Mirror 5/24/2011) when better prepared students were unable to enroll in the then overbooked colleges.

At the same time, across the nation, politicians – most with little experience in higher education – began to depict remedial coursework as an expensive obstacle for unprepared students to overcome rather than necessary support for them to be successful. Confusing correlation with causation, organizations such as Complete College America actually blamed enrollment in remedial coursework – and not the students' lack of basic academic skills – as the reason why unprepared students were not as successful as students who entered college with adequate reading, writing and math skills. Ignoring the overwhelming evidence that increasing numbers of high school graduates clearly lacked the necessary skills to be successful in post-secondary education, politicians in several states questioned the value of teaching unprepared students the essential skills that they had failed to develop in high school. In Connecticut, members of the State Legislature began to examine the ways in which remediation was carried out at the State's twelve community colleges.

Fortunately, unlike lawmakers in other states, who attempted to legislate the elimination of developmental courses and support in college, Connecticut legislators led by Beth Bye spoke with experienced educators from the community college system before finalizing a draft of what would become PA12-40. During the spring of 2012, PA12-40 was passed in an effort to reduce the amount of time unprepared students would be required to participate in remedial instruction. The legislation also addressed concerns about the limitations of standardized placement testing, in particular the use of a single placement instrument to assess student preparedness for college. And, the legislation supported proactive steps to reduce the need for remediation in college by calling for Connecticut high schools to do a better job of addressing their students' academic deficiencies before they graduated.

## PA12-40

The key features of PA12-40 stated that beginning no later than the fall semester of 2014:

- 1) Colleges would use more than one method for determining student placement in initial math and English courses (multiple measures).
- 2) Colleges would offer an embedded support option that would enable eligible students to complete the gateway English and/or math courses during their first semester of attendance.
- 3) Colleges would be prohibited from offering a sequence of multiple levels of developmental courses.
- 4) For students with very low skills, colleges would make transitional level programs available free of charge (the legislation designated additional funds for this purpose).
- 5) To reduce the demand for remediation in college, by 2016 Connecticut high schools would develop a process to assess their students' level of readiness in time to offer remediation before these students earned their diplomas.

### Implementation

PA12-40 would require a major overhaul of the existing approaches to remediation at most Connecticut community colleges because many of the community colleges offered a sequence of two or more levels of remedial coursework in reading, writing, and mathematics to address the wide range of academic deficiencies presented by entering students. Initially, there was widespread confusion over how to comply with this law in the weeks and months following the passage of the bill. The bill included new unfamiliar terminology; for example, the familiar term *developmental* instruction was replaced with *intensive* instruction. Questions arose about *embedded instruction* and placement processes that used *multiple measures*. Prior to 2012, none of the colleges had been offering embedded support in college-level courses in part due to what had been considered the prohibitive expense associated with this type of instruction (e.g., increased faculty costs for smaller class sizes and additional instruction time). PA12-40 not only required colleges to develop embedded curriculum, but the new bill provided additional funding to make this type of instruction possible. Questions also concerned the bill's one-semester of intensive instruction. Student advocates wanted to know if struggling students would be allowed to repeat an intensive course if they were unable to develop the competencies to pass the course in just one semester. There were also questions about funding the transitional-level programs for students with very low literacy and numeracy levels because these courses were not financial aid eligible. In addition, faculty from science, social science, humanities, and other academic departments expressed concern that students moving into their courses from accelerated developmental programs would not be prepared to keep up with the pace and reading expectations of college coursework.



To address these questions and improve transparency and communication, the PA12-40 Advisory Group, with representation from across the system, was convened in November 2012. One of the first tasks of the PA12-40 Advisory Group was to produce a Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) document to answer key questions about PA12-40 and how it would be implemented.

One of the major decisions for responding to PA12-40 involved the process of establishing new curricula for transitional, developmental, and embedded math and English courses. Some saw this as an opportunity to unify the developmental curriculum of all the colleges while others were concerned that imposing a single curriculum would reduce the effectiveness of instruction for some groups of students. Fortunately, the newly created PA12-40 Advisory Group recognized that imposing a single approach at every college would be less likely to effectively address the needs of students in 12 different communities. Rather than using a top-down approach that would limit valuable faculty input, the Advisory Group recommended to the Vice Presidents that each college be allowed to fully engage its faculty and its local decision-making processes to create solutions that best meet the needs of its students. In this way, hundreds of faculty members were able to participate and contribute their expertise to develop curricula that addressed the needs of their students within the boundaries set forth by the law.

#### College Access Challenge Grants (CACG)

To inform the development of the curriculum that would respond to PA12-40, the BOR awarded College Access Challenge Grants to statewide math (Math Issues Group) and English (CCET) committees to research remediation efforts throughout the system and to make recommendations for effecting the changes required by PA12-40. These two committees – each open to members from every community college in the state – had ready access to information on current developmental and gateway course learning objectives and each college's Accuplacer placement scores as well as detailed information about developmental and gateway level curricula being used throughout the system. Throughout the spring and summer of 2013, the members of CCET and the Math Issues Group worked diligently to address the changes required by PA12-40. Each group examined the charge of PA12-40 to determine its impact on current approaches to basic skills instruction across the system. This examination involved surveying all twelve colleges to identify current practices with regard to instruction and placement. The work of CCET and Math Issues during this period established the foundation for curriculum development and placement practices for each of the twelve schools to build upon.

## Connecticut Coalition of English Teachers (CCET)

Over eight months in the spring and summer of 2013, the Steering Committee of CCET collaborated at the state level while its individual members worked with their local English departments to realize the outcomes of the College Access Challenge Grant (CACG). The group began by identifying the competencies for entry into each of the levels described in PA12-40. Focus on these competencies grounded CCET's work on outcomes and placement. Subsequently, CCET members agreed on learning outcomes for developmental, embedded and gateway English courses, confirming that embedded and gateway English courses must have the same learning outcomes. The group also developed a course description of a six-credit intensive-level course (ENG096) with common learning outcomes for reading and writing. CCET's report included recommendations for the development of placement processes that incorporated the use of multiple measures as required by the legislation. Recommendations included the option of a challenge essay to supplement results from standardized instruments (SAT and Accuplacer).

## Math Issues Group

Math Issues reviewed the alignment of the topics in both the Elementary Algebra and Intermediate Algebra courses. As a result, the scope and sequence of topics were carefully assessed and more abstract topics (e.g., factoring polynomials) were moved to Intermediate Algebra and more foundational algebraic topics (e.g., solving simultaneous equations) were moved to Elementary Algebra. All 12 community colleges reached 100% agreement on the learning outcomes of both Elementary Algebra and Intermediate Algebra. In 2018-2019, Math Issues conducted a survey of the 12 community colleges and found that the 100% alignment of the courses was still in place across the math curricula of the colleges. The members of the Math Issues Group also identified a range of Accuplacer scores for initial student placement in intensive-level, embedded-level, and college-level math courses.

## Curriculum Design and Implementation

To address the development of embedded curriculum in the area of English Composition, some colleges used the ALP model that was developed by Peter Adams and colleagues at Baltimore County Community College. In this model, students who placed below college-level English would attend the same class as those who tested into college-level English. However, the former group would attend an additional hour after class in which they would receive supplementary instruction and feedback on their progress. Other schools used a model of embedded support in which students who tested just under college-level would be taught together but receive additional instruction time (ranging from 1 to 3 hours) with their professors each week throughout the semester. Each college could determine how much

additional time was optimum with most settling on an additional three hours per week. However, financial and logistical concerns also factored in the determination of the amount of additional time at some colleges.

### Course Placement Instruments

For over a decade, Accuplacer by The College Board had been used by all of the community colleges to place entering students in their initial math and English courses. Although Accuplacer was the system's common instrument, each college determined its own cut-off scores for placement in college-level and developmental coursework. In May 2013, the BOR policy requiring colleges to use Accuplacer results to place students in their initial courses was relaxed to allow colleges to develop their own placement procedures to meet the multiple measures requirement of PA12-40. During this period, some colleges developed behavioral questionnaires to supplement Accuplacer scores. For one year, one college stopped using Accuplacer results altogether and conducted interviews with all entering students to determine their placement in math and English. Other placement measures included using students' SAT/ACT/GED scores, overall high school GPA, and student writing samples. During 2013 and 2014, Connecticut's public schools were planning to administer the competency test Smarter Balanced to all students in their junior year of high school. This instrument promised to provide diagnostic information on the academic skills of students. The use of junior year Smarter Balanced results was also proposed as a multiple measure for determining math and English course placement at the colleges. However, while the Smarter Balanced instrument was adopted for use with students from third to eighth grade, parental objections prevented it from being administered to high school students. Instead, beginning in March 2016, all high school juniors would be required to take the SAT. In 2018, The College Board released a new version of Accuplacer – Accuplacer Next Generation – that included significant changes to content, question format, and score ranges. CCET and CMAC thoroughly reviewed this instrument and revised their placement recommendations accordingly. In 2019, the Test Administrators Council recommended that an electronic bridge be developed between the BOR and the State Department of Education to obtain SAT scores of students who apply to the community colleges. Later that year, the community colleges adopted a uniform policy to accept AP test scores of 3 or higher for college credit.

### **Impact of PA12-40: Results**

To examine the impact of changes related to PA12-40, this section will compare the performance of two entering student cohorts. The pre-PA12-40 cohort is made up of first-time students who entered a Connecticut community college in the fall semesters of 2011 and 2012. The post PA12-40 cohort is

composed of first-time students who began their studies in the fall semesters of 2015 and 2016 after changes made in response to PA12-40 had been fully implemented. Each cohort is divided into three subgroups based on their Accuplacer results. The first subgroup (Subgroup I) is composed of students whose Accuplacer results place them slightly below college-level coursework. Before the passage of PA12-40, these students would have been required to pass a developmental-level course to be eligible to take college English and math. Post PA12-40, most of these students are eligible to enroll in a college-level course with embedded support. The second subgroup (Subgroup II) is made up of students whose placement results were significantly below the cut-off for college-level coursework. Prior to PA12-40, some of these students would have been required to take one semester of developmental-level coursework and many would have been required to complete two semesters of coursework before being eligible to take college-level courses. Post PA12-40, these students would most likely begin their studies in one-semester intensive-level courses. The third subgroup (Subgroup III) is composed of students whose placement results indicate the most extreme level of academic deficiency. Many of these students lack the ability to do basic arithmetic and/or lack fundamental reading comprehension skills. Prior to PA12-40, most of these students were required to successfully complete two semesters of remedial coursework. Post PA12-40, these students are placed into the free transitional-level of instruction and support.

For all entering students at all academic levels, the impact of PA12-40 has been positive. Clearly, the students whose placements results put them just below college-level coursework (Subgroup I) have benefitted most from the new curriculum. Prior to 2014, these students, would have been required to complete one semester of developmental coursework, but now many are enrolling and completing college-level English and math courses during their first semester of attendance. In addition, being eligible to take ENG101 during their first semester also enables these students to take college-level coursework in other subject areas, which can further accelerate their progress toward earning a degree.

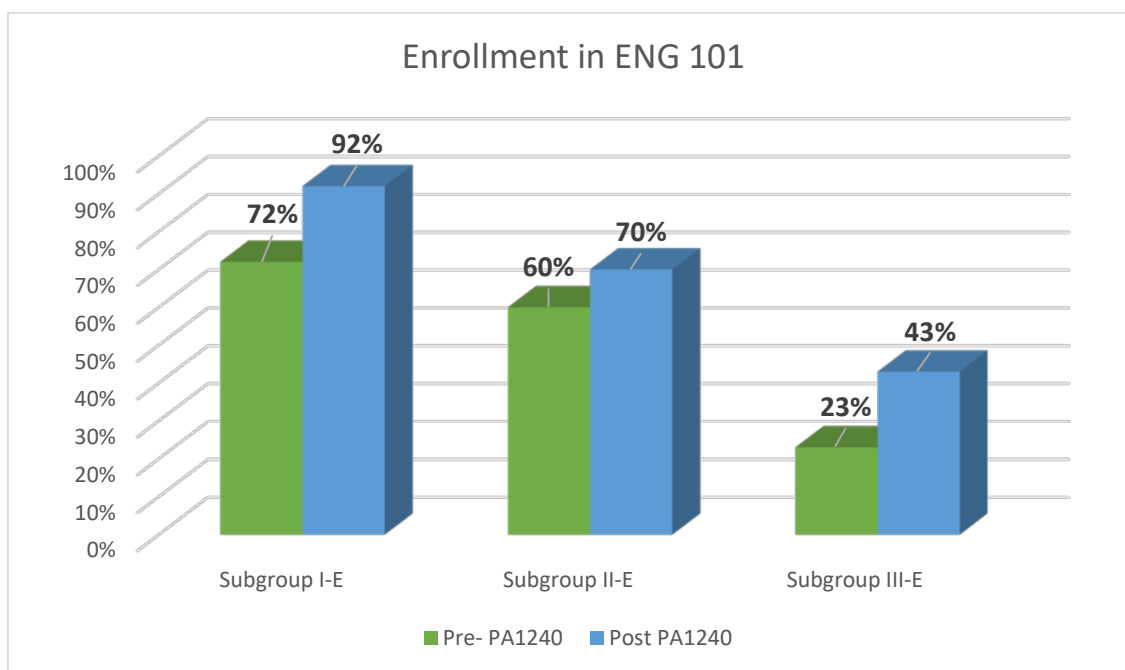
### College English Enrollment

Achieving eligibility to enroll in college-level English Composition (ENG101) is an important milestone for a college student. A student identified as prepared for the challenges of ENG101 has demonstrated the ability to read and write sufficiently to participate fully in college-level coursework. At most colleges, eligibility for ENG101 is a prerequisite for enrollment in introductory courses in most subject areas. Consequently, many students cannot begin taking the courses that will count toward graduation until they are eligible to take ENG101.

The rates that students in all three English subgroups enroll in English 101 have increased since the implementation of PA12-40. Prior to the passage of PA12-40, 72% of entering students in Subgroup I-E enrolled in college-level Composition (ENG101) within three years of attendance. This number

jumped to 92% when PA12-40 curriculum and support took full effect. The percentage of students in Subgroup II-E enrolling in ENG101 increased by 10 percentage points from 60% pre- PA12-40 to 70% post PA12-40. And the lowest skilled students in Subgroup III-E nearly doubled their rate of eventually enrolling in ENG101 from just 23% before PA12-40 to 43% after PA12-40 took full effect (see figure 1).

**Figure 1: All Subgroups ENG101 Enrollment**

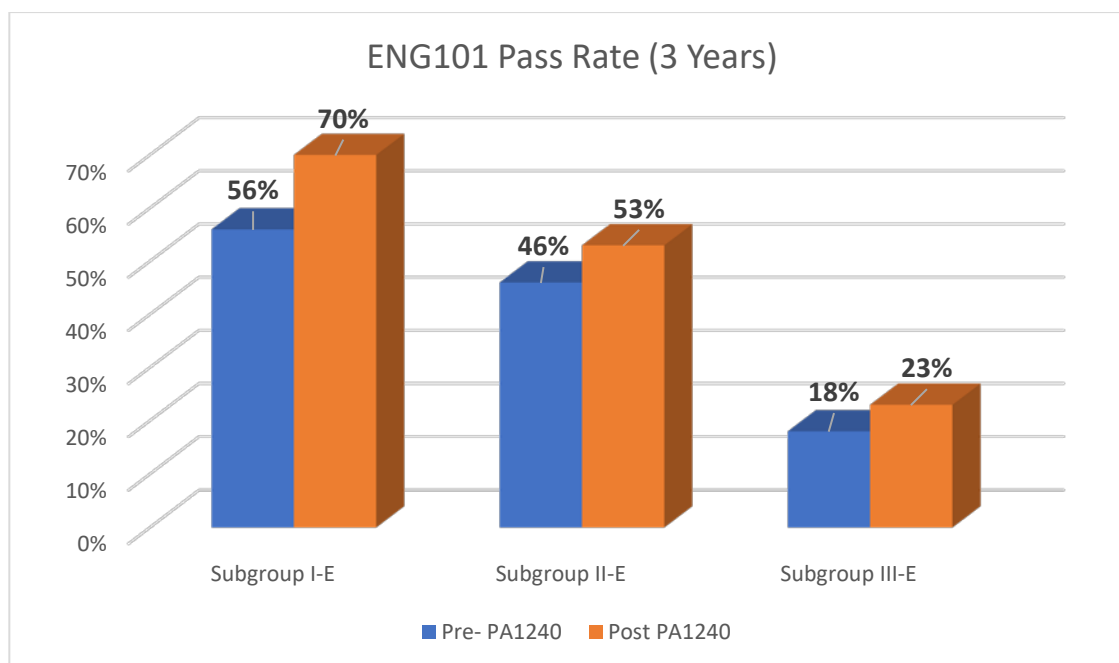


### College English Pass Rate

While being eligible to enroll in ENG101 is an important progress marker for college students, passing this key course is essential for continued progress towards a degree. Prerequisites for many liberal arts and second-year program courses require that students have passed ENG101. Given that the majority of these courses require extensive writing, students must possess the skills associated with passing ENG101 in order to be successful. These skills not only include the ability to write grammatically correct sentences that express ideas clearly, but also the ability to organize information to communicate a complex line of thinking over several pages of text. The ENG101 pass rates of students in all three subgroups increased following the implementation of PA12-40. Pass rates for students in each cohort were tracked over three years and pass rates for all three subgroups improved under PA12-40. Prior to the passage of PA12-40, the pass rate (over three years) for students in Subgroup I-E was 56%. With PA12-40 in full effect, the pass rate of students in Subgroup I-E increased by 14 percentage points to 70%. The pre- and post PA12-40 ENG101 pass rates for students in Subgroup II-E increased more moderately by 7

percentage points from a pre-PA12-40 rate of 46% to a post PA12-40 rate of 53%. The ENG101 pass rate for students in the lowest skilled subgroup (Subgroup III-E) increased by 5 percentage points from 18% pre-PA12-40 to 23% post PA12-40 (see figure 2).

**Figure 2: All Subgroups ENG101 Pass Rate**



The average time required for developmental students to pass English 101 has declined significantly since the implementation of PA12-40. Prior to the implementation of PA12-40, students in Subgroup I-E took an average of one full academic year to pass college-level English Composition. After PA12-40 was implemented, the average time to passing ENG101 was cut to just one semester for this subgroup. The implementation of PA12-40 also reduced time to passing ENG101 for students in Subgroup II-E with most of these students successfully completing ENG101 in their first academic year.

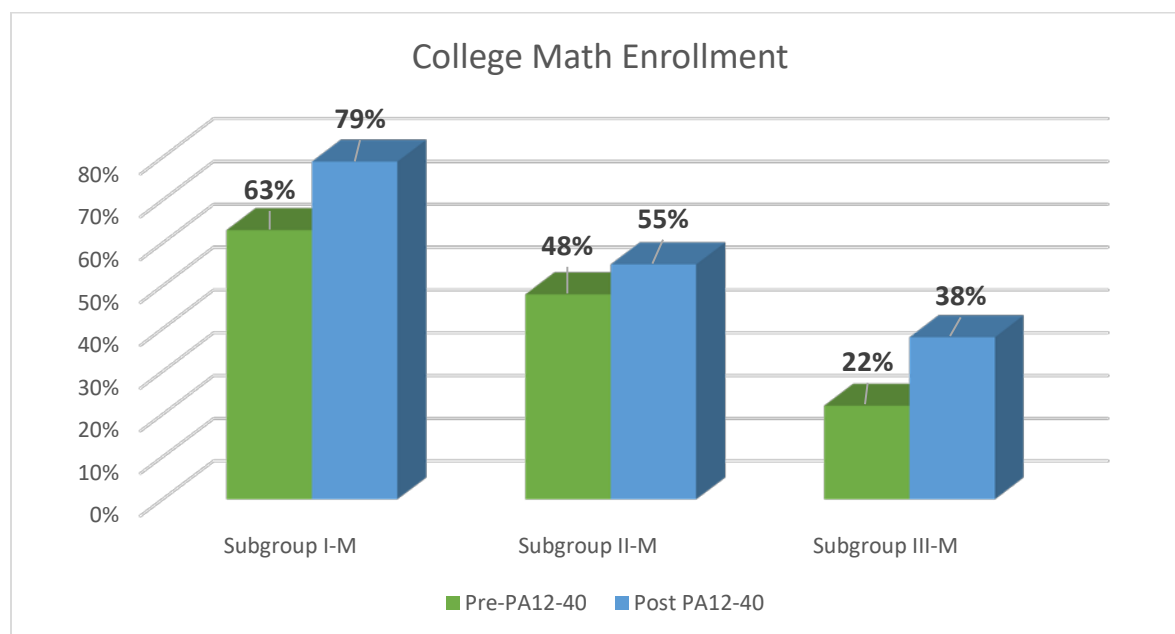
English 101 GPA has not improved for developmental students when they take college-level English since the implementation of PA 12-40. GPA in ENG101 for post PA12-40 Subgroup I-E students is flat compared to Subgroup I-E students from the pre PA12-40 cohort. Grades for Subgroup II-E students (whose scores are well below the college-level cutoff) show a slight trend downward. This trend is understandable given that students whose placement results indicate significant need for remediation are entering college-level English after fewer semesters of preparation. Despite slightly lower grades in English Composition, these students are still performing well enough to pass their college-level English course and progress toward degree completion.

The implementation of PA12-40 has had no discernable effect on fall-to-spring retention of students in Subgroup I-E and Subgroup II-E. Approximately 60% of students in Subgroup I-E in both cohorts returned for the subsequent spring semester. Students in both cohorts of Subgroup II-E returned for the subsequent spring at a rate of approximately 55%. For students in Subgroup III-E, however, retention to the spring semester improved from 41% for the pre-PA12-40 cohort to 48% for the post-PA12-40 cohort.

### College Mathematics Enrollment

Achieving eligibility to enroll in college-level math is another important milestone for college students, especially for those who are pursuing careers in STEM fields. At most colleges, eligibility for Intermediate Algebra is a prerequisite for enrollment in most introductory physical science courses, such as chemistry. As seen in English, the rates that students in all subgroups enroll in college-level math have increased since the implementation of PA12-40. Prior to the passage of PA12-40, 63% of entering students in Subgroup I-M enrolled in college-level math within three years of attendance. This number rose to 79% when PA12-40 curriculum and support took full effect. The percentage of students in Subgroup II-M enrolling in college-level math increased from 48% pre- PA12-40 to 55% post PA12-40 while the rate of Subgroup III-M students enrolling in college-level math improved considerably by 16 percentage points from just 22% before PA12-40 to 38% after PA12-40 took full effect (see figure 3).

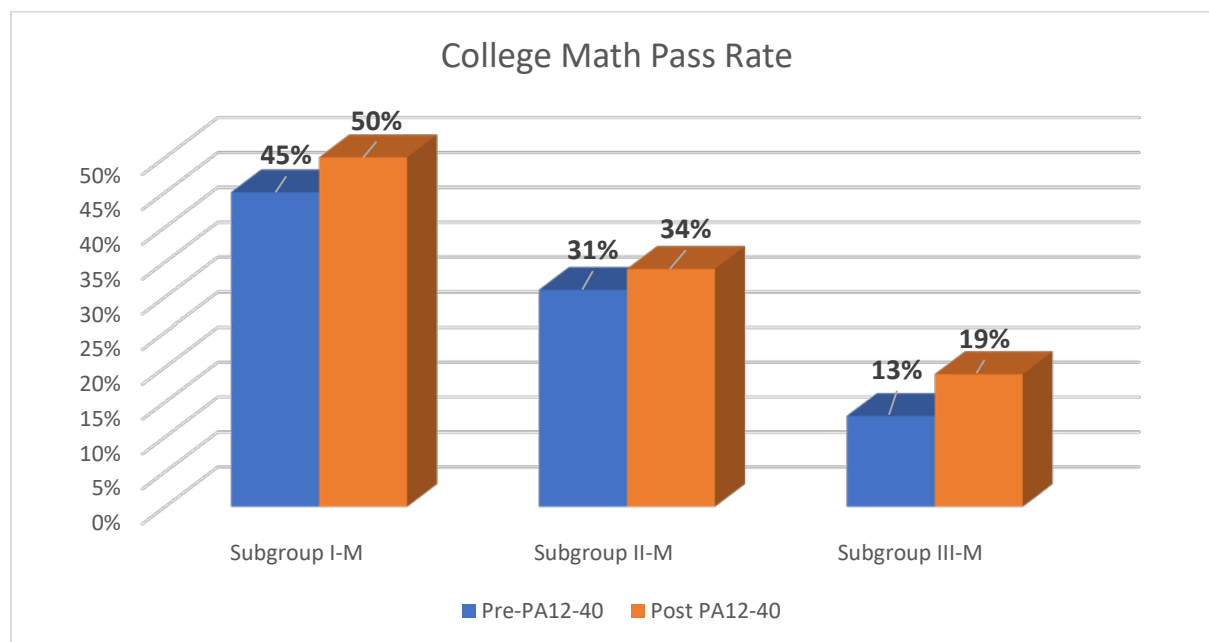
**Figure 3: All Subgroups College Math Enrollment**



## Passing College-level Mathematics

The college-level math pass rates also increased following the implementation of PA12-40. Tracked over three years, pass rates for all three subgroups improved under PA12-40. The post PA12-40 college math pass rate for students in Subgroup I-M increased 5 percentage points from a pre-PA12-40 rate of 45% to a post PA12-40 rate of 50%. Prior to the passage of PA12-40, the pass rate (over three years) for students in Subgroup II-M was 31%. With PA 12-40 in full effect, the pass rate of students in Subgroup II-M improved to 34%. The college math pass rate for students in the lowest skilled subgroup (Subgroup III-M) increased by 6 percentage points from 13% pre-PA12-40 to 19% post PA12-40 (see figure 4).

**Figure 4: All Subgroups College Math Pass Rate**



## PA12-40 Student Progress to Degree

The ultimate goal of PA12-40 was to enable more students to earn college degrees. So, while the steps taken in response to this legislation have led to more students completing their English and math requirements over a shorter period of time, it is important to evaluate the impact of PA12-40 curricular and support changes on degree attainment. Long term student success can be measured by the number of students who earn an associate degree over a given period of time. One measure used in IPEDS reporting involves determining how many first-time students in an incoming cohort graduate within 150% of the expected time it would take a student earning 30 credits per year to complete a degree. The 150%



completion marks are different for a four-year university and a community college. For a community college student, the expected time to complete the requirements of an associate degree is two years, so 150% of this period is three years.

A more accurate measure of community college student accomplishment may be *success rate*, which is a combination of graduation and transfer-out rates. Students who graduate or transfer to a four-year school within 150% of the expected completion time are counted as successes. For community colleges, the *success rate* is the percentage of students in a cohort who either graduate or transfer to a four-year college or university within three years of entering college. This metric has been used in our Accountability Reports to the Higher Education Coordinating Council for some time, with the rationale that it is a better measure of performance for non-selective two-year schools than graduation rate alone.

The *success rate* for developmental English students just below the testing cutoff for college-level English (the top half of Subgroup IE) has improved with the implementation of PA12-40. In the pre-PA12-40 cohort, these students graduated or transferred to a four-year school at a rate of 19%. With the full implementation of PA12-40, the success rate for the corresponding group of students rose to 21%. Credit accumulation also increased for students entering college at this level of proficiency. The pre-PA12-40 student cohort earned 17.82 credits over their first two years of attendance while the post-PA12-40 cohort earned an additional three credits (20.72) over the same period. Credit accumulation among students in the other subgroups remained flat or showed a very small increase.

In addition, the gap in *success rate* between college-ready English students and those testing just below the college-level English cutoff narrowed with the implementation of PA12-40 from 6% to 3%.

However, for the majority of developmental students, those in the lower half of Subgroup IE, as well as Subgroups IIE and IIIIE, success rate and credit accumulation remained unchanged among the pre- and post- PA12-40 cohorts.

## CONCLUSIONS

The implementation of PA12-40 was a major undertaking that required extensive individual and collaborative efforts across the system over the past six years. The data presented above provide clear evidence that these efforts have benefited students throughout the state. All available evidence indicates that the effects of implementing PA12-40 legislation have been positive for helping new students to enroll in and pass intensive, embedded, and gateway courses in math and English. Compared to students in the pre-PA12-40 era, today's students of all ability levels are enrolling in math and English gateway courses sooner, and higher percentages of these students are successfully completing these important courses than did students in the pre-PA12-40 era. The positive effects of PA12-40 implementation extend to students

who enter the community college system with a range of academic abilities. As indicated above, each of the six English and math subgroups showed improvement as a result of implementation.

While we have evidence that PA12-40 implementation has helped students to complete key English and math courses, the available evidence does not show improvement in the three-year graduation rate for students post PA12-40. However, three-year graduation rates are often a poor measure of our students' achievement, given that the majority of Connecticut community college students do not maintain full-time status throughout their college careers and would not be expected to graduate within three years. Due to the recency of full PA12-40 implementation, there is insufficient data on the four-year and five-year graduation rates of post PA12-40 students. As stated above, however, an increase in the combined graduation and transfer rates (*success rate*) of some developmental students provides some evidence of positive long-term impacts of PA12-40 on student achievement.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

The implementation of PA12-40 has demonstrated that with adequate support, community college students can accelerate the pace at which they develop the reading, writing, and math skills necessary to participate in college-level studies. However, resources impact the extent to which individual colleges are able to make intensive and embedded courses and support available for their students. Due to resource considerations, some of the colleges have not been able to make a seat in an embedded support course available to every student who qualifies for one. Further, resource considerations have impacted the amount of additional time for embedded support as well as the availability of academic support in the forms of in-class tutoring and technology. We recommend that the resources allocated for PA12-40 be used to ensure that every student who is eligible for intensive or embedded coursework and who registers in a timely manner is able to enroll in those courses during the first semester of attendance. We further recommend that resources be allocated to make best practices such as in-class tutoring available to students at all colleges.

The research contained herein allows for very broad conclusions about the overall effectiveness of the restructured approaches to remediation that have been brought about by the implementation of PA12-40. One of the benefits of fostering local decision-making in the implementation of PA12-40 is that colleges were able to try out and evaluate different approaches to facilitating student achievement. Over the first years of implementation, colleagues shared the pros and cons of each method, and eventually the system saw a convergence of approaches to educating students in math and English. Throughout our work, the PA12-40 Advisory Council has recommended that long-term, in-depth studies of various forms of instruction and instructional support be carried out in order to determine if some approaches are more effective than others. However, while conducting this type of research on an ongoing basis is important, it

is essential to underscore that this research may not identify one method or combination of methods as superior. Various instructional methods may work equally well, and some methods may be particularly effective with students from particular academic, cultural, and socioeconomic backgrounds.

We also recommend continued research and exploration of placement tools and procedures. For over fifteen years, Accuplacer has been the placement measure common to all of the community colleges. In 2018, a new version of Accuplacer (Next Generation) was released, and the previous version became unavailable. Over the past two years, CCET has expressed concerns about the usefulness of the writing component of Accuplacer Next Generation, and some English departments are questioning whether the community colleges should continue to use this product. We recommend that additional research be conducted to assess the usefulness of Accuplacer Next Generation for placing students in their initial English and math courses. In response to direction from the Board of Regents, over the past four years, the PA12-40 Advisory Council has been attempting to identify a limited number of placement methods that qualify as approved multiple measures. While we understand the benefits of limiting the number of placement tools used throughout the system, we also believe that colleges should continue to explore the efficacy of alternative approaches to placement, especially those that do not rely solely on standardized multiple-choice instruments. To that end, we recommend increased collaboration among the colleges and the State Department of Education to facilitate the use of SAT results, Advanced Placement scores, and high school GPA in the placement process for entering community college students. The COVID 19 crisis necessitated utilization of SAT and GPA as primary placement measures and the use of both will provide data on the value of each as a placement measure. Second, we recommend the continued availability of non-standardized assessment measures such as writing samples for English placement. Finally, we recommend funding and support to develop opportunities for college faculty to collaborate with high school faculty to better prepare students for college-level work to realize the PA12-40 goal of reducing the need for remediation in college.

It is also critical that future research examine the effects of PA12-40 implementation on long-term student success, especially student progress towards an associate degree and eventual transfer to a four-year college or university. For decades, colleges have framed student preparedness for college-level work based on their demonstrated reading, writing, and mathematical skills. Consequently, the majority of resources for remediation have focused on these areas. As long as students struggled to pass these courses, which are typically prerequisites for other college-level coursework, helping students to be successful in math and English was considered essential and even sufficient for promoting college success in general. However, recent studies of remediation have shown that accelerating student progress in math and English does not always impact their accumulation of credits toward completing a degree over time. Therefore, it is important to assess whether the methods currently used in Connecticut's community

colleges to accelerate student progress in math and English have an enduring impact on degree completion among students who enter college with lower levels of English and math proficiency.

In the area of curriculum, we recommend that the levels of coursework outlined in PA12-40 continue to be made available to serve students of various levels of academic preparedness. The legislature recognized that our students enter with varying levels of readiness, and our multiple measures approach to placement has allowed us to effectively identify students and place them in the appropriate course level, either transitional, intensive, embedded, or college ready. The intensive level of instruction is particularly important to preserve. Time is an important resource for students who are building essential academic skills. English research indicates that many intensive level students register for the college-level course after a single semester of remediation, but not all students enter our colleges prepared to make the leap directly into an embedded curriculum. We strongly recommend continuation of this model of offering intensive, embedded, and college-level curriculum as the best strategy to meet the needs of our diverse student population.

Finally, we recommend that it is essential that faculty play a central role in all future curriculum planning and development. One important lesson of PA12-40 is the critically important part that faculty involvement played in the development of solutions that promoted effective teaching and learning within the parameters of the legislation. Faculty expertise and collaboration in the CCET, Math Issues, and Math Basic Skills statewide groups as well as the extensive contributions of faculty in the Math, English, and Developmental Studies Departments on individual campuses were largely responsible for the successful implementation of PA12-40. Because the members of these groups worked with students every day, they were able to draw upon their expertise to make informed decisions about the most effective ways to meet students' learning needs. Although faculty were not consulted when legislators developed this bill, it was the faculty who made it work to serve the best interests of our students. Therefore, we believe that changes of this magnitude should engage faculty involvement from the outset.

**Connecticut State Colleges & Universities  
CONSOLIDATED  
FY2020-21 Operating Budget**

	TOTAL REVENUE	PS	FRINGE	OTHER EXPENSES	TOTAL EXPENDITURES	DEBT SERVICE	OTHER CONTINGENCIES	TRANSFERS IN / OUT	ADDITIONAL FUNDS	NET
<b>State Universities</b>										
Central Connecticut State University	238,771,855	108,859,752	71,561,398	60,637,567	241,058,717	(8,836,368)	5,180,519	(1,057,289)		(7,000,000)
Eastern Connecticut State University	141,314,823	60,779,559	42,476,533	35,837,841	139,093,933	(6,937,812)	-	(1,057,289)		(5,774,211)
Southern Connecticut State University	225,701,730	105,688,257	70,143,948	55,761,893	231,594,098	(7,970,572)	-	(1,057,289)		(14,920,230)
Western Connecticut State University	130,466,021	58,478,407	39,561,328	31,353,703	129,393,438	(5,567,329)	-	(1,057,289)	245,004	(5,307,031)
CSU System Office	8,537,867	4,941,852	3,396,015	4,429,156	12,767,023	-	-	4,229,156		(0)
<b>State Universities Total</b>	<b>744,792,295</b>	<b>338,747,827</b>	<b>227,139,222</b>	<b>188,020,160</b>	<b>753,907,209</b>	<b>(29,312,081)</b>	<b>5,180,519</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>245,004</b>	<b>(33,001,472)</b>
<b>Community Technical Colleges</b>										
Asnuntuck Community College	22,488,231	11,138,223	8,122,951	3,016,408	22,277,582	n/a	445,552	(844,557)	460,774	272,418
Capital Community College	36,758,057	21,108,691	13,997,330	4,651,760	39,757,781	n/a	795,156	(1,417,090)	240,605	(3,381,053)
Gateway Community College	65,409,066	34,176,093	23,222,550	12,151,369	69,550,012	n/a	1,391,000	(3,156,682)	1,814,136	(4,092,492)
Housatonic Community College	46,752,041	24,582,466	16,736,295	8,248,267	49,567,028	n/a	991,341	(2,351,736)	1,420,438	(2,754,945)
Manchester Community College	57,549,009	28,964,701	21,985,510	6,838,730	57,788,941	n/a	1,155,779	(2,494,567)	1,246,329	(332,391)
Middlesex Community College	26,560,211	13,832,641	9,650,737	3,932,386	27,415,763	n/a	548,315	(1,245,677)	525,452	(1,027,462)
Naugatuck Valley Community College	65,565,171	32,951,100	23,635,616	7,657,045	64,243,761	n/a	1,284,875	(3,016,050)	1,602,137	1,192,372
Northwestern Community College	17,380,507	9,209,192	6,556,749	9,353,382	25,119,323	n/a	1,098,036	(590,689)	249,534	(6,981,935)
Norwalk Community College	52,844,994	28,384,129	17,164,309	1,927,216	47,475,654	n/a	353,863	(2,518,162)	1,179,948	4,384,989
Quinebaug Valley Community College	18,088,800	9,595,182	6,383,048	2,284,630	18,262,861	n/a	365,257	(648,099)	349,756	(107,146)
Three Rivers Community College	39,045,642	20,481,338	13,379,275	6,098,830	39,959,443	n/a	799,189	(1,909,708)	944,849	(1,079,471)
Tunxis Community College	40,135,629	20,559,155	14,500,867	6,255,142	41,315,164	n/a	826,303	(1,524,820)	941,554	(936,498)
CCC System Office	2,563,737	1,563,130	1,000,607	290,210	2,853,947	n/a	(3,000,000)	290,210		(3,000,000)
CSCC	14,834,577	8,968,881	5,865,696	23,812,082	38,646,659		2,889,170	22,462,082	1,350,000	2,889,170
<b>Community Technical College Total</b>	<b>505,975,672</b>	<b>265,514,922</b>	<b>182,201,540</b>	<b>96,517,458</b>	<b>544,233,920</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>9,943,836</b>	<b>1,034,455</b>	<b>12,325,512</b>	<b>(14,954,445)</b>
<b>Charter Oak State College</b>	<b>18,247,785</b>	<b>8,708,895</b>	<b>6,154,622</b>	<b>3,397,476</b>	<b>18,260,993</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>(13,208)</b>
<b>Board of Regents</b>	<b>770,029</b>	<b>408,341</b>	<b>361,688</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>770,029</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>
<b>GRAND TOTAL CSCU</b>	<b>1,269,785,782</b>	<b>613,379,985</b>	<b>415,857,071</b>	<b>287,935,094</b>	<b>1,317,172,151</b>	<b>(29,312,081)</b>	<b>15,124,355</b>	<b>1,034,455</b>	<b>12,570,516</b>	<b>(47,969,125)</b>

**ITEM****Fee Reductions in response to Pandemic****Overview**

On February 6, 2020, the Board of Regents adopted a resolution that said, in part, that “the President of CCSU in facilitating Board-approved policies, may make limited and necessary adjustments to tuition and fees to conform with these policies, provided that the adjustments shall not increase the combined cost of tuition and fees as established by the BOR, so as to not increase costs to students, and that said adjustments will be promptly communicated to the Finance and Infrastructure Committee of the Board for their review”

This authority has been utilized several times recently to allow several universities to adjust fees for on-line learning. These fees reductions were approved based on the fact that they would not result in a significant revenue loss to the universities while they would simplify and lower the costs borne by students taking on-line classes in the summer and fall of 2020.

This information item satisfies the requirement that such changes be promptly communicated to the Finance and Infrastructure Committee of the Board.

**Fee Reductions**

The following fee reductions have been approved by President Ojakian

1. CCSU: Due to COVID 19 pandemic, CCSU has temporarily modified the Tier II eLearning Registration Fee for the Summer 2020 from a \$50 per course fee to a one-time charge of \$50 regardless of the number of Online classes taken per student.
2. CCSU: Due to COVID 19 pandemic, CCSU has delayed the implementation of the \$25 increase to the Orientation Fee from \$125 to \$150 from 7/1/2020 to 7/1/2021.
3. CCSU: Due to COVID 19 pandemic, eliminate all online fees, normally charged as \$50 per online course, and in favor of consistency, charge the PT online students the same registration fee as PT on-ground students (\$58/UG, \$65/GR student, per term). This would create an unfavorable impact to the University of approximately \$50K for the fall semester and something smaller for the spring.
4. CCSU: Eliminate the difference between the Out of State eLearning rates from the Out of State On Ground Rates by the values below for UG and GR.

<b>Undergraduate:</b>	<b>FY21</b>
	<b>Current</b>
Out of State - UG - Onground	\$581
Out of State - UG - eLearning	\$608
<b>Onground vs eLearning Diff</b>	<b>(\$27)</b>

<b>Graduate:</b>	<b>FY21</b>
	<b>Current</b>
	<hr/>
Out of State - GR - Onground	\$728
Out of State - GR - eLearning	\$767
	<hr/>
<b>Onground vs eLearning Diff</b>	<b>(\$39)</b>

The financial impact of bringing them in line based on the estimated credit hours in our FY21 Spending Plan is \$37K for the whole year.

5. WCSU: Due to COVID 19 pandemic, WCSU has temporarily modified the Tier II eLearning Registration Fee for the Summer 2020 from a \$50 per course fee to a one-time charge of \$50 regardless of the number of Online classes taken per student.
6. WCSU: Due to COVID 19 pandemic, WCSU will eliminate on-line fee for all of 20-21.

No action is required on these fee reductions unless the Board elects to override any of these fee reductions. Staff will provide a revised fee schedule to the Board and the campuses before July 1.

06/10/20 Finance and Infrastructure Committee  
 06/18/20 Board of Regents



**Connecticut State  
Colleges & Universities**

Dear NECHE Commissioners,

Thank you for the opportunity to respond to public comments regarding the ongoing implementation of Students First. Rather than going through a point by point refutation, we thought it most helpful to address the themes raised in the remarks in the hope of definitively resolving inaccuracies that persist. We have addressed these types of questions in the past, particularly those raised by the Faculty Advisory Committee in their semiannual reports to the Board of Regents. We are committed to transparency and have provided information on our workgroups and implementation activities on our website ([www.ct.edu/consolidation](http://www.ct.edu/consolidation)) so that interested parties can participate, speak with leaders and monitor progress. We have also offered opportunities for discussion at the local level as new policies or initiatives have been proposed so that faculty, staff and students can ask questions and provide feedback. We will continue to be available for constructive discussions and welcome the opportunity today to address ongoing concerns.

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## **Progress towards Connecticut State Community College jeopardizes the individual accreditation of all twelve community colleges.**

The Board of Regents (BOR) is unequivocal in their commitment to preserve and sustain the individual accreditation of the community colleges prior to consolidation. College chief executive officers continue to maintain management and decision-making authority, including financial decision-making, for their institutions. To ensure that there is no misunderstanding, reporting lines for the chief executive officers will remain distinct and separate from the interim leadership of Connecticut State Community College prior to consolidation. Commitment to this point has been reiterated by the Board of Regents during the initial approval of Students First and in the revised plans and is addressed in detail in the progress report submitted to the Commission on June 5, 2020.

Public comments indicated that prioritization of Additional Responsibility (AR) assignments by the Connecticut State Colleges and Universities (CSCU) System Office have jeopardized individual college accreditation. Current collective bargaining agreements specify that AR assignments “shall be for the purpose of fulfilling the mission goals and priorities of the college and System as determined by the employer.” When collective bargaining units recalled faculty working on Students First committees, those assignments had to be replaced. Individual campus leaders were not only operating within their authority



under current collective bargaining agreements but also ensuring a commitment to align assignments in support of the strategic plan laid out by the governing board.

Additional comments expressed concern regarding the BOR approval of the General Education core for Connecticut State Community College. In the initial Students First proposal, the BOR called for the development of a common general education core for the single college. This development does not impact the current accreditations of the 12 colleges or the current curriculum process. The General Education committee was formed in May 2018 with 12 elected members, one from each college and six members of the transitional steering committee, Students First Academic and Student Affairs Consolidation Committee (SF ASA CC). From May 2018 to December 2019, the General Education workgroup developed and refined a proposal for a common General Education core for Connecticut State Community College. The full committee with 12 college representatives reviewed public responses to an initial draft and made substantial revision based on faculty feedback. In addition, each campus was offered a listening session to further discuss the proposal which occurred at a majority of colleges. After considerable public comment and additional revision to align with a previously developed transfer core, the final proposal passed through the transitional governance structure and was sent to each college for feedback and an endorsement vote using current local governance procedures. Faculty input on the committee post public comment led to the addition of an embedded diversity requirement to the core. This requirement will be further defined by a faculty diversity committee. The original proposal, the feedback and changes were included in the proposal forwarded for endorsement and the original timeline was extended a year to allow for full public comment and governance review.

The Board of Regents built on the process used successfully with the system-wide Transfer and Articulation Policy (TAP) degrees, to solicit input and ensure participation in these decisions. The BOR maintains the governance authority to direct a common general education core. It was faculty developed and faculty at all the colleges had multiple opportunities to give feedback as well as the opportunity to endorse or reject the final proposal through local governance channels. In the end, two colleges voted for the proposal; one against; and nine abstained from voting.

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## **Actions taken by CSCU as a response to the COVID-19 pandemic have been confused with Students First.**

Although each of the 12 community colleges in Connecticut is individually accredited, they are part of a single system and governed by a single board. There are and have been since the inception of the Connecticut State Colleges and Universities (CSCU) Board of Regents (and before that, the Connecticut Community Colleges Board of Trustees), common system-wide policies and procedures. Two of the examples presented in public comment, the Credit/No Credit and Placement procedures were part of the CSCU response to the COVID-19 pandemic. It is important to note that in both cases, the CSCU Provost requested recommendations from relevant faculty experts. She acted quickly and within her

authority to respond to immediate needs during an unprecedented crisis and provide procedures to support students in the current semester. The actions were temporary, fell within the purview of the CSCU Provost and fall outside of the scope of Students First.

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## **Scope of authority and governance: Faculty have not been afforded the opportunity for engagement in the process and input has been ignored.**

From the launch of Students First, the Board of Regents and CSCU leadership have been committed to a participatory process. The leadership of the Students First work, in particular, the members of the College Consolidation Implementation Committee (CCIC) and the chairs of the SF ASA CC and the Guided Pathways Task Force (GPTF) have been uniformly insistent that the Students First work be developed by the faculty, staff, and administrative experts in CSCU who have dedicated their careers to higher education.

A shared governance workgroup, with elected members from each college, was formed in 2018 and charged by the CSCU Provost to craft “a proposal on how to operationalize. . . communication, collaboration, and mutual accountability between administration, faculty, staff, and students which advances excellence in the operation of CSCU institutions and ultimately to provide to the single college its governance structure.” The work of the Shared Governance committee is ongoing; they are finalizing a proposal to share for public comment and college feedback and to submit to the transitional governance bodies: SF ASA CC and the CCIC. The Board of Regents is particularly focused on shared governance and ensuring that, per Standard 3.15, faculty have a substantive voice in matters of educational programs, faculty personnel, and other aspects of institutional policy that relate to their areas of responsibility and expertise. Now that CSCC’s President, CAO, and CFO are identified, they can be added to the work group and the proposal can continue to be finalized after receiving public comment.

While union leadership recommends no participation and many colleges recalled elected representatives, the Students First Academic and Student Affairs Consolidation Committee (SF ASA CC) remains a broadly representative committee, meeting the spirit of shared governance tenants. Indeed, despite union leadership calls to cease participation in Students First work, many faculty and staff, including those recalled by their campus senates, opted to continue their participation. As the General Education example illustrates, feedback from faculty is consistently sought, valued and most often acted upon. No feedback has been ignored, but to be clear, some requests have been denied, namely those that call for discontinuation of Students First in full, and those that entail a major shift in the transitional process that has been established by the BOR and the executive leadership of CSCU.

As stated in #2 above, all 12 community colleges are governed by a singular Board of Regents. While faculty and staff at the colleges develop curriculum and implement policy, the authority to approve curriculum and set policy resides exclusively with the BOR. For example, in its initial approval of Students

First and its subsequent reaffirmation, the BOR called for the alignment of curriculum across the 12 colleges. As a result, the curriculum for Connecticut State Community College is currently being developed and aligned by faculty discipline groups. To encourage broad involvement from faculty throughout the system, the curriculum alignment leadership team sent a request this Spring to full- and part-time faculty members inviting them to participate in their discipline-specific alignment work groups. In just two weeks, this outreach yielded 198 faculty interested in taking the lead in curriculum alignment. Recognizing that this work is difficult to complete during the academic year, funding was allocated to support faculty work over the summer.

While we are disappointed that union leadership is urging faculty to abdicate their curricula and governance responsibilities, in direct contradiction to NECHE standards 3 and 4, and that this has led some faculty to withdraw from important curricular and governance discussions regarding Connecticut State Community College, we continue to solicit input and continue this work with the many faculty who are willing. Our hope is that as the new college leadership team improves capacity to support this work, additional faculty and staff will volunteer and elected committee members will reconsider their actions and rejoin the conversation. We further trust that the unions will support those members who continue to engage in this work as they have indicated they would in a letter to membership.

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## **The proposed organizational structure marginalizes decision making, relationships and students.**

The draft organizational chart was presented in a statewide webinar on May 15, 2020. A process is now underway to solicit feedback on the draft, which aligns with our values of shared governance. We anticipate changes will be made based on that feedback in the same way that collaborative change based on assessment and feedback will continue to improve the structure of Connecticut State Community College perpetually

The structure outlines the roles, responsibilities and relationships that support Connecticut State Community College. Designed to both meet NECHE standards and provide a solid infrastructure for quality assurance, the organizational chart for CSCC consolidates current leadership from the 12 colleges into a single institution. It balances the need for administrative specialization, which is required of a large academic institution, with the maximization of student-facing positions to ensure a high-quality educational experience. Benchmarked against many prominent community colleges, Connecticut State Community College ensures appropriate administrative capability without organizational bloat through a relatively flat structure with, in many cases, two steps from campus staff to the president's cabinet.

As a matrixed organization, Connecticut State Community College places great emphasis on relationships. For example, academic administration is housed at the college office whereas faculty are housed at a campus. At the college level, faculty will be organized first by academic discipline and then by Area of

Study. All curriculum and related decisions will be developed within this structure – primarily composed of faculty – led by the CSCC Associate Vice President of Academic Programs and Curriculum under the direction of the CSCC Provost. This structure supports a single catalog of programs and courses and ensures communication among discipline faculty across the campuses. Faculty leads and program coordinators on the campuses perform functions that are best met locally, such as the hiring and evaluation of adjunct instructors. Far from marginalizing faculty role in decision-making, this structure requires that faculty are intimately involved in both local and global decision-making for the college.

Above all else, the new structure is a full redesign centered on equity for students, ensuring that each gets the support needed to achieve both short-term and long-term goals. To that end, the structure provides faculty more time to work with students and with other faculty in their discipline across the state, and with more opportunities to advance the quality of teaching and learning at all locations. With the centralization of many administrative tasks, staff on campuses will have more time for direct student interaction as well. Connecticut State Community College is designed to meet the needs of 21st century students and meet them equitably.

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## **The size and complexity of the proposed institution is unprecedented.**

While Connecticut State Community College will be the largest college in New England, it will be less than half the size of the country's biggest community college. Georgia, Louisiana and Wisconsin have all launched community college consolidations. Earlier this spring, Minnesota announced plans to merge five community colleges to address persistence and completion concerns. The most recent merger of the seven colleges in the Dallas County Community College District into a single accredited institution serving 83,000 credit students and 25,000 continuing education students is larger than Connecticut's consolidation. Far from being unprecedented, the pace of consolidation is only likely to increase in a post-COVID environment with less public financial support for higher education.

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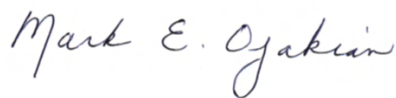
We certainly acknowledge that Students First is a significant organizational change and have made every effort to engage faculty and staff in this work in a way that is transparent, respectful and inclusive as we move forward. We have worked diligently to minimize any risks associated with its implementation while also staying focused on the reasons for change.

Students First was conceived and remains focused on increasing success for all students. The indisputable fact stands that after years of incremental attempts at reform, individual community college completion rates remain unacceptably low. Even more troubling is Connecticut's 29-point achievement gap in college attainment between white and minoritized students—the third highest in the nation. Students First is a research-informed initiative. Connecticut State Community College is built on best practices that have

worked in other states, resulting in dramatic improvements in degree completion, particularly for minoritized students, economic mobility and increased talent pool.

We look forward to the opportunity to meet with the Commission later this month.

Sincerely,



Mark E. Ojakian,  
*CSCU President*



Dr. David Levinson,  
*Interim CSCC President*