



Elgin  
Community  
College

# Performance Report

**Fiscal Year 2023**

(Academic Year 2022-2023)

**Submitted by**  
**The Office of Planning and Institutional Effectiveness**  
**Elgin Community College**  
**District 509**

**September 2023**

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# INTRODUCTION

## Purpose

According to policy, the Elgin Community College Board of Trustees annually reviews key indicators or metrics that demonstrate progress in meeting ECC Strategic Plan goals. These indicators serve as guideposts to ensure that Elgin Community College, through its decisions and actions, remains accountable to its Mission of *improving people's lives through learning*.

The Performance Report is the College’s annual summary of these indicators. Prepared at the end of each fiscal year, the Performance Report provides a high-level snapshot of how the College delivered its Mission during the prior year. Each indicator in the report aligns to a College Goal. In turn, the College Goals align to the Key Imperatives of the ECC Strategic Plan. The table below displays the alignments of these various components.

STRATEGIC PLAN KEY IMPERATIVES	COLLEGE GOALS	PERFORMANCE INDICATORS
 Teaching and Learning Excellence	Completion Mastery of Learning Outcomes	4-Year Completion/Transfer Rates General Education Learning Outcomes
 Lifelong Connections	Enrollment Credit Accumulation	Unduplicated Student Headcount Total Credit Hours Enrolled
 ECC Experience	Student Experience Employee Experience Community Experience	Student Satisfaction PACE Climate Survey Adoption of Community Vibrancy
 Fortify Our Future	Student Affordability Institutional Financial Health College Fundraising Operational Efficiency	Average Net Price Percentage of Actual Budget Spent Unrestricted Funds Raised Adopt JIRA and Teamwork Ratings

## Goals and Performance Indicators

College Goals are set each year by the President's Cabinet based on review of the prior year's performance. Goals are intended to account for any gaps and/or new opportunities noted during review. Using SMART Goal methodology, each College Goal contains a current state or baseline; an intended target; a stretch goal that challenges us further; and a date by when the target is to be achieved. For example, for Goal 1 (Completion), the College's FY2023 Goal was to increase the percentage of students who complete their programs from 35.7% (baseline) to 39.5% (target) with a stretch goal of 41% (stretch goal) by June 30, 2023 (date).

To aid the College in deciding which goals to focus on, the College relies on performance indicators gathered by various ECC departments and offices; new metrics from outside agencies, such as Achieving the Dream; new higher education research; and mandates from state or federal regulatory agencies and accreditors. Goals selected as a priority in any given year often derive from these indicators, which sometimes foreshadow where future focus is needed.

## Structure of the Report

The College set 11 College Goals; thus, this Performance Report for FY2023 contains 11 sections, each summarizing progress made on one of these 11 goals. Each College Goal lays out on two pages in printed form: our current progress, our past progress (where available), and key accomplishments or strategies that helped us fulfill the goal. The left-side page contains the current and past progress in visual form, usually with a chart or graph, along with written explanation beneath it. The right-side page contains accomplishments in the form of narrative descriptions.

## Audience and Feedback

Insights derived from discussion of the Performance Report guide leadership practices of the Board of Trustees and President. A formal review of the report takes place during the ECC Board's public Committee of the Whole meeting each October. Additionally, the Illinois Community College Board and the federal Higher Education Act (Student Right to Know legislation) require many of the indicators contained in this report to be filed annually. In 2022, the Illinois General Assembly passed legislation to require Elgin Community College and other Illinois colleges to solicit external feedback on accountability measures, and the Performance Report aids in compliance with this law. Finally, digital copies are made available to the public on the College's website.

Questions about this report, and ideas or comments about future indicators, may be forwarded to Philip Garber, PhD, Vice President of Planning, Institutional Effectiveness, and Technology at [pgarber@elgin.edu](mailto:pgarber@elgin.edu) or 847-214-7285.

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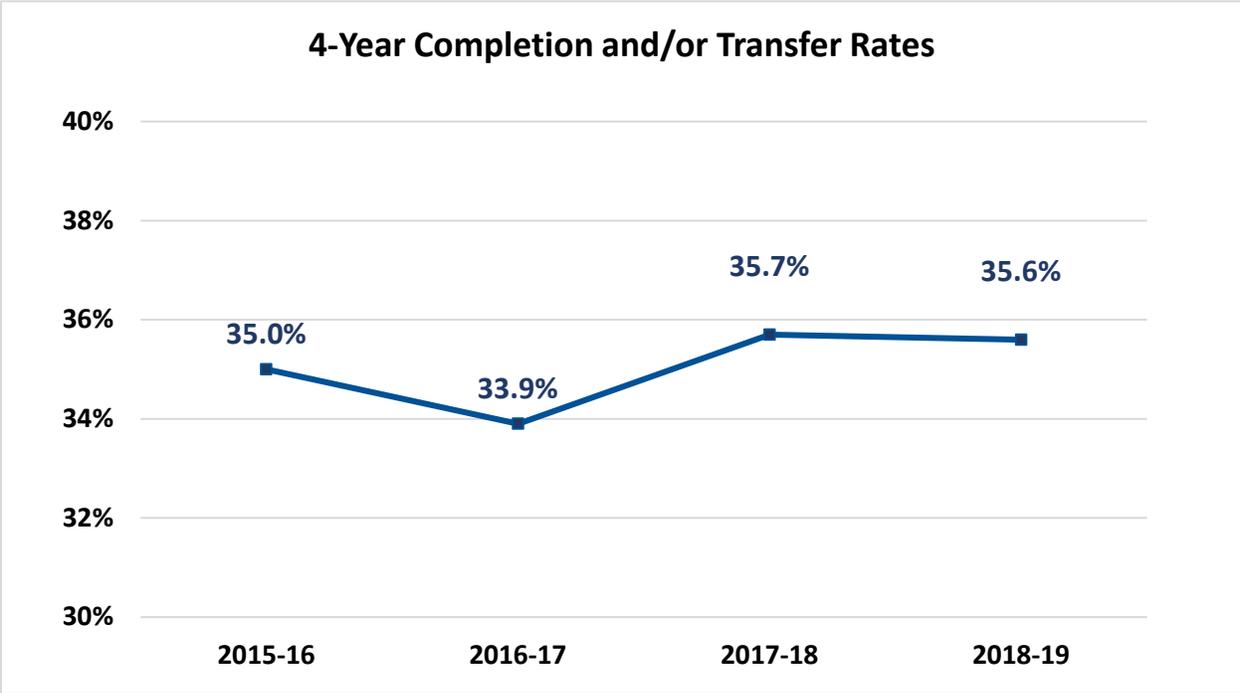
# TEACHING AND LEARNING EXCELLENCE

*Deliver instructional practices and curriculum to ensure student-centered learning.*

## GOAL 1: COMPLETION

**STATEMENT:** Increase the percentage of students who complete their programs and/or transfer from 35.7% to 39.5% (the smallest statistically significant improvement) with a stretch goal of 41% by June 30, 2023.

**OUTCOME: Target not achieved.** The outcome stayed relatively the same as the baseline, slightly declining from 35.7% to 35.6% completion (from the fall 2018 cohort).



(Source: Post-Secondary Data Partnership Tableau Site, as of June 1, 2023)

Despite strategies put in place, the four-year completion/transfer rate for the fall 2018 cohort was 35.6%, falling short of the target of 39.5%. However, this result aligns to historical trends noted in previous cohorts, where four-year completion/transfer rates consistently ranged in the mid-30s. ECC does well against other institutions, as the PDP dashboards show the national completion rate at 28% for F2023. Even so, using a lagging metric as an annual goal can be challenging. By definition, completion requires a four-year horizon, and the strategies ECC puts in place to foster completion operate annually, such as credit accumulation and persistence from term-to-term. Thus, consideration will be given for selecting a goal in future years that reflects annual activity.

## Key Accomplishments Related to Goal 1: Completion

### Increased Early Alert Usage and Student Follow-Up

Early Alerts are digital communications among students, faculty, advisors, and success coaches about academic progress. The number of Early Alerts has steadily increased since the College launched CRM Advise software in spring 2021. During FY2023, sixty-three percent (63%) of alerts were followed up (i.e., students met an advisor to discuss remediation options), which is an increase of 4% over prior terms. Students who follow up on alerts are also more likely to persist to the following term (66% vs. 57% who did not follow up).

### Deployed Five-Year Accessibility Plan

The number of ECC students requesting disability accommodations has increased in recent years from 669 students in FY2017 to 750 students in FY2023. In response, the College adopted a five-year accessibility plan in fall 2022 with goals related to improving communications, enhancing learning, strengthening employee development, and auditing/reviewing accessibility standards. During FY2023, eighteen (18) classes were remediated for accessibility in partnership with Distance Learning. In partnership with Marketing and Communications, fifty (50) forms and thirty-six (36) documents were remediated on the college website and employee portal.

### Implemented Co-Curricular Tracking

Co-curricular events include club meetings, volunteering, and special campus events. Attendance at co-curricular activities is now being tracked via the ExLibris CampusM mobile app (renamed the *MyECC Experience App*). This action was approved by ECC Trustees in late 2022, and rollout began in April 2023. Tracking co-curricular participation is critical to understanding learning overall and represents a leap forward in assessing co-curricular learning, a key focus of the Higher Learning Commission (HLC) and other accreditors.

### Expanded Success Coach Role

For three years, ECC has relied on federal coronavirus relief funds to hire success coaches in Student Services and Development. Success coaches connect students to essential services (e.g., advising, registration, and testing) needed during student onboarding. In FY2023, ECC benefitted from moving coaches to college funds, thereby expanding their roles. Coaches now assist academic advisors for students on academic probation and use CRM Advise to document these interactions.

### Expanded Support for Men of Color

FY2023 welcomed the largest cohort of TRIUMPH Scholars ( $N=23$ ) since the program began in 2018. The Transforming and Impacting Undergraduate Men Pursuing Higher Education (TRIUMPH) is a mentorship program designed to increase graduation among men of color.



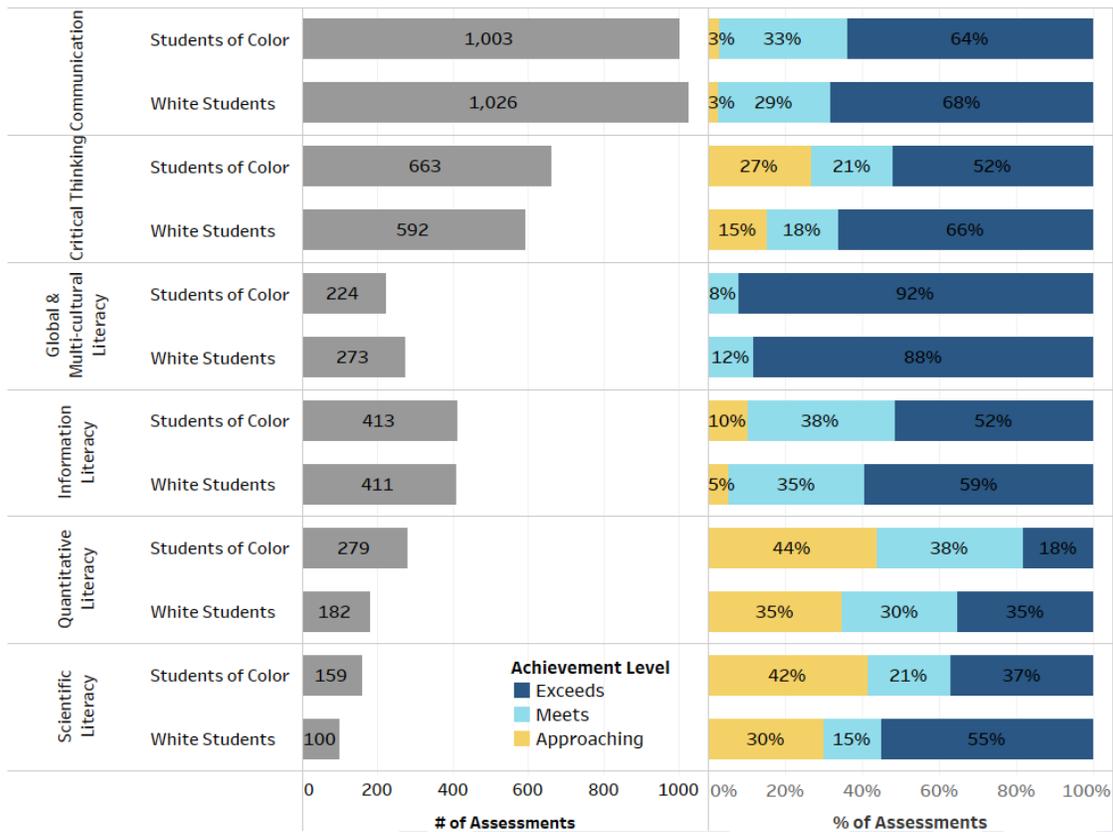
## TEACHING AND LEARNING EXCELLENCE

*Deliver instructional practices and curriculum to ensure student-centered learning.*

### GOAL 2: MASTERY OF LEARNING OUTCOMES

**STATEMENT:** Decrease achievement gaps between students of color and white students in general educational learning outcomes to -5% with a stretch goal of 0% by June 1, 2023.

**OUTCOME: Target partially achieved.** Of the six general educational learning outcomes, two are at the stretch goal (no gaps); one is at target; three are below target however two of those outcomes the achievement is unclear due to small data.



(Source: ECC Assessment Data, as of May 23, 2023)

Significant advancements have been observed in certain learning outcomes. In both the Communication and the Global and Multicultural Literacy areas, there are no observable gaps between students of color and white students. Information Literacy is at the target with a gap of 5%. Quantitative Literacy has a 9% gap, while Critical Thinking and Scientific Literacy each present a 12% gap, all are below target. However, due to the limited sample size for Quantitative and Scientific Literacy, the results lack clear evidence.

## Key Accomplishments Related to Goal 2: Mastery of Learning Outcomes

### Involved Students in Research, Presentations, and Conferences

- The Center for Undergraduate Research, Innovation, and Creativity (CURIC), officially opened with the start of the fall 2022 semester. The first cohort included 14 students and eight faculty. Highly unique to the two-year community college environment, the CURIC encourages and promotes scholarship and creative academic projects for all students through one-on-one or small group project mentoring, preparation for academic research beyond ECC, access to a dedicated learning space, and the opportunity to present at an annual CURIC symposium. The symposium was jointly hosted with the ECC Honors Program. A total of 12 students presented original research they carried out in collaboration with seven faculty.
- Additionally, ECC supported several faculty-led efforts to highlight student participation at professional conferences.

### Strengthened Assessment Data to Improve Learning

- As part of the College's Quality Improvement Project (QIP) with the HLC, every semester a new faculty-led assessment cohort is onboarded. Each cohort runs for four semesters and then retires. Two (2) new faculty-led assessment cohorts joined (one in fall 2022 and the second in spring 2023) and at the end of spring 2023, the first cohort in the project retired. Assessment cohorts ensure faculty have the resources needed to collaborate across sections and courses when designing and evaluating student learning. The Assessment Strategy Team (AST) sponsors the cohort work and helps the College draw upon data to provide insights about how students learn, which is the key focus (QIP).
- Learning Improvement Reports, over 20,000 artifacts of student learning have been collected and analyzed. Learning Improvement Reports document assessment results and opportunities to improve learning for each course assessed.
- ECC's learning management system (Brightspace by Desire2Learn) was updated to ensure that data derived from evaluating student artifacts (e.g., assignments, projects, etc.) are recorded in formats that allow for in-depth analysis. Data from general education courses alone constitutes over 5,000 student artifacts in the system.
- ECC's data visualization system (Tableau) has been updated in accordance with Brightspace enhancements. Dashboards now allow faculty to sort and filter student data on learning as it pertains to specific courses, particular programs, and across general education areas.



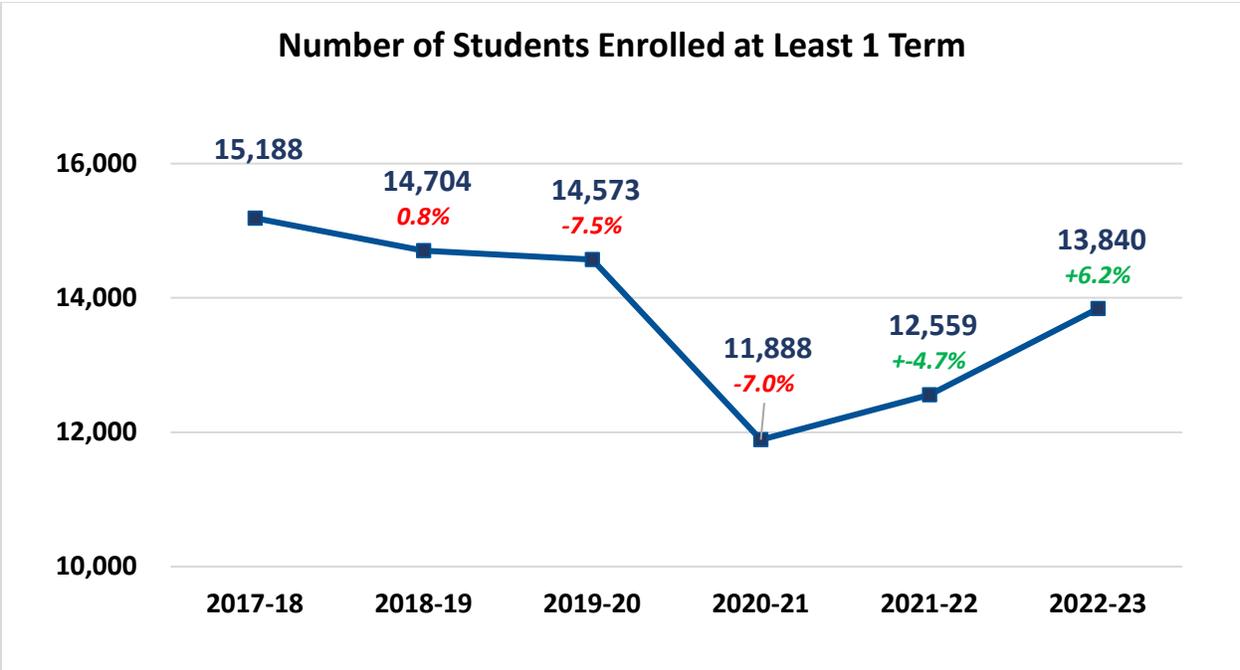
# LIFELONG CONNECTIONS

Create a lifelong meaningful, and mutual relationship with the college.

## GOAL 3: ENROLLMENT

**STATEMENT:** Increase annual unduplicated enrollment in FY2023 from 12,559 to 13,500 with a stretch goal of 14,500 by April 3, 2023.

**OUTCOME: Target achieved.** Total enrollment for FY2023 reached 13,840 students.



(Source: ICCB A1 Data Submissions, as of May 2, 2023)

After enrollment declined during the COVID-19 pandemic, counts have rebounded since 2020-21. FY2023 increases to near pre-pandemic levels. Reasons may include a return to campus for in-person learning; the relaxation of social distancing protocols to allow larger class sizes; a wider selection of synchronous and asynchronous classes developed during remote learning; an increase in Hispanic/Latinx enrollment; an increase in dual credit program enrollments; and increases in grant funding for many academic programs.

## Key Accomplishments Related to Goal 3: Enrollment

### **Began Configuration of Recruitment and Admissions Module**

During FY2023, the College began work with Servio Consulting to configure the recruitment and admissions module and digital marketing tools within the Salesforce Education Cloud. This software aids enrollment efforts by standardizing disparate tracking systems, allowing us to target and assist applicants as they transition to enrollment. The Salesforce system is expected to “go live” in February 2024.

### **Welcomed Middle School Students**

Resumed Middle School Fridays for the first time since the COVID-19 pandemic. More than 1,200 children from 11 middle schools visited campus to learn about college readiness, career paths, and college affordability. For many middle school students, this is their first exposure to a college campus.

### **Connected Applicants and Enrollees to Appropriate Services**

For years the College has conducted outreach to students before and during reenrollment periods. Telephone call campaigns directed toward returning students who have not yet registered are made prior to each semester. Additional telephone calls are made to students who are administratively dropped for non-payment. More recently, the Recruitment and Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Offices sent e-mails and mailings to Black and Latinx applicants to encourage matriculation. Anecdotally, we know that, across all outreach campaigns, students who are contacted tend to act, whether in the form of registering for classes, securing funds for enrolling, or meeting advisors to create educational plans. We also know that outreach does not have to be involved, as simple reminders (or “nudges”) are enough to encourage action. Since oversight of outreach campaigns are overseen by various departments, it is difficult to determine the collective impact of outreach college-wide. Moving forward, the College will start to monitor the impact of outreach campaigns to inform Goal 3 (Enrollment).

### **Created New Marketing Campaign**

The “You’ll fit right in” marketing campaign was designed and created during FY2023 to highlight ways in which prospective students (1) learn, (2) connect, and (3) belong at ECC. Many ECC programs and services are featured in short videos reflecting these three essential dimensions of campus life. The campaign features a commercial, registration mailer, and billboards of ECC students. Marketing and Communications also partnered with ECC departments to raise visibility and awareness of college programs and services. Examples include Internship Relaunch Week (March 2023), Experience ECC Night (April 2023), and several new program videos and webpage enhancements. A new viewbook was created for prospective students along with webpages organized by admission type (e.g., new vs. returning students, summer only students, etc.).



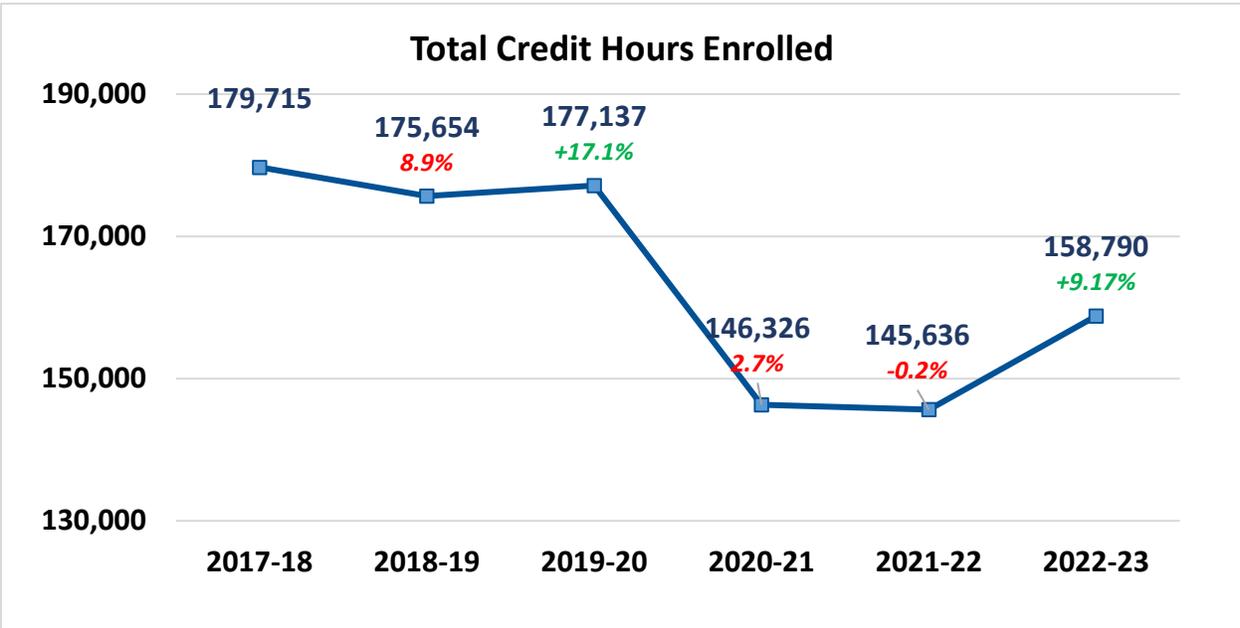
# LIFELONG CONNECTIONS

Create a lifelong meaningful, and mutual relationship with the college.

## GOAL 4: CREDIT ACCUMULATION

**STATEMENT:** Increase the total annual credit hour count from 145,636 to 160,000 with a stretch goal of 170,000 by June 30, 2023.

**OUTCOME: Target not achieved.** The total credit hours increased 9.17% from the previous year, approaching target at 158,790.



(Source: ICCB SRSU Data Submission as of May 23, 2023)

Similar to enrollment (Goal 3), total credit hours enrolled (Goal 4) declined in 2020-21 due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Unlike the immediate, but partial, rebound of enrollment, total credit hours continued to decrease in 2021-22. In FY2023, despite the number of credit hours increasing by 9%, a positive change, the 158,790 total credits fall short of the goal target of 160,000 by less than 1%. Relatedly, the College finds the average number of credits attempted by each student has been declining since the pandemic despite the enrollment and credit hour increases as reported here. In 2020-21, student enrolled on average, in 12.3 credit hours during eh academic year; in 2021-22, the figure declined to 11.6 for the year; and in 2022-23, it declined again to 11.5. Thus, although students are indeed returning post-pandemic, they are taking reduced course loads.

## Key Accomplishments Related to Goal 4: Credit Accumulation

### Launched the “Just One More” Campaign

To kick off summer and fall 2023 registration, academic advisors launched a “Just one more” campaign, whereby students are encouraged to enroll in an additional course and advisors proactively place the next course of their programs into their educational plans. Research shows that *more is more* when it comes to completion; that is, students whose GPAs demonstrate an ability to handle more credits do better with than without them. They not only complete faster but perform as well, or even better, with an additional course.

### Improved Placement Testing Increases Credit Accumulation

Credit accumulation is made easier by improvements in placement testing. During FY2023, the College updated its English writing exam with new essay prompts; provided additional student outreach to encourage retesting on math placement exams; and increased the volume of high school dual credit testing to meet increased enrollment.

### Grew Guaranteed Admission Partnerships

ECC Transfer Services advanced credit attainment by establishing new transfer partnerships in career-technical fields (now with five university partners) and two new guaranteed admission partnerships (Beloit College and Trinity Christian College). Further, as a host site for the Illinois Regional College Fair, ECC welcomed 161 colleges and universities and over 329 prospective students to campus during FY2023.

### Hired a Developmental Math Coordinator

The developmental math coordinator aids students progressing from developmental to college-level math. The coordinator's areas of focus include outreach to students and advisors to strengthen math placement and encourages retesting as well as outreach to faculty at both ECC (Developmental Math Pathway Committee) and the state (Development Education Reform Act meetings) to review success data and align content across placement tests and math courses. The role also provides technical and software-related support to ECC students.

### Advanced the Success of the Dual-Enrollment Program

FY2023 marks the latest of ECC's six-year upward trend in dual enrollment with high schools. Comparing last academic year to the prior one, enrollment in dual credit programs increased 85% overall (from 805 to 1,492 students) and 222% within high schools (from 324 to 1,045 students). These programs help students accumulate credits earlier and faster than they would under a traditional enrollment timeframe.



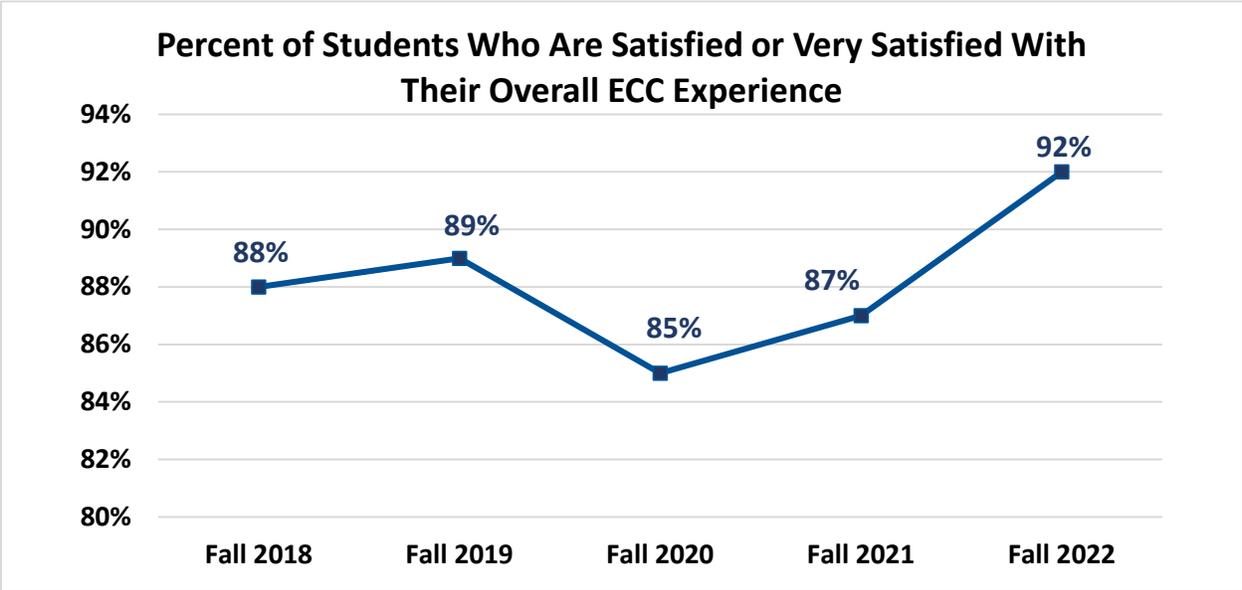
# ECC EXPERIENCE

*Cultivate a welcoming destination for students, employees, and our community.*

## GOAL 5: STUDENT EXPERIENCE

**STATEMENT:** Increase the percentage of students responding "very satisfied" or "satisfied" to a question about overall satisfaction on the fall 2022 administration of the Current Student Survey from 87% to 90% with a stretch goal of 93%.

**OUTCOME: Target achieved.** The percentage of students responding with combined responses increased to 92%, which is 2% higher than the target set and missing the stretch goal by 1%.



*(Source: Annual ECC Current Student Survey, as of June 1, 2023 [unweighted])*

The College’s Current Student Survey is administered every fall semester. Students responding to the survey have consistently expressed very high levels of satisfaction with their experience, highlighting the College’s efforts to cultivate a welcoming environment, with nearly 90% of students rating themselves as “satisfied” or “very satisfied” for each of the past five years. In fall 2022, 92% of respondents stated that they were satisfied with ECC overall. This is our highest satisfaction rate in the past five years, exceeding the FY2023 goal target of 90%.

## Key Accomplishments Related to Goal 5: Student Experience

### Captured Student Satisfaction

The College conducts its homegrown Current Student Survey each year to assess satisfaction among students. Over 1,400 students responded in fall 2022, and results were weighted to better reflect ECC's population. Students' overall satisfaction came in at 92% ("very satisfied", "satisfied" and "somewhat satisfied" combined); and additional survey items with high satisfaction included: overall quality of service to students (89%); student-centeredness (88%); campus safety and security (88%); and inclusive environment (88%).

### Improved Student Satisfaction

ECC participated in the national Noel-Levitz Student Satisfaction Inventory (SSI) in spring 2022. Over 1,100 student respondents provided insights into which aspects of campus life are most satisfying. Comparing 2023 figures to the College's prior figures from 2019, we see increases for survey items pertaining to faculty satisfaction (83% in 2023 vs. 80% in 2019); technological accessibility (87% vs. 84%); and a sense of welcoming on campus (87% vs. 84%). ECC's averages are higher than averages nationally, which are 78% across each of these items.

### Implemented the Four Commitments Initiative

In spring 2023, 30 faculty members participated in the Four Commitments Program launched by the Office of Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion to increase student engagement and sense of belonging. Activities in the program include learning students' names; ensuring syllabi contain high expectations with various opportunities for students to demonstrate learning; meeting one-on-one with students; and providing feedback early on during a course. Initial data demonstrates a higher rate of success in intervention sections and enrollment in subsequent terms.

### Boosted Active Student Involvement

The number of active student organizations increased from 17 to 27 (a 37% increase) over the prior year. ECC student leaders of organizations continue to excel academically compared to non-leaders with average cumulative GPAs of 3.06 (vs. 2.85 for non-leaders) and average earned credit hours of 11.19 (vs. 6.07). Meanwhile, the Spartan Food Pantry saw an increase in visits from 1,282 in FY2022 to 4,536 in FY2023 with the addition of fresh produce donated by the Sherman Hospital Community Garden and Northern Illinois Food Bank.

### Created the Center for Civic Engagement

Faculty laid groundwork to launch a Center for Civic Engagement at ECC in fall 2023. The Center fosters the skills and experiences students need to be thoughtful civic leaders on campus, in their communities, and our democracy. In funding the Center, the College also sponsors a new Civic Leaders Scholarship for promising students.



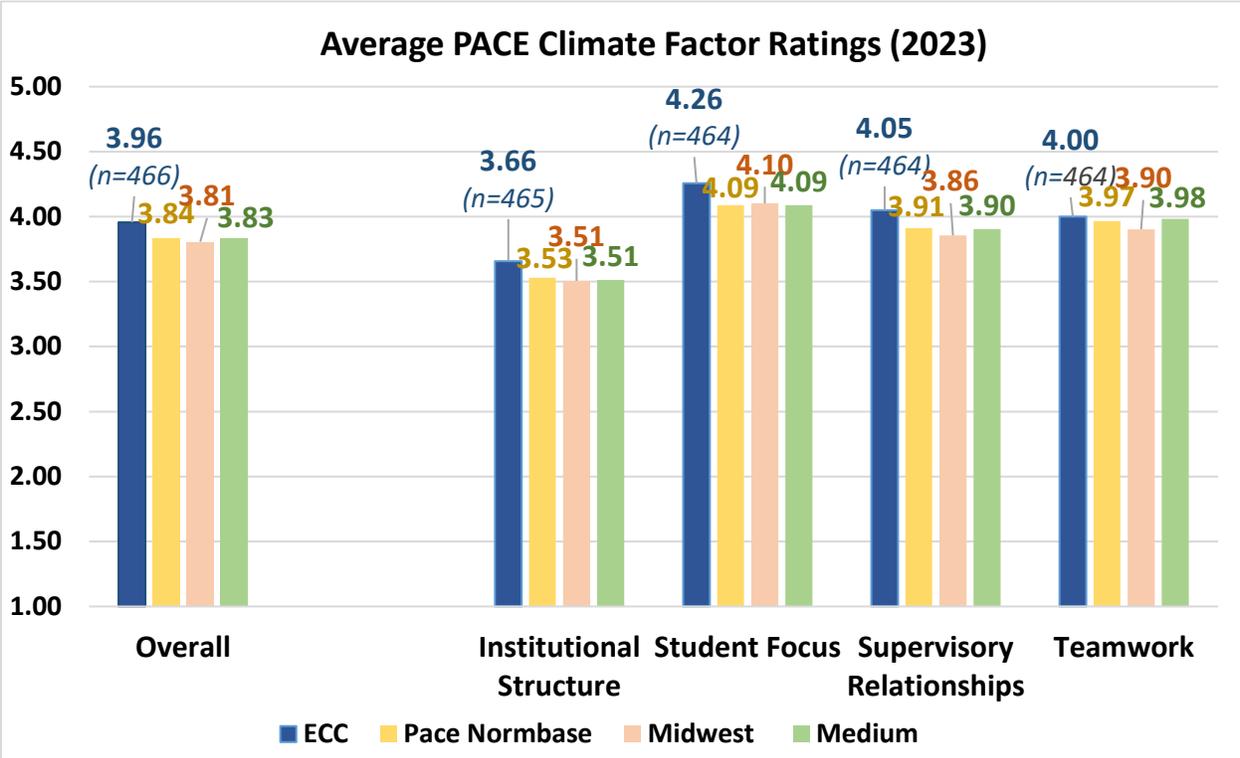
# ECC EXPERIENCE

Cultivate a welcoming destination for students, employees, and our community.

## GOAL 6: EMPLOYEE EXPERIENCE

**STATEMENT:** Identify an annual survey tool to measure employee engagement and/or satisfaction with a stretch goal to determine a baseline measurement by June 30, 2023, so a goal can be set for FY2024.

**OUTCOME: Stretch goal achieved.** Exceeded target of identifying the PACE Climate Survey and hit the stretch of administering the survey and collecting baseline data for setting FY2024 goal.



(Source: PACE Employee Survey Aggregate Results, as of June 1, 2023)

With the stretch goal achieved, ECC was able to collect baseline data from the first administration of the PACE Climate Survey for Community Colleges (PACE). The results were very positive. The overall mean score of 3.956 out of a 5.0 is driven by 46 standard questions representing four climate factors each with a unique focus on the campus climate. ECC’s mean scores are higher across all climate factors compared to the three community college comparison groups: PACE Normbase (all colleges using the PACE survey); Midwest (colleges in our region); and Medium (colleges with similar student size).

## Key Accomplishments Related to Goal 6: Employee Experience

### Identified and Administered Employee Survey

A yearlong process led to the selection of the North Carolina State University's PACE Climate Survey for Community Colleges as the employee survey for the College. In fall 2022, after comparing vendors varying by service and price, PACE was selected based on best practices and feedback collected in focus groups of representatives from ECC collective bargaining units. PACE administered the survey in February 2023. Several tactics were used to increase the response rate and provide accessibility, including interpretation services for Spanish-speaking employees; technical assistance to access the online survey for employees less familiar with computers; and assistance for employees working during evening/night shifts. The reports were delivered in April. For the first time at ECC, workgroup reports were generated, allowing supervisors to compare data from their teams to college-level data and to aid in defining team-level actions for improvement. Supervisors received training during an Administrative Team meeting on how to read, analyze, interpret, and communicate results. Expectations for using the results for FY2024 goal setting were also provided.

### Grew Department and Programs in CETAL

The Center for the Enhancement of Teaching, Assessment, and Learning (CETAL) experienced two significant departmental changes: (1) creating and filling an associate dean role, and (2) bringing the Office of Outcomes Assessment into CETL. Five new programs were introduced (Grading Café, Faculty Equity Research Community, Inclusive Teaching Reading Group, Exam Shakeup Teaching Retreat, and Accessibility Workshop Series). Sixteen programs were continued. Participation was highest among full-time faculty (50% participated) and about 12% of part-time faculty participated, representing 19% of all faculty. There were 141 unique faculty (52% of full-time and 48% part-time) participants in the Center.

### Created Positive Interactions with Human Resources

Human Resources Outreach Committee (HROC) held ten open table sessions near the cafeteria during lunch. These informal sessions allowed employees to stop by and learn about HR practices and ask questions directly with HR representatives.

### Emphasized the Importance of Employee Health and Wellness

Several activities occurred to address health and wellness: (1) ECC Community Meditation Garden was constructed and unveiled; (2) monthly Employee Assistance Program (EAP) webinars were offered; (3) Mental Health Awareness month was held in May with a dedicated EAP counselor onsite offering 1:1 employee counseling. All sessions filled quickly. This will be offered again in the future.



## ECC EXPERIENCE

*Cultivate a welcoming destination for students, employees, and our community.*

### GOAL 7: COMMUNITY EXPERIENCE

**STATEMENT:** Identify an annual survey tool to be used for measuring employer and/or community engagement and/or satisfaction, collecting a baseline measurement, with a stretch goal of communicating the results to key stakeholders, by June 30, 2023.

**OUTCOME: Stretch goal achieved.** The initial target was achieved when an annual tool (Community Vibrancy Cohort) was identified and implementation began with our Achieving the Dream (ATD) Coach. An early activity included creating the community engagement self-assessment in spring 2023 to inform the Community Vibrancy Cohort with baseline data (N=10) collected, showing strengths and gaps which were reported to key campus stakeholders, thus satisfying the stretch goal.

### COMMUNITY VIBRANCY METRICS



A consistent annual survey was identified in FY2023 to meet Goal 7 (Community Experience). First, ECC joined the ATD Community Vibrancy Cohort, focusing on 5 metrics that contribute to equitable and inclusive communities. Meanwhile, an internal Community Engagement Self-Assessment was developed to capture a 2023 snapshot. Results gathered from ECC deans and directors indicate a disconnect or lack of knowledge among ECC departments when it comes to understanding community partnerships, their strengths, impacts, and infrastructures needed for growth. In communicating findings among deans, a consensus was reached to expand the use of Salesforce, thus leveraging a central database for all departments to use to share partnership information. The Community Engagement Self-Assessment will be used internally to gauge progress as ATD further expands the Community Vibrancy Cohort and develops a national toolkit.

## Key Accomplishments Related to Goal 7: Community Experience

### Strengthened Community Connections

ECC joined the ATD Community Vibrancy Cohort, enabling the College to refine outcomes related to economic and social mobility and thereby improve access for key populations. Additionally, the College surveyed deans and directors to identify strengths and challenges associated with partnership onboarding and oversight. A self-assessment survey revealed a need for greater coordinated outreach and internal communications across departments when it comes to understanding and deriving value from partnerships. The survey was a precursor to joining the Cohort itself and will be repeated in future years to gauge ongoing progress.

### Contracted Architectural Services

ECC contracted with DLA and Lamp architectural firms to oversee design, engineering, and construction management needed for the College's new manufacturing center.

### Evaluated ECC Brand Awareness

Hired Clarus Corporation to conduct a Community Brand Messaging Survey of 938 residents of our region. Results indicate that the ECC community is heterogeneous with different needs, attitudes, and knowledge when it comes to community colleges and higher education in general. Given this, Clarus recommends an overall brand messaging tactic common to all populations with sub-messaging specific to key audiences. Outreach efforts, such as direct mail and email, should be similarly layered.

### Honored Native Americans with the Creation of a Land Acknowledgement Statement

In December 2022, ECC adopted its first-ever Land Acknowledgement Statement to honor the Native American tribes that once settled the land where the College is situated. The statement was authored by ECC students from History 150 (*History of Native America*) taught by Professor Antonio Ramirez. A "living" document, this statement will be revisited every two years.

### Created the 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Committee

ECC launched a 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Committee to organize a myriad of celebratory events planned for FY2024 to recognize the College's 75th anniversary. The College was founded on January 10, 1949, as an extension of Elgin High School, and FY2024 will be a year to look back and recognize the many milestones we have achieved since then.

### Accredited by NACEP and NECPA

At the end of FY2023, ECC received national accreditation from the National Alliance of Concurrent Enrollment Partnerships (NACEP) for its dual credit programs and from the National Early Childhood Program Accreditation (NECPA) for its Early Childhood Education program.



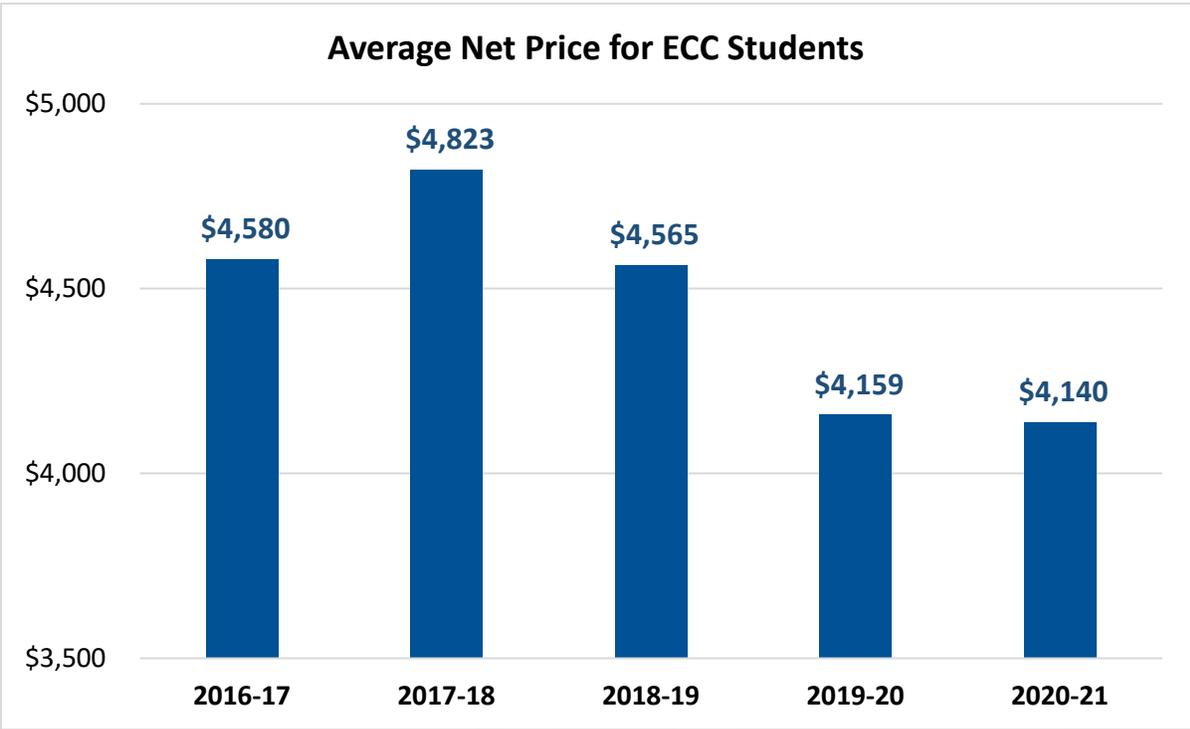
## FORTIFY OUR FUTURE

*Position the college to remain affordable while ensuring long-term financial stability and operational efficiency.*

### GOAL 8: STUDENT AFFORDABILITY

**STATEMENT:** Decrease the average net price to attend ECC per student from \$4,159 to \$4,000 with a stretch goal of \$3,750 by fall 2023.

**OUTCOME: Target not achieved.** Average net price decreased, but only slightly (<1%), from \$4,159 for 2019-2020 students to \$4,140 for 2020-21 students. Note that this information is reported in arrears for past student cohorts through IPEDS data reporting.



(Source: <https://collegecost.ed.gov/affordability>, as of June 1, 2023)

According to the National Center for Educational Statistics (NCES), the average net price of attendance is generated by “subtracting the average amount of federal, state/local government, or institutional grant and scholarship aid from the total cost of attendance.” Although the average net cost reduction target was not achieved for FY2023, the average net price did decline slightly year-over-year. ECC was included in NCES’s Lowest Net Price List among US public community colleges for each of the past two years. Given the lag in reporting this particular metric (the most recent NCES report comes from 2020-21 cost data), the target for Goal 8 (Student Affordability) in FY2024 will be adjusted to focus on non-loan aid.

## Key Accomplishments Related to Goal 8: Student Affordability

### Implemented Textbook and Course Materials Taskforce Recommendations

The Textbook and Course Materials Taskforce completed four (4) of the nine (9) recommendations outlined in its FY2023 report for reducing costs of instructional materials for students. Another four (4) recommendations are in progress, and one (1) recommendation will be revisited in FY2024. Among the committee's recommendations are leveraging professional development and instructional tools for faculty and strengthening guides, web tools, and outreach for students.

### Increased Non-Loan Aid Impacts Academic Success

Prior analyses showed that ECC students receiving non-loan aid complete with less financial debt. In FY2023, predictive modeling revealed that financial support also impacts academic success. Students receiving aid during their first year are more likely than students not receiving aid to achieve the following: (1) complete gateway English (59% vs. 24%) and math courses (30% vs. 16% for the fall 2021 cohort); (2) persist to the next year (75% vs 25% for the fall 2020 cohort); (3) complete their programs (41% vs. 9% for the fall 2018 cohort); and (4) attain baccalaureate degrees (28% vs. 8% for the fall 2016 cohort). *[NOTE: cohort years vary due to the intervals needed to tally various metrics.]* Non-loan aid awarded per capita (which includes grants, scholarships, tuition waivers, and emergency funds) has increased 150% since 2010.

### Created Center for Financial Empowerment and Wellness

ECC continues efforts to strengthen financial resiliency in partnering with the KCT Credit Union to form the Center for Financial Empowerment and Wellness in the Renner Academic Library. The Center offers checking and savings accounts, credit cards, and low interest loans.

### Increased Number of Financial Aid 101 Sessions Held

Online financial literacy programs were developed during COVID remote work to provide important financial information to parents and students – Financial Aid 101, adult information sessions, parent/student orientations, and programs for high school students. During FY2023, sessions returned to a live format with a 23% increase in number of sessions delivered over the prior year.

### Finalized Disbursement of Federal Relief Funds

FY2023 marked the final year dispersing Higher Education Emergency Relief Funds (HEERF) to ECC students. Since the federal government made these funds available during the COVID-19 pandemic, a total of \$14,378,648 has been awarded and disbursed to 14,061 students through June 30, 2023.



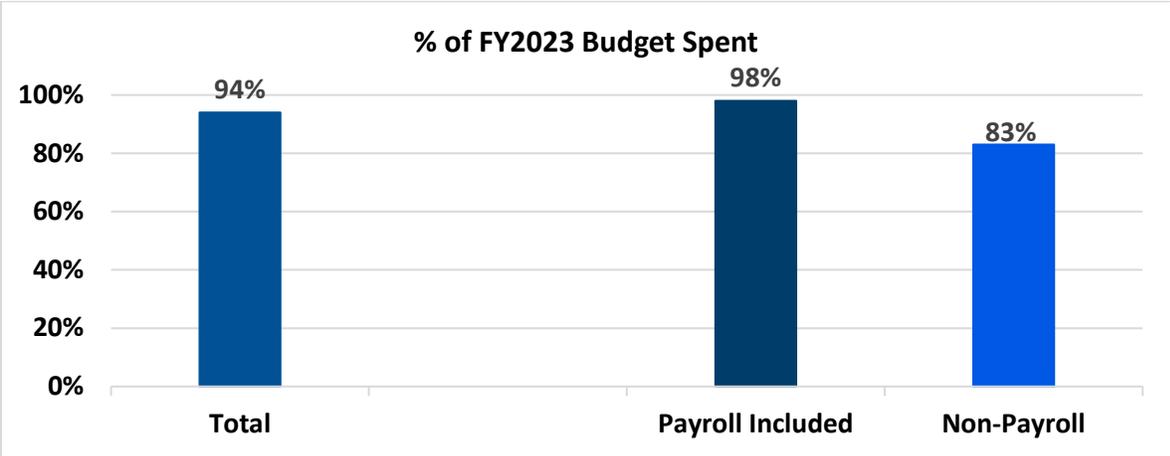
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## GOAL 9: INSTITUTIONAL FINANCIAL HEALTH

**STATEMENT:** Increase the college average departmental actual-to-budget ratio from 90% to 92% with a stretch goal of 94% by June 30, 2023.

**OUTCOME: It depends.** The unaudited budgeted-vs-actual ratio for all operating expenditures (excluding transfers) was 94%, which meets the stretch goal. The spend rate for salary and benefits was 98% (representing 76% of the budget), which exceeds the stretch goal. However, when considering all non-payroll expenditures (representing 24% of the budget), the ratio was 83%, which misses the target.



(Source: ECC "Budgeted-to-Actual" report, includes only Funds 01 and 02)

Non-payroll expenditures are expenditures that budget officers have more discretion and control over. Operating funds include the duction fund (Fund 01) and operations and maintenance fund (Fund 02). ECC uses zero-based budgeting, meaning that budget officers must be intentional in resource planning, as all expenses must be justified starting from zero each budget year. When done well, the actual-to-budget ratio will be 100%, i.e., spending as planned, which is the ultimate goal.

These figures do not include transfers. Unspent funds go toward either the fund balance or are strategically transferred to fund future capital projects or the College Insurance Plan liability. Given this first year of setting goal targets, finding the best way to express Goal 9 (Institutional Financial Health) needs further work. Lessons learned from the year will be applied to future years when setting targets that lead to a consistent meaningful measure.

## Key Accomplishments Related to Goal 9: Institutional Financial Health

### **Sustained Tuition Costs and Tax Levy**

FY2023 marked the fifth year that the College has maintained level tuition (\$132 per credit hour) and the third year that the College has not levied a property tax increase for area residents and businesses. These same assumptions are used in the College's FY2024 Budget also.

### **Optimized Budget Process with New Software**

The College transitioned from Excel workbooks to Questica software for budgeting. Advantages of using budgeting software include standardizing workflows, easing justifications for budget officers, facilitating querying and analysis, and providing more accurate financial forecasting.

### **Modernized and Merged Contracting Processes**

The College transitioned from a manual process to DocuSign software to expedite vendor agreements and minimize disruptions; meanwhile, the College merged contract review into risk management practices, thereby minimizing liability and ensuring cost savings for insurance.

### **Reestablished Grant Management/Financial Compliance Position**

To ensure compliance with expense reporting associated with larger grants, the College reestablished a full-time position for grant management and fiscal compliance. This position provides fiscal oversight for grants, while deans, directors, and other administrators provide oversight with grant outcomes.

### **Aligned Department Goals to College Goals**

In late FY2023, the College hosted a series of performance cafes to assist employees in writing annual goals that align to the 11 College Goals set for FY2024. As a result, the College is assured that expenses arising from employee goals align to overarching directions and can be easily justified with zero-based budgeting.



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### GOAL 10: COLLEGE FUNDRAISING

**STATEMENT:** Raise unrestricted college campaign funds of at least \$1.5 million with a stretch goal of \$2 million by June 30, 2023.

**OUTCOME: Target exceeded.** An approximate total of \$1.7 million has been raised in the form of monetary gifts, pledges, and commitments exceeding the target of \$1.5 million for the first year of the campaign.



The ECC Bright Futures Campaign is a two-year campaign. By the end of June 2024, the multi-year goal is to raise a total of \$3 million, which is on track given the activity so far. At the close of FY2023, the Institutional Advancement and ECC Foundation reports raising approximately \$1.7 million in monetary gifts, pledges, and commitments, representing almost 57% of the total two-year goal. However, as pledges and commitments, not all of these funds have been received to date.

*(Source: Institutional Advancement and ECC Foundation Report, September, 12, 2023)*

Beyond the ECC Bright Futures Campaign, Institutional Advancement and ECC Foundation is actively working to raise giving across all areas – annual giving, major giving, in-kind gifts, and grants. Two main events are held every year. In September 2022, the annual Gala hosted 209 people. In June 2023, the annual golf outing was attended by 135 people.

## Key Accomplishments Related to Goal 10: College Fundraising

### Secured Legislative Funding for the Manufacturing Training Center

ECC's future Manufacturing Training Center received federal legislative funds to strengthen programs in mechatronics and automation. The ECC Foundation has completed the US Department of Education paperwork needed to dispense these dollars, and the Center itself is actively undergoing architectural and site planning.

### Awarded Scholarships to Student Athletes

In FY2021, the Board of Trustees approved athletic scholarships at the Division II level. In FY2023, ninety-two (92) scholarships totaling \$223,167 were awarded to ECC student-athletes.

### Reinstated the ECC Alumni Network

The ECC Foundation is actively working to reestablish the ECC Alumni Engagement Network. The purpose of this effort is to recognize outstanding alumni who have made a positive impact to the College. In recognition of the College's 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary, the Institutional Advancement and Foundation Board is finalizing a Sensational Seventy-Five Alumni List to be released and celebrated this coming year. The Alumni Engagement Network is one of many affinity groups sponsored by the ECC Foundation. Others include groups focused on the needs of women (Purses with Purpose) and retirees (Retiree Advisory Network).

### Continued Positive Impact of Complete to Compete Scholarship Program

Analyses conducted in FY2023 continue to show the success of ECC's Complete to Compete Scholarship, which is awarded to promising students who have accrued 45+ credits but need a financial boost to complete. Scholarship recipients from the 2022-23 academic year are on track to complete more credits and graduate than a statistically matched comparison group who met eligibility criteria but did not apply. These findings mirror those from the 2020-21 and 2021-22 academic years; the three-year aggregate is 76% vs. 31% and is based on 55 total students.

### Accelerated Students' Progression Through Grants

In FY2023, the College received three (3) large grants to accelerate students' progression through programs. First, the Pipeline for the Advancement of the Healthcare Workforce (PATH) addresses post-COVID shortages of healthcare workers by upskilling credentials with financial support for tuition and textbooks. Nineteen (19) ECC health programs and three (3) short-term training programs in the Workforce Development Division qualify for PATH. Second, the Early Childhood Access Consortium for Equity (ECACE), formed from Illinois Public Act 102-0174, to disburse scholarships and provide career navigators for students in Early Childhood Education. Third, a year-long Certified Recovery Support Specialist (CRSS) Certificate from the Illinois Department of Human Services (IDHS) includes classroom work and an internship. ECC scholarships awarded in FY2023 for all three programs totaled \$650,382 which collectively benefit 1,091 enrollees, albeit the level of support varies by grant and program.



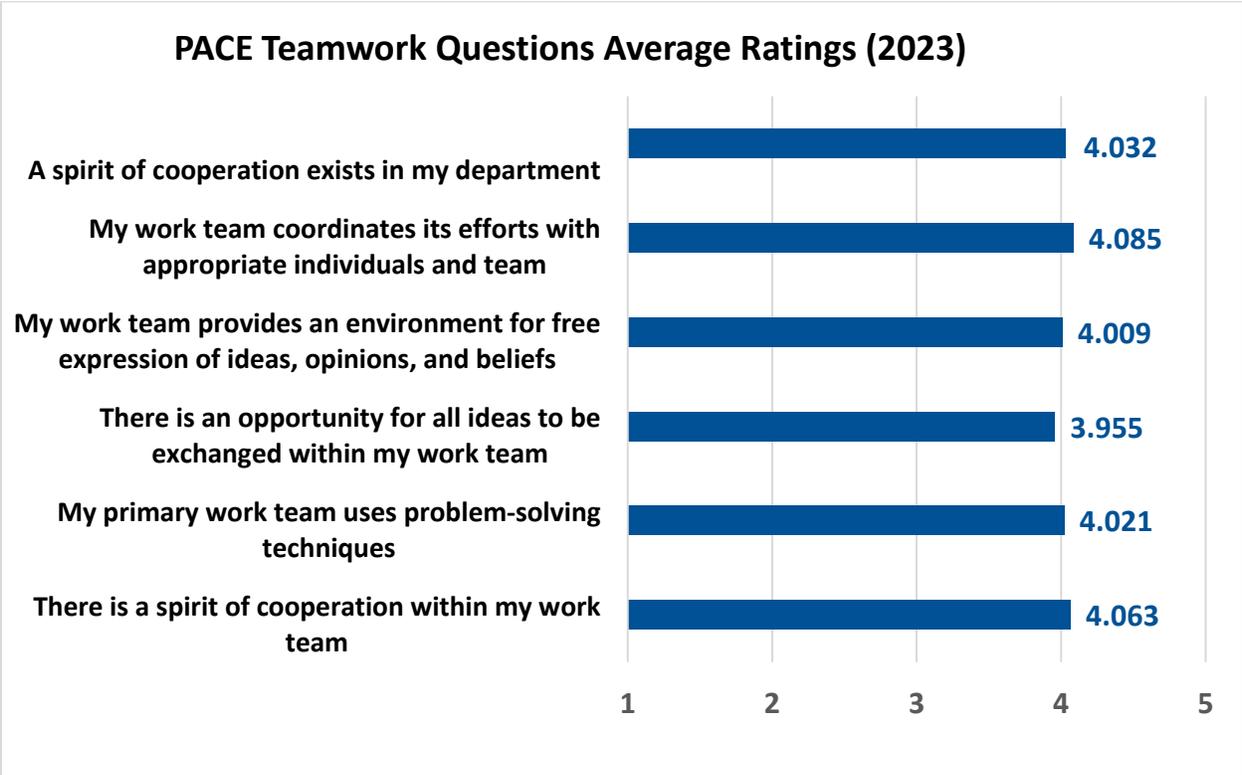
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## GOAL 11: OPERATIONAL EFFICIENCY

**STATEMENT:** Establish a request/project tracking system and follow-up satisfaction survey by June 30, 2023, for any interested service departments beginning in FY2024.

**OUTCOME: Target not achieved as written.** We shifted focus as the year unfolded and are now close to adopting a college-wide project management tool (Jira) in IT, HR, IR and MarCom to track requests and workflows which will satisfy the initial intent of the goal set for FY2023 once implemented.



(Source: PACE Climate Survey Aggregate Results, as of June 1, 2023)

As a proxy for operational efficiency, survey results from the PACE Climate Survey, administered in 2023, reveal positive employee perceptions of teamwork. Items include views on collaboration and cross-functional teamwork, expressing opinions and ideas fully, and engaging in problem-solving techniques. Aggregate mean ratings for each survey question under the Teamwork factor are consistent and positive, ranging from 3.96 to 4.09 on a 5-point rating scale.

## Key Accomplishments Related to Goal 11: Operational Efficiency

### Identified Software to Track, Measure, and Assess Workflows

Partnering with consultant ISOS to expand use of Jira software. This software is used to track and monitor workflows in several service departments, including Information Technology (IT), Institutional Research (IR), Distance Learning (DL), and Human Resources (HR). Having a common platform allows the College to share information more efficiently across units, track progress, and troubleshoot where needed. It is planned to include an internal customer service component. This is a building year; the first department to fully integrate the software as envisioned is planned for late FY2024.

### Restructured Student Success Strategy Efforts Through Newly Created ESSAC

The Equity and Student Success Action Council (ESSAC) fully rolled out to provide oversight of student success and equity projects college wide as they relate to ATD and Illinois Equity in Attainment Initiative (ILEA) efforts. The Council's structure was created so that projects have clear trial, implementation, and offboarding phases within expected timeframes to reduce the amount of time from start to finish. The Council will rely on student data to determine when to transition projects across these phases and move them to scale.

### Assessed Cybersecurity Practices Against National Standards and Improved Safeguards

Performed penetration testing of the network to identify potential vulnerabilities, such as outdated software and systems with Janus Associates. Cybersecurity practices at ECC were compared against national NIST 800-171 standards, and findings will inform ECC's Information Technology practices moving forward. Extended the endpoint detection service with Sophos to include Managed Detection and Response Services, which monitors web traffic 24/7 to guard against suspicious activity.

### Modernized Technology Throughout Campus

Dedicated additional resources to modernizing technology across campus including digital signage and videoconferencing capabilities (i.e., display screens, ceiling microphones, cameras, cables, etc.)

### Conducted Compensation Review and Improved HR Search Committee Standards

Reviewed market competitiveness and salary structures of 460 employees using the Hay Group Method through Korn Ferry to be shared in FY2024. A panel of employees assisted HR to update the search committee standards, including committee composition, responsibilities, training, and data collection. In June, 36 supervisors completed training. The number of interview questions has been reduced, and supervisors are moving candidates through the process quicker than before. Hiring times have been reduced for Business and Finance jobs from 28 to 26 days and TLSD jobs from 41 to 23 days. While many factors contribute to decreases, the general feeling is that ECC hiring managers feel more comfortable with hiring at the College.