



## STRATEGIC DIRECTION

2015-2017

### **MCCA STRATEGIC DIRECTION REPORT: *Advocacy and Collective Action as a 21<sup>st</sup> Century Network-Centric Organization***

The Michigan Community College Association (MCCA) and its member colleges continue to face an unrelenting, rapidly changing environment. Increased competition, the commoditization of education, rising costs coupled with calls for tuition restraint, uncertain state and local funding, and increased regulation and accountability for student success, are calling for heightened collective action and a strong Association to help position the colleges for long-term sustainability and success.

In 2013, the MCCA Board of Directors approved a new approach for organizing the work of the Association. The network-centric organizational model, with centers of excellence (i.e. Center for Student Success, Michigan Colleges Online, Michigan New Jobs Training Program, and the Center for Global Initiatives) bee-hived around the 'hub'/core that is focused on legislative and public advocacy, has proved to be an effective approach. This networked structure has offered the Association the flexibility to better support member colleges and respond to emerging opportunities.

The *2015-2017 Strategic Direction* herein is intended to provide broad strategic direction for the achievement of the goals as the MCCA continues to evolve as a network-centric organization.

### **MCCA MISSION**

*MCCA is the association of Michigan public community colleges whose mission is to provide leadership on issues affecting member colleges.*

## MCCA VISION

MCCA is a **network-centric** association of community colleges providing strong and effective leadership on issues affecting member colleges. The MCCA will:

- Become the most effective advocate for community colleges;
- Improve the image and credibility of community colleges;
- Foster collaboration, connection and partnerships among the community colleges and stakeholders; and
- Provide the highest quality service to member colleges.

## MCCA GOALS

As defined by the Vision statement, the Association's work will be guided by three primary strategic goals. Those goals are:

1. Provide strong legislative and public advocacy;
2. Maintain and support a collaborative network; and
3. Continuously assess the needs of the membership and provide the highest quality services to members.

### **GOAL #1: PROVIDE STRONG LEGISLATIVE AND PUBLIC ADVOCACY.**

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As a network-centric organization, the 'hub' and core of the MCCA is laser-focused on legislative and public advocacy. Due to fiscal and political realities, there will be increasing legislative and regulatory threats to our member institutions. MCCA will work to mitigate threats, and advance and support legislation, administrative rules and initiatives that offer opportunity and preserve the constitutional authority and autonomy of local Michigan community college boards to "supervise and control" their local institutions. Also key to successful long-term advocacy is a strong public relations strategy to position community colleges as a critical player in economic and talent development.

#### ***Strategies:***

- A. Support the activities of the *MCCA Legislative Committee* as a legislative recommending body.
- B. Execute community college legislative advocacy agenda as adopted by the MCCA Board of Directors.
- C. Provide actionable real-time information on state- and federal-level policy developments (via online communications, webinars, briefs etc).

- D. Support the *MCCA Legislative Liaisons Group* to ease communication regarding legislative activities and needed action.
- E. Conduct Legislative Summits as needed to support policy advocacy goals.
- F. Strive to achieve 100% participation in the MCCA Political Action Committee.
- G. Strengthen strategic messaging/branding for community colleges.
  - i. Work with the leadership of the Michigan Community Colleges Marketing and Communications Association (MCCMCA) and *Interact Communications Inc.*, to execute the second phase of the *You've Got This* marketing campaign (focus on digital platforms).
  - ii. Coordinate with the Public Relations Committee to leverage opportunity and ensure consistent messaging.
  - iii. Execute the annual Community College Day.
  - iv. Actively engage with the media to share the good news of community colleges.

## **GOAL #2: MAINTAIN AND SUPPORT A COLLABORATIVE NETWORK.**

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As the MCCA works to maintain and support a collaborative network, it will follow the principles for the age of networked intelligence<sup>1</sup>:

- **Collaboration:** Collective knowledge, capability, and resources within a network of participants can accomplish much more than one organization can acting alone;
  - Expand the space of experiences, scope and scale of interactions, and stakeholder relationships in ecosystem/network.
- **Openness:** The world is becoming more transparent (unprecedented information about the true value of products and services);
- **Interdependence:** Everything and everyone is interconnected through networks. There is simply no room for unilateralism in a world in which transparency and collaboration will be essential to ensuring near- and long-term stability and growth.

### ***Strategies:***

- A. Maintain a network-centric structure, with an alliance of supporting initiatives/centers of excellence (i.e. Center for Student Success, Michigan Colleges Online, Michigan New Jobs Training Program, and the Center for Global Initiatives) that are entrepreneurial, agile and bee-hived around the 'hub' focused on the core competency of legislative and public advocacy. With this network-like structure, potential threats in the environment are identified more quickly, and urgency

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<sup>1</sup> Sources: Jarvis (2011). What Would Google Do?; Ramaswamy & Gouillart (2012). The Power of Co-Creation; Tapscott & Williams (2012). Macrowikinomics: New Solutions for a Connected Planet.

around tomorrow's opportunities are fostered in a more agile way by engaging existing and new initiatives/centers of excellence in the network.



- B. Keep members informed of legislative issues and opportunities for engagement with the network.
- i. Provide real-time information on state- and federal-level policy developments (*MCCA Latest News*).
  - ii. Produce *MCCA Weekly Board Update*, which includes state-, national- and international-level information (as well as updates from the initiatives/centers of excellence) that is relevant to members for optimal participation in the network.
  - iii. Produce monthly *MCCA Update*, a brief document highlighting the key issues and opportunities impacting community colleges. Target audience is the trustees of the 28 member colleges.
  - iv. Produce monthly *MCCA Activities and Updates* summary to be shared with the members of the *Professional Associations Leadership Alliance*, a cross-functional group supported by the MCCA containing the leadership of all community college professional associations to share priorities, projects, and discuss potential opportunities for cross-pollination between the work of the various associations.
  - v. Produce *MCCA Legislative Briefs* on key legislative priorities.
  - vi. Deliver webinars on relevant/timely topics.
  - vii. Continuously update and maintain the MCCA website with relevant information.

- viii. Conduct – and share with the network – statewide research on relevant topics and propose new opportunities for Michigan community colleges (partnering/networking).

### **GOAL #3: CONTINUOUSLY ASSESS THE NEEDS OF THE MEMBERSHIP AND PROVIDE THE HIGHEST QUALITY SERVICES TO MEMBERS.**

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The world is changing rapidly and knowledgeable leaders are imperative for strong, flexible and sustainable institutions. The MCCA will facilitate relevant professional development opportunities for presidents and trustees, will deliver services via the networked initiatives/centers of excellence, and will continuously assess the needs of the membership to identify opportunities for collective action and provide the highest quality services to members.

#### ***Strategies:***

A. Provide services via the networked initiatives/centers of excellence:

i. **Michigan Center for Student Success (MCSS).**

- a. Provide information that integrates findings from national and local research activities and practitioner experiences on the ground to effectively represent community colleges in state-level cross-sector conversations related to student success leading to policy recommendations.
- b. In partnership with other stakeholders (Governor's Office, legislators, universities, K-12, employers and community-based agencies), work to identify and implement a comprehensive policy framework to support increased student success in Michigan.
- c. Organize high-quality convenings to connect college practitioners and other stakeholders to promote promising practices and raise awareness about issues related to student success.
- d. Serve as a hub to facilitate emerging opportunities for campus-based work and the integration of findings from national pilot sites.
- e. Provide support for colleges implementing interventions and/or participating in ongoing initiatives and identify successful practices and challenges identified by early-adopter colleges.
- f. Maintain a role in the continuing development of Michigan's P-20 longitudinal data system to ensure that it meets the needs of the colleges in providing easy and open access to data for institutional improvement.



- g. Facilitate sustained dialogue related to the use of data to inform continuous improvement efforts across all 28 community colleges
- h. Participate in the development of a student success research network that includes institutional research and planning staff from community colleges, university student and faculty researchers and other key stakeholders.

ii. **Michigan Colleges Online (MCO)**, formerly the Michigan Community College Virtual Learning Collaborative (MCCVLC).



- a. Support colleges adopting innovations in online teaching & learning.
- b. Facilitate program sharing among colleges.
- c. Facilitate the sharing of scarce resources.
- d. Leverage strategic partnerships.
- e. Increase opportunities for global online education.
- f. Provide a more efficient interface for learners and college staff.
- g. Raise awareness of the MCO in the Michigan education community.

iii. **Michigan New Jobs Training Program (MNJTP)**.



- a. Serve as liaison between colleges, the Michigan Department of Treasury, the Michigan Economic Development Corporation, employers and other interested stakeholders in the program (a local, employer-driven program that allows the community colleges to divert state Individual Income Tax revenue captured from newly created jobs to fund job training).
- b. Provide technical assistance to the community colleges, including individual support and professional development/regular meetings of the *MNJTP Users Group*.
- c. Manage the statewide \$50 Million legislative cap and prioritization queue for MNJTP funding.

iv. The **Center for Global Initiatives (CGI)**.



- a. Serve as an entry point to Michigan's community colleges for international projects, foundation-supported activities, partnerships, and delegations to Michigan.
- b. Raise resources from foundations, private and governmental agencies to support the community colleges in programming and activities.
- c. Foster long-term relationships and partnerships on behalf of the community colleges to create a network and easier access to real international opportunities that benefit Michigan, the local communities, and institutions alike.

- d. Connect regions around the globe to Michigan community colleges for stateside and/or overseas programming (English as a Second Language, technical/skills training).
  - e. Facilitate networking and professional development for interested community colleges on international programming and outreach.
- B. Provide legal services to member colleges.
- i. General inquiries relating to laws affecting Michigan community college districts, such as Community College Act of 1966, Open Meetings Act/Freedom of Information Act, General Property Tax Act, and FERPA.
- C. Provide quality and relevant professional development for members.
- i. Provide orientation for new presidents and new trustees.
  - ii. Conduct the annual Presidents Summer Institute and bi-annual Trustee Summer Institute.
  - iii. Execute annual MCCA Summer Conference.
- D. Facilitate collaborative efforts that will provide value-added benefit for the membership.

## **IMPLICATIONS AND EXPECTATIONS**

### ***Making the Network-Centric MCCA Real***

#### **Expectations for Member Colleges**

***Active Engagement:*** As a voluntary organization, engagement in various initiatives varies and the networked model allows for that. However, the **network expects a high level of participation** and is bound by collegial rules. The effectiveness, relevancy and value-added of the network is dependent on the active engagement of members.

***Unified Position on Legislation and Priorities:*** Once the Association arrives at a decision by a majority, the expectation is that member colleges support the position and have a unified front in advocacy (unless it's harmful to an individual community college). Embedded in this process is the strong assumption that colleges will actively engage in the dialogue, communicate the impact of legislation/action (self-interest), and will respect the will of the majority (group interest).

***Contribution to the MCCA Political Action Committee (PAC):*** As a member of the MCCA, there is the expectation that colleges contribute \$1,000 annually to the PAC, as the activities and contributions of the PAC benefit the whole and the collective agenda.

## **Expectations for MCCA Staff**

***Accountability for Progress on MCCA Strategic Direction:*** Provide regular updates to the MCCA Executive Committee on progress, and provide annual report to the MCCA Board of Directors on performance/achievement of agreed upon goals.