



michigan community college association

LEADERSHIP ACADEMY

TRANSFORMATIONAL LEADERSHIP FOR STUDENT SUCCESS

March 20, 2025





STUDENT SUCCESS PROJECT TIME & GROUP DISCUSSIONS



michigan community college association
LEADERSHIP ACADEMY

STUDENT SUCCESS PROJECTS GROUP DISCUSSION



- Each group take 5 minutes to share your project and an update on your progress.
- Use this as an opportunity to share a question your group has been discussing and any feedback you would like from your colleagues.



DCCL PROGRAM TAKING APPLICATIONS!

FERRIS STATE UNIVERSITY

DOCTORATE IN COMMUNITY
COLLEGE LEADERSHIP

- Doctorate in Community College Leadership (Ed.D.)
- 3 year-program
- Applications are open through April 19, 2025 for a May start
- Fellows receive 3 credit hours towards their program of study for completion of the Academy curriculum.



An overhead view of five people sitting around a white round table, engaged in a study session. They are surrounded by open books, laptops, and papers. The scene is dimly lit with a blue tint. The text 'WELCOME! SESSION & MODULE OVERVIEW' is overlaid in large white letters on the left side of the image.

WELCOME! SESSION & MODULE OVERVIEW



michigan community college association
LEADERSHIP ACADEMY

SERIES OVERVIEW: PART ONE

Articulating Student Success and Understanding the Student Perspective Through a Leadership Lens

Convening 1:

The Essential Roles of Leadership in Student Success

- Defining Student Success
- Higher Education in State Contexts

Convening 2:

Keeping Students' End Goals in Mind

- Improving Labor Market Outcomes
- Improving Transfer at Scale

Convening 3:

The Student Experience

- Improving Teaching and Learning
- Redesigning Advising to Better Support Students



SERIES OVERVIEW: PART TWO

Fostering Leadership Traits to Drive Reform and Advance Change Management Strategies for Student Success

Session 4: Leadership Traits to Drive Change

- Leading from the Middle
- Leadership Qualities for Senior Staff
- Striving for Equity as a Core Component of Leadership

Session 5: Managing and Advancing Institutional Change

- Using Finance Strategically to Advance Reforms
- Leading Internal Transformational Change

Session 6: Effective External Partnerships and the Leadership Journey

- Leading Highly Effective External Strategic Partnerships
- Reflecting on Your Personal Leadership Journey



CONVENING #4 GOALS & OBJECTIVES

- Understand the strategies that mid-level leaders can employ to effect change at the college
- Understand the skills and qualities transformational senior leaders used to foster reform at the college
- Recognize the agency practitioners have at different levels of the organization
- Examine why a sustained focus on equity is a crucial element of institutional leadership.



AGENDA

Thursday, March 20, 2025

TIME	AGENDA ITEM
1:00 – 1:10 pm	Welcome, Recap Session #3, Overview Session #4
1:10 – 1:55 pm	Leadership Insights Kickoff Activity: Leadership from the Middle <i>Dr. Michael Gavin, President, Delta College</i>
1:55 – 2:10 pm	Break
2:10 – 2:55 pm	Qualities of Transformational Community College Leaders <i>Dr. Michael Gavin, President of Delta College</i>
2:55 – 3:00 pm	Break



AGENDA

Thursday, March 20, 2025

TIME	AGENDA ITEM
3:00 – 3:45 pm	Panel: Strengthening Leadership for Student Success <i>Dr. Glenn Cerny, President, Schoolcraft College</i> <i>Dr. Lori Gonko, Vice President of Strategy & Human Resources, Henry Ford College</i> <i>Michael Williams, Director of Financial Aid, Macomb Community College</i> <i>Moderator: Dr. Michael Gavin, President of Delta College</i>
3:45 – 4:30 pm	Reflection & Discussion: Strengthening Leadership for Student Success
4:30 – 4:35 pm	Closing Module 1: Debrief & Reflections
4:45 – 6:30 PM	Evening Reception & Tour (VT470 Lobby Area)



MODULE 1: LEADERSHIP QUALITIES FOR STUDENT SUCCESS

MODULE 1 FACILITATOR



Dr. Mike Gavin

He/Him/His

President, Delta College



LEADERSHIP INSIGHTS

- The most important compass will be your passion.
- What questions are the right ones?
- Most of the time projects come up to you based on lenses people have. Your job is to have the lens of the entire region.
- Even if you know the answer, you have to pose it as a question.

In order for all of these to work, you have to know the levers of power at your institution.



Paul Laurence Dunbar, First Major African American Poet

The Old Front Gate

BY [PAUL LAURENCE DUNBAR](#)

W'en daih's chillun in de house,

Dey keep on a-gittin' tall;

But de folks don' seem to see

Dat dey's growin' up at all,

'Twell dey fin' out some fine day

Dat de gals has 'menced to grow,

W'en dey notice as dey pass

Dat de front gate's saggin' low.

W'en de hinges creak an' cry,

An' de bahs go slantin' down,

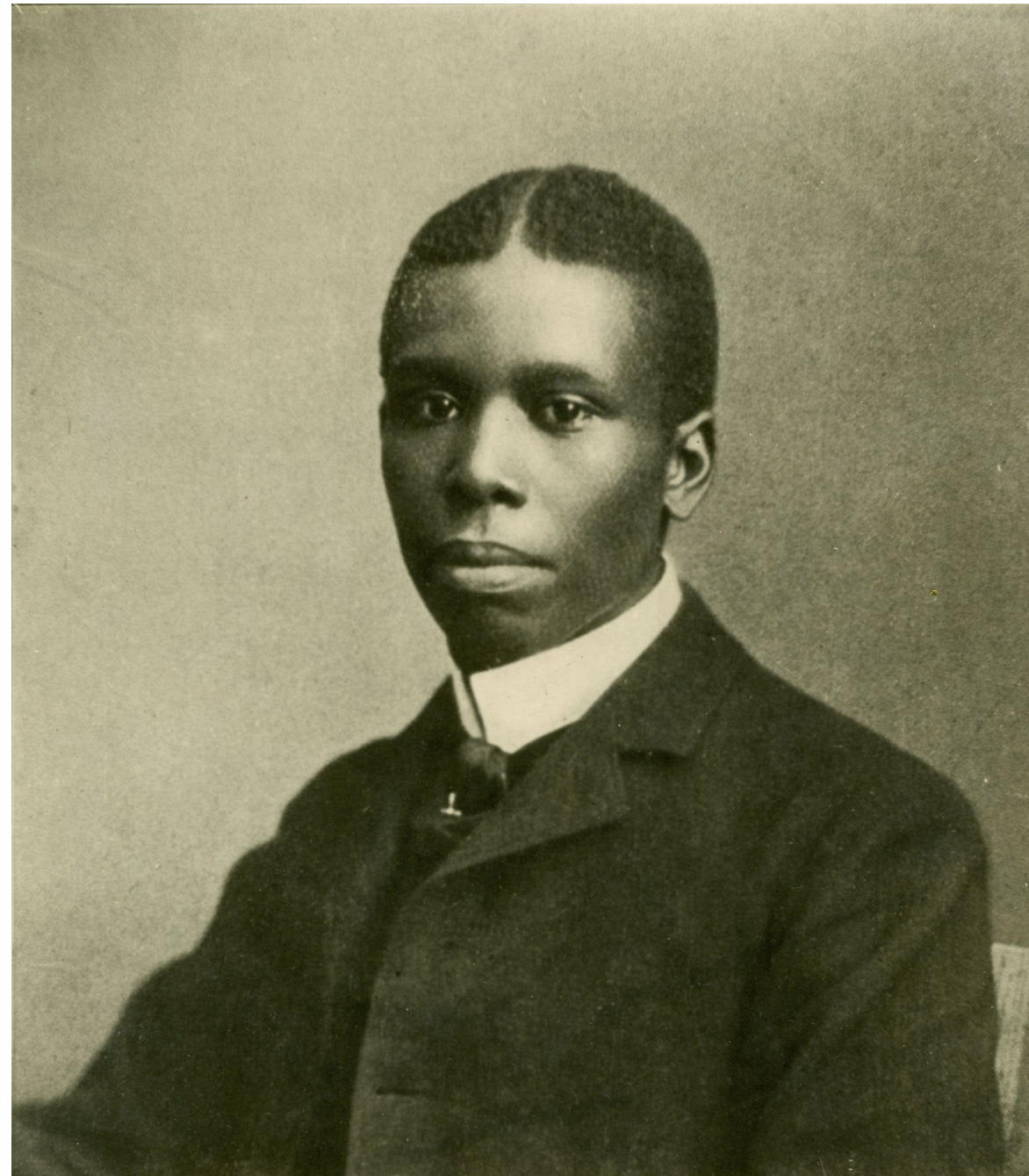
You kin reckon dat hit's time

Fu' to cas' yo' eye erroun',

'Cause daih ain't no 'sputin' dis,

Hit's de trues' sign to show

Dat daih's cou'tin' goin' on



Power is Often Invisible, and Intentionally So

We Wear the Mask BY PAUL LAURENCE DUNBAR

We wear the mask that grins and lies,
It hides our cheeks and shades our eyes,—
This debt we pay to human guile;
With torn and bleeding hearts we smile,
And mouth with myriad subtleties.

Why should the world be over-wise,
In counting all our tears and sighs?
Nay, let them only see us, while
We wear the mask.
We smile, but, O great Christ, our cries
To thee from tortured souls arise.
We sing, but oh the clay is vile
Beneath our feet, and long the mile;
But let the world dream otherwise,
We wear the mask!

I've got to write dialect poetry, it's the only way I can get them to listen to me.—Dunbar in conversation with James Weldon Johnson on the aesthetic of poetry for the Harlem Renaissance.




KICKOFF ACTIVITY: LEADING FROM THE MIDDLE

Directions:
At your table spend the next 20 minutes discussing the following questions.

For pre-work, you completed the [Leadership Capacity Assessment Tool](#) (pp. 4-8).

- Which capacity is a particular strength for you? How have you developed it?
- Which capacity is an area of growth? How might you strengthen it?
- As you advance in your leadership, which capacity might be a priority to develop?

MODULE 1 SEQUENCE

Session	Focus
<i>Kickoff Activity:</i> Leadership Capacity Assessment Tool	Mid-level Leader Qualities
 <i>Presentation:</i> Qualities of Transformational Community College Leaders	Senior-level Leader Qualities
<i>Panel:</i> Strengthening Leadership for Student Success	Leader Development and Mid-level/Senior-level Connections
<i>Reflection and Discussion:</i> Strengthening Leadership for Student Success	Mid-level/Senior-level Connections and Personal Reflection



BREAK

The convening will resume at 2:10 pm

Qualities of Transformational Community College Leaders



**Deep commitment
to student access
and success with
excellence and
equity**

Effective leaders are driven to create scaled and systemic change in student success at the college and in economic mobility and talent development in the community.

What does it look like in action?

- **Persistence:** Work strategically and relentlessly for scaled and sustainable advances with measurably better outcomes for students
- **Patience:** Understand that change takes time, but know that impatience is often needed and that patience without persistence is an excuse
- **Boldness:** Make hard choices on behalf of students
- **Collaboration:** Remain aware that many decisions should be made collectively, with broad buy-in



My Leadership Lesson at AACCC

- Equity gaps and systems needed in departments to address
- Online education and gaps
- Schedule
- Curriculum that transfers
- Curriculum that is based on competencies in the job market
- Current chair structure does not provide time to implement systems to ensure any of these are addressed in an ongoing fashion
- Operationalizing any of these takes way beyond the release time offered to chairs
- It is impossible to hold people accountable for work that is impossible to get done when teaching and also working on 10-month contracts
- Chairs' compensation is not aligned with the amount of work

**10 New
Assistant Deans;**

7 New Positions

For that we gain 14 new faculty

7 New Assistant Deans is Equivalent to 21 new positions and addresses major institutional needs.

Where We Started: 4-Year Student Completion Measured in 2016

	All	Hispanic	White	African American	Asian	Multi-race
Fall 2012 4-Year Graduation Rate	20%	18%	22%	10%	20%	20%
Achievement Gap (where our institution needs to work to fulfill its mission)	N/A	-2%	N/A	-9%	N/A	N/A

- Aspen short-list
- AtD Leader College
- AACU Awards
- National recognition
- Major strife about the roll-out
- Lesson learned— even if you know where you are going, ask for input on decisions; only reorg for student success.

QUALITIES OF TRANSFORMATIONAL COMMUNITY COLLEGE LEADERS

Deep commitment to student access and success with excellence and equity

Willingness to take strategic risks to advance student success

Ability to create lasting change within a college

Ability to enact a strong, bold strategic vision for the college and its students reflected in external partnerships

Ability to align resources to student success



PRESENTATION PREVIEW

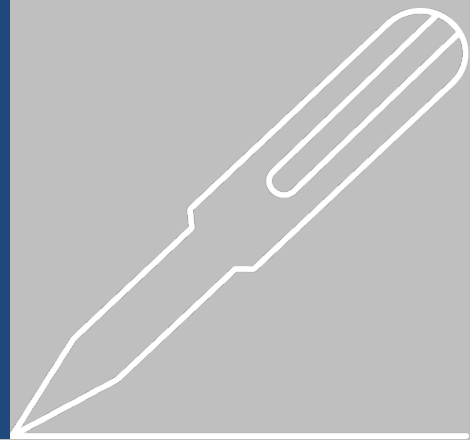
Qualities of Transformational Community College Leaders

- This research focuses specifically on the presidency; however, you see these qualities apply beyond the presidency.
- As you listen, consider:
 - How have you seen these qualities in action from senior leaders and presidents you've worked with?
 - How might these qualities show up in mid-level leadership roles?
 - Where are your own strengths, and where might you want to focus your own growth?



STOP AND JOT

Deep commitment
to student access
and success with
excellence and
equity



How have you seen a **deep commitment to student access and success with excellence and equity** in action from senior leaders and presidents you've worked with?

**Willingness to
take strategic
risks to advance
student success**

Effective leaders are able and willing to courageously champion and implement large-scale, systemic changes that significantly improve student success outcomes.

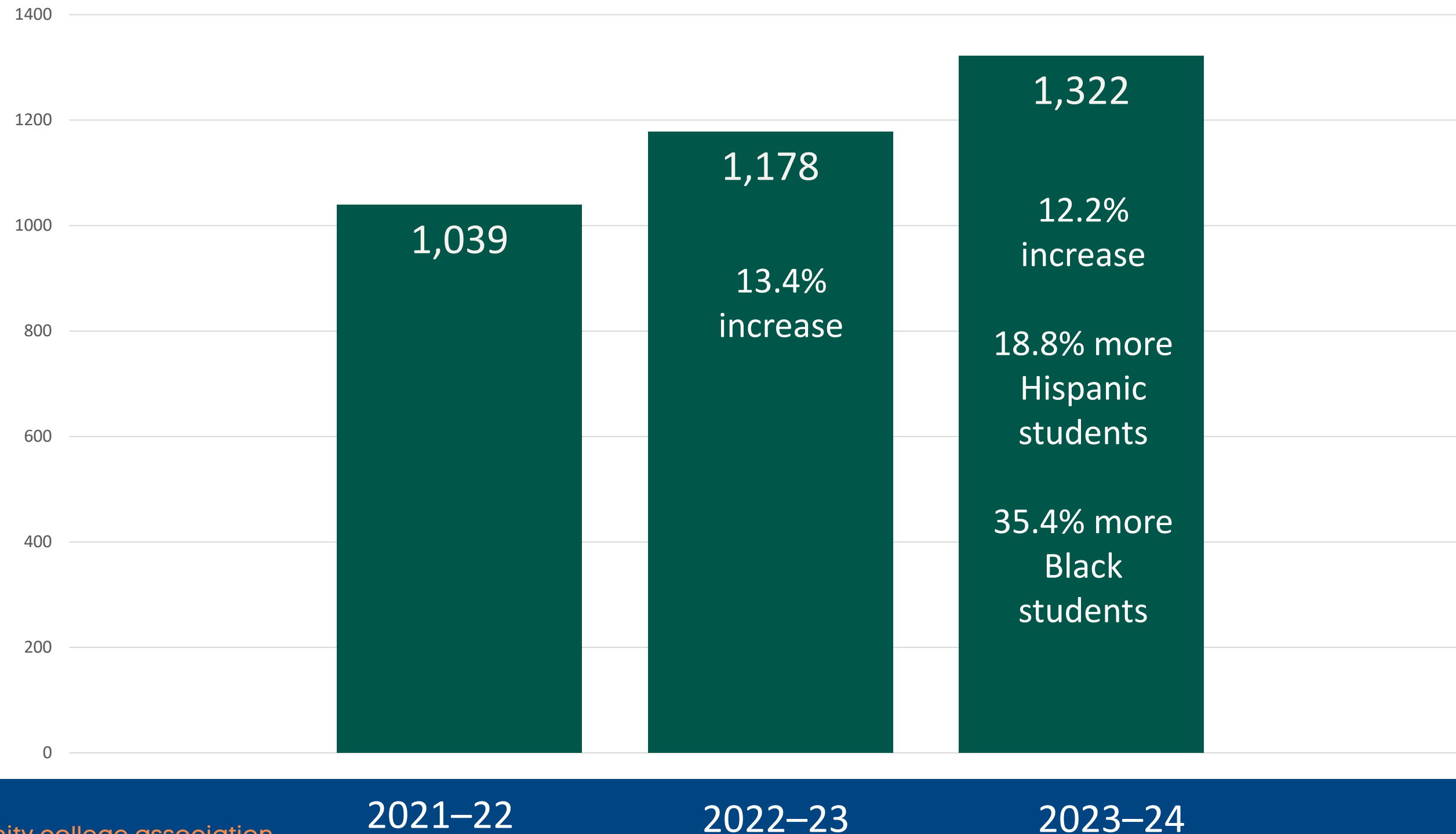
What does it look like in action?

- Create urgency and candor by openly acknowledging low levels of student success and shortcomings rather than defending or excusing current institutional performance
- Use low performance to challenge and inspire everyone at their college to improve student outcomes, asking: “Is this success rate okay?”
- Reallocate resources wherever needed to support programs and policies that improve student success



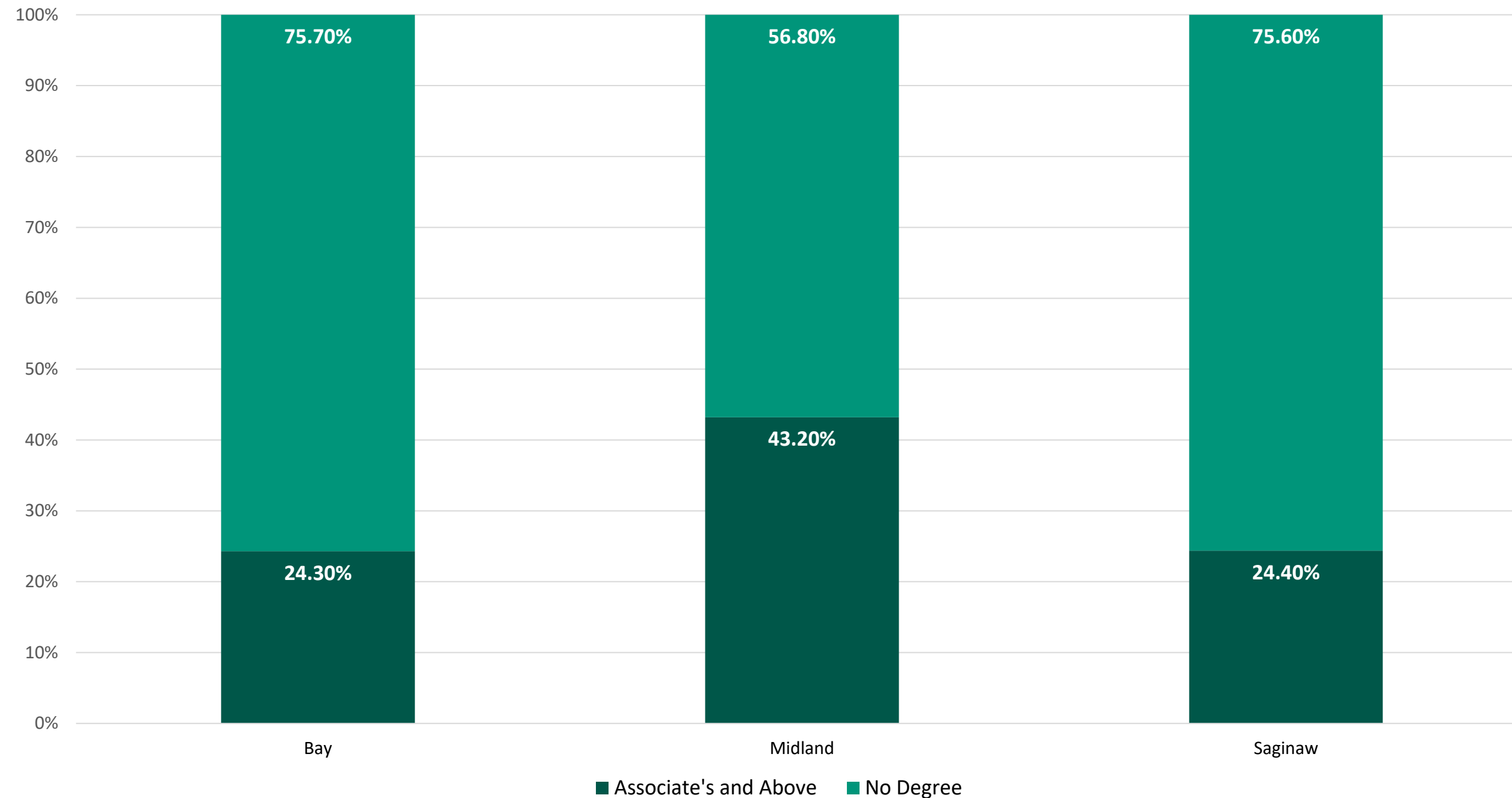
Completion

Year-to-year



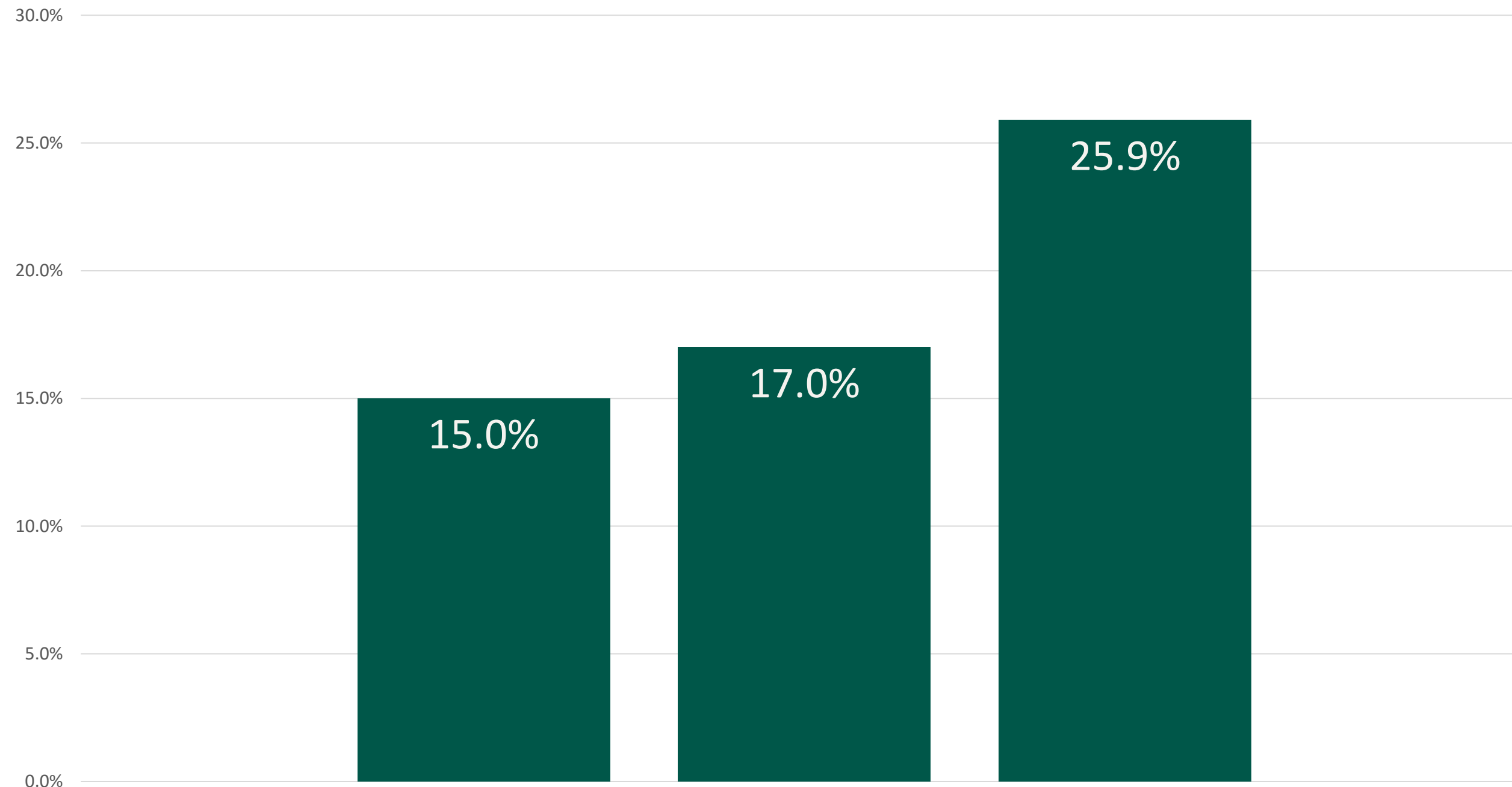
Degree Attainment in Delta's District

Based on census data



Completion

3-year graduation rate



2021-22

2022-23

2023-24*

*23-24 grad rate still in progress.



michigan community college association
LEADERSHIP ACADEMY

TURN AND TALK



- When have you seen a leader take a strategic risk? How did they approach it? What was the outcome?
- How have you taken strategic risks in your work? What was the result? If you haven't had many opportunities for strategic risk-taking, how might you build that skill as you prepare to advance in your leadership?

Ability to create lasting change within a college

Effective leaders strategically lead institutional reform by implementing a limited set of bold student success reform strategies while, at the same time, developing key institutional capacities.

What does it look like in action?

- **Define a prioritized agenda** for scalable and sustainable change to improve student success outcomes
- **Use data** to build urgency and a shared understanding of the reform agenda
- **Communicate consistently and effectively** about the reforms, considering audience and message
- **Employ change management strategies** to build shared ownership for the reforms
- **Align structures, resources, incentives, and capacities** to key student success goals

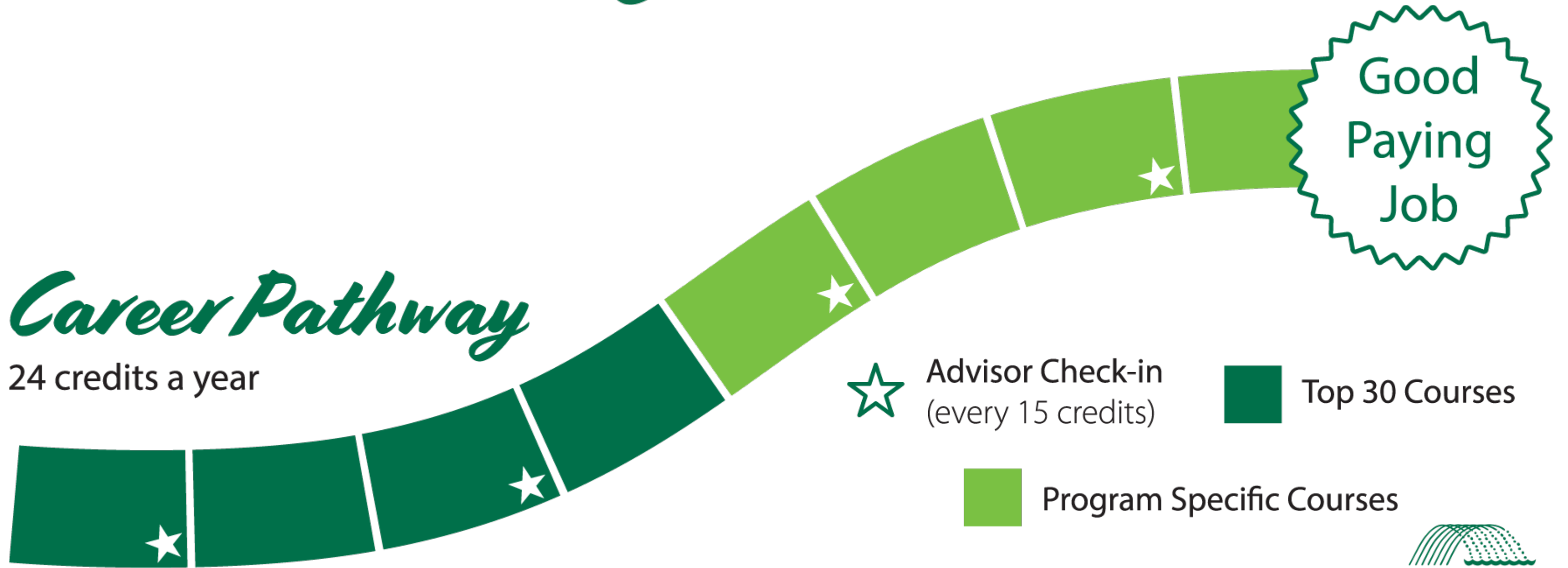


“It is not about the faculty, staff, or administration; it is really about the student...The president, of all people, must first and foremost be an advocate for the student and create a culture where the student is the centerpiece of the institution.”

**–Jerry Sue Thornton, former president,
Cuyahoga Community College**



the way forward



the way forward

Transfer

24 credits a year



Transfer
as Jr.
or Sr.



Advisor Check-in
(every 15 credits)



Top 30 Courses



Delta College



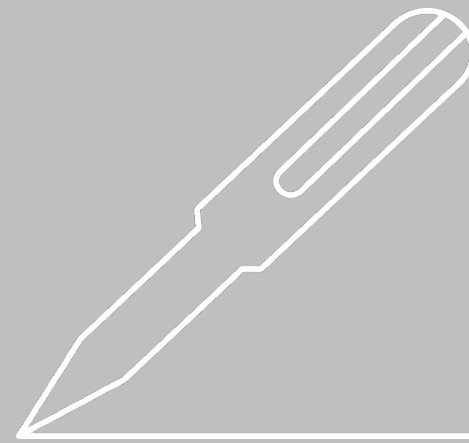
MAJOR SHIFTS AT DELTA

- Change in governance systems
- Shift in data emphasis and use
- Enrollment and Retention Management bi-weekly
- Partnerships are key



STOP AND JOT

Ability to create lasting change within a college

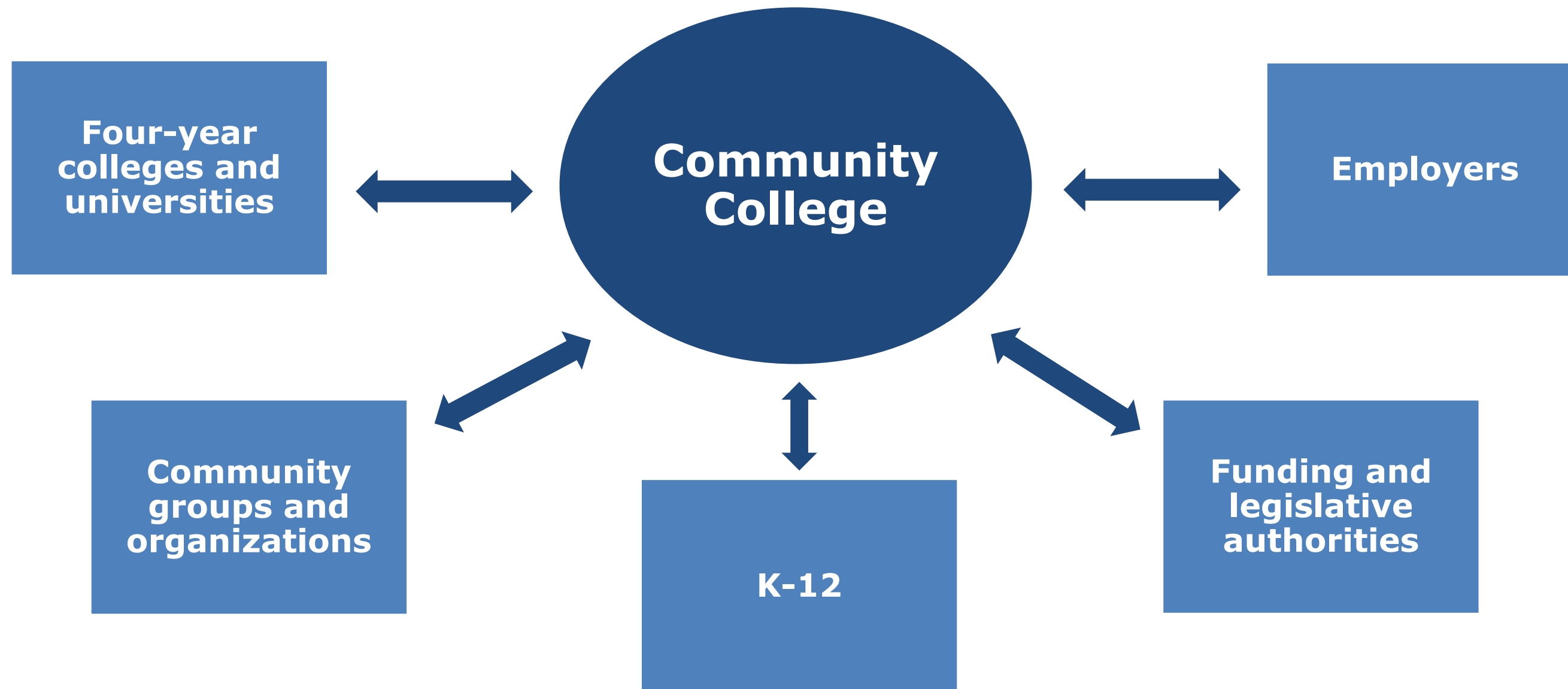


How have you seen an **ability to create lasting change within a college** in action from senior leaders and presidents you've worked with?

Ability to enact a strong, bold strategic vision for the college and its students reflected in external partnerships

What does it look like in action:

Effective leaders possess a vision that extends beyond the college to achieve broader aims of student success that the college could not achieve alone, and the capacity and commitment to build and sustain scaled strategic partnerships to achieve that vision.



Ability to enact a strong, bold strategic vision for the college and its students reflected in external partnerships

Effective leaders possess a vision that extends beyond the college to achieve broader aims of student success that the college could not achieve alone, and the capacity and commitment to build and sustain scaled strategic partnerships to achieve that vision.

What does it look like in action?

- Working closely with:
 - **K-12** systems to ensure students are equitably connected to programs of study
 - **Four-year colleges and universities** to define skills, create clear pathways, and improve transfer processes and outcomes
 - **Employers** to define skills, provide regular feedback, support work-based learning, and supply scholarships and equipment
 - **Community-based organizations** to connect adults to programs of value and deliver nonacademic supports
 - **Funding and legislative authorities** to ensure policy and financial decisions that support the community college mission



Building Community Partnerships

to Address Hurdles Students Face



Housing



New Approach to
Food Pantry



Transportation



Uwill: Mental
Health



Mobile Medical
Unit



Child Care



Projects We Are Doing



Academic DEI



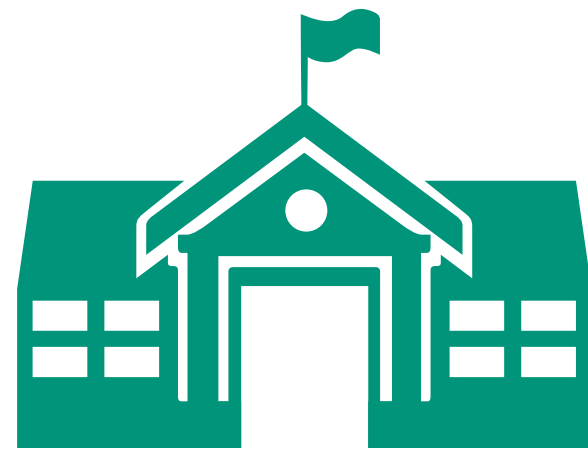
Nursing Cohort



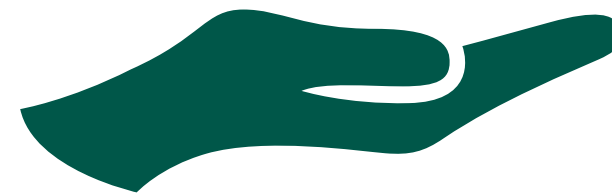
Mentor Collective



Student Success



Faculty Staffing



SES Staffing



Summer Childcare

Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA)



- CBA requires inclusive pedagogy in the classroom for evaluation
- Same for Promotion and Tenure
- Assessment of student success rates at monthly meetings, with aggregate and disaggregated data studied

More Initiatives

- Equitable transfer
- Equitable job placement
- Dual enrollment as an equity imperative

National Recognition

for Student Successes since 2021

- Eduardo Padron Award for Institutional Transformation
 - Commitment to Equity Community & Civic Engagement
- Achieving the Dream
 - Leader College
- White House Visits and Highlights



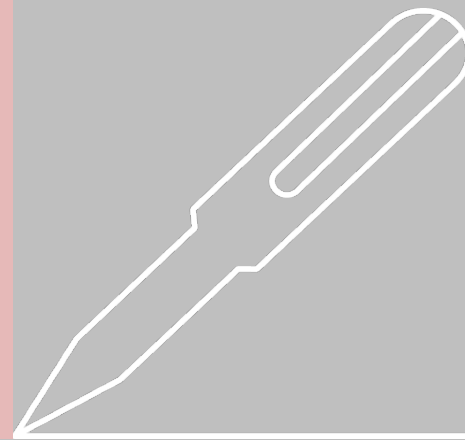
“Follow the students. Where are they coming from and where they are going will tell you where to develop partnerships to help students.”

–**Bob Templin, former president, Northern Virginia Community College**



STOP AND JOT

Ability to enact a strong, bold strategic vision for the college and its students reflected in external partnerships



How have you seen an **ability to enact a strong, bold strategic vision for the college and its students reflected in external partnerships** in action from senior leaders and presidents you've worked with?

Ability to align resources to student success

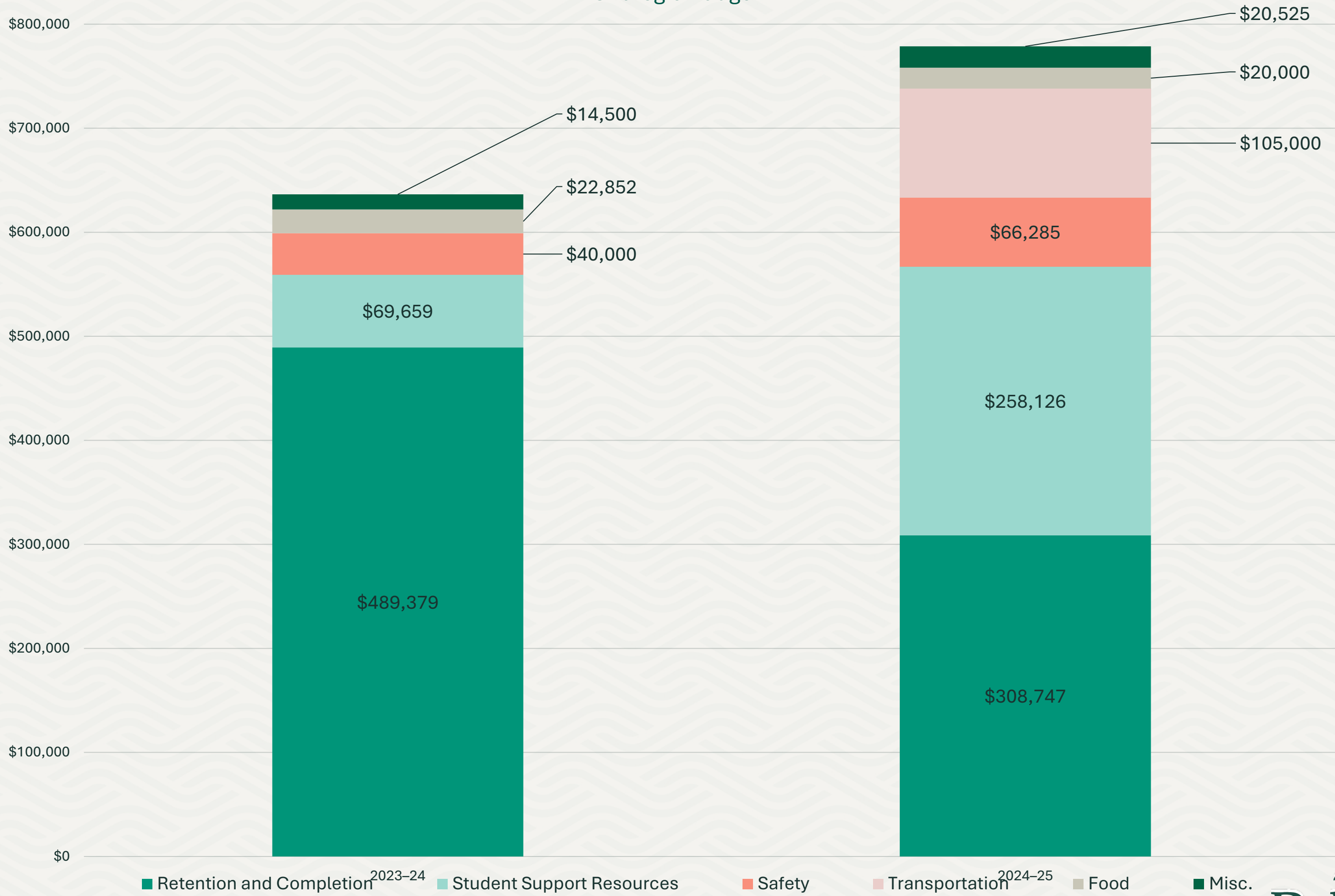
Effective leaders raise substantial resources from multiple sources and work to strategically align revenue acquisition and resource allocation to student success goals.

What does it look like in action (internally)?

- Make clear that the bottom line will be guided first and foremost by the institution's student access and success mission
- Realign resources when needed to advance student outcomes, maximizing the portion of limited resources spent on what matters most to advance student success
- Develop a human capital strategy for hiring, developing, and incentivizing faculty and staff, understanding that the vast majority of your budget and student's time is spent with them



Strategic Budget



■ Retention and Completion ²⁰²³⁻²⁴
■ Student Support Resources
 ■ Safety
 ■ Transportation ²⁰²⁴⁻²⁵
■ Food
 ■ Misc.



**Ability to align
resources to
student success**

Effective leaders raise substantial resources from multiple sources and work to strategically align revenue acquisition and resource allocation to student success goals.

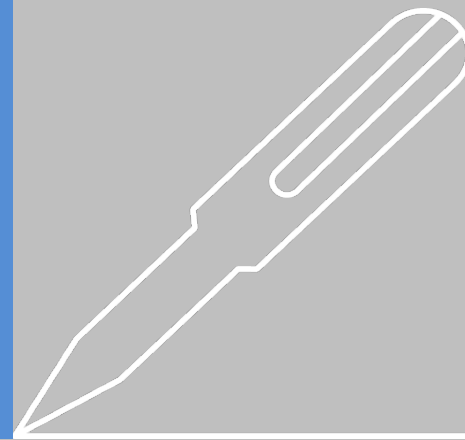
What does it look like in action (externally)?

- Play a lead role in developing partnerships that bring resources to mission and in securing funds from state legislatures, higher education systems, foundations, corporations, and individual donors
- Position and support other college leaders to increasingly play important roles in developing partnerships and securing resources
- Find entrepreneurial ways to raise revenue to support strategies for improving student success



STOP AND JOT

Ability to align
resources to
student success



How have you seen an **ability to align resources to student success** in action from senior leaders and presidents you've worked with?

QUALITIES OF TRANSFORMATIONAL COMMUNITY COLLEGE LEADERS

Deep commitment to student access and success with excellence and equity

Willingness to take strategic risks to advance student success

Ability to create lasting change within a college

Ability to enact a strong, bold strategic vision for the college and its students reflected in external partnerships

Ability to align resources to student success



INDEPENDENT REFLECTION



Refer to the five qualities of transformational community college leaders in your Participant Toolkit.

- Which of the qualities do you most often and least often see among leaders today?
- Why do you think that is?


TURN AND TALK



Refer to the five qualities of transformational community college leaders in your Participant Toolkit.

- Discuss the examples of the qualities you identified in your Stop and Jot reflections.
- Which of the qualities do you most often and least often see among leaders today? Why do you think that is?

MODULE 1 SEQUENCE

Session	Focus
<i>Kickoff Activity:</i> Leadership Capacity Assessment Tool	Mid-level Leader Qualities
<i>Presentation:</i> Qualities of Transformational Community College Leaders	Senior-level Leader Qualities
 <i>Panel:</i> Strengthening Leadership for Student Success	Leader Development and Mid-level/Senior-level Connections
<i>Reflection and Discussion:</i> Strengthening Leadership for Student Success	Mid-level/Senior-level Connections and Personal Reflection



BREAK

The convening will resume at 3:00 pm

PANEL DISCUSSION: STRENGTHENING LEADERSHIP FOR STUDENT SUCCESS



michigan community college association
LEADERSHIP ACADEMY

See Participant Toolkit

STRENGTHENING LEADERSHIP FOR STUDENT SUCCESS

Panelists


- Dr. Glenn Cerny, President, Schoolcraft College
- Dr. Lori Gonko, Vice President of Strategy & Human Resources, Henry Ford College
- Michael Williams, Director of Financial Aid, Macomb Community College

Moderator

- Dr. Mike Gavin, President, Delta College



MODULE 1 SEQUENCE

Session	Focus
<i>Kickoff Activity:</i> Leadership Capacity Assessment Tool	Mid-level Leader Qualities
<i>Presentation:</i> Qualities of Transformational Community College Leaders	Senior-level Leader Qualities
<i>Panel:</i> Strengthening Leadership for Student Success	Leader Development and Mid-level/Senior-level Connections
 <i>Reflection and Discussion:</i> Strengthening Leadership for Student Success	Mid-level/Senior-level Connections and Personal Reflection



INDEPENDENT REFLECTION



Reflect on the following:

- What are your key takeaways about leadership from the panel discussion? How did the panelists' reflections connect to the five qualities we discussed in the presentation?
- The presentation focused on what the five qualities look like in action for presidents and senior leaders. What do these qualities look like in mid-level leadership roles?
- Which of the five qualities is an area of growth for you? (Consider these qualities alongside your results from the Leadership Capacity Assessment for mid-level leaders.) How might you develop this quality in your current role?

GROUP DISCUSSION



Discuss the following

- What are your key takeaways about leadership from the panel discussion? How did the panelists' reflections connect to the five qualities we discussed in the presentation?
- The presentation focused on what the five qualities look like in action for presidents and senior leaders. What do these qualities look like in mid-level leadership roles?
- Which of the five qualities is an area of growth for you? (Consider these qualities alongside your results from the Leadership Capacity Assessment for mid-level leaders). How might you develop this quality in your current role?



GALLERY WALK



- Using the Post-its at your tables, write down how you could demonstrate or develop one of the Qualities of Transformational Community College Leadership in your current role. Post your idea on the corresponding chart paper.
- Repeat this with as many qualities as you like



MODULE 1 DEBRIEF AND REFLECTIONS



Q&A AND DISCUSSION



- What learning might you take back to your current role, based on this module?
- What might you share with others at your institution?

CLOSING LOGISTICS

Networking Reception in the Lobby 4:45-6:30 p.m.

Day 2, Friday, March 21st 8:30 a.m. – 11:45 a.m.

Networking Breakfast 8:30 - 9:00 a.m.

Module 2: Striving for Equity as a Core Component of Leadership

