

Community Colleges Support Governor Murphy's State Plan for Higher Education

TRENTON, N.J. – The New Jersey Council of County Colleges released the following statements from New Jersey's community college presidents in support of the State of New Jersey's Higher Education Plan released earlier today.

Atlantic Cape Community College

President Barbara Gaba:

"Increasing higher education attainment and decreasing achievement gaps have long been pillars of the community college mission. The State Plan for Higher Education offers an expansive vision of higher education that is collaborative and innovative that prepares students for success in an increasingly diverse and global economy. We are excited about the State Plan for Higher Education, and commend Governor Murphy and Secretary Smith Ellis for their vision and leadership."

Bergen Community College

President Michael Redmond:

"The likelihood of delivering results increases when we set targets for our aspirations. This plan sets worthy goals for student completion and success by providing seamless, affordable and creative pathways from high schools to community colleges to baccalaureate institutions and the workforce through enhanced partnerships with business and industry. In total, this plan encourages collaboration in the higher education community and embraces our responsibility to educate the next generation of citizens who will drive New Jersey forward in the 21st century."

Brookdale Community College

President David Stout:

"The goals within the plan for higher education create a framework in which the K-12, community colleges, four-year colleges and universities, and businesses can collaborate to create meaningful educational experiences for all students while at the same time preparing them for high wage careers. We commend Governor Murphy and Secretary Smith Ellis for developing a student-centric Higher Education Plan that will make New Jersey the national leader in providing higher education to all."

Camden County College

President Donald Borden:

“As the need for a post-high school education becomes ever more important in order to secure employment that pays a living wage, Secretary Zakiya Smith Ellis’ plan for higher education identifies core issues and addresses how to collaboratively make this opportunity available to all New Jersey residents.”

Essex County College

President Anthony Munroe:

“The State Plan for Higher Education sets forth a vision that will increase access to post-secondary education for more New Jerseyans, allowing them to earn the credentials and degrees they will need to obtain jobs that provide family-sustaining wages. Their education can take various forms, including industry relevant credentials, associate degrees and beyond. At Essex County College, we are taking bold steps to innovate – just as this plan will guide creative partnerships, innovation and opportunities across the state of New Jersey. Essex County College has been a leader in providing workforce development training, which enable students to go into high-demand, innovative jobs. We are very pleased that the Secretary of Higher Education, Dr. Zakiya Smith Ellis, and Governor Murphy have placed important emphasis on higher education and moving the entire sector forward with students as the focal point. This bold plan is timely and will create the funding needed by so many in Essex County to attend college and better their lives. We look forward to this plan becoming a reality.”

Hudson County Community College

President Chris Reber:

“I look forward to working with all of my colleagues in the K-12 and postsecondary educational communities in order to build partnerships and pathways that support the State Plan for Higher Education. Together we can achieve outcomes for our students and communities that are greater than the sum of our individual contributions. I speak for all members of Hudson County Community College in thanking the Governor and Secretary for their leadership and vision for educational excellence in New Jersey that is second to none.”

Mercer County Community College

President Jianping Wang:

“This Action Plan puts student success front and center. Mercer County Community College looks forward to continuing our innovative partnerships with businesses, four-year institutions, school districts, and government agencies to achieve our shared vision and to meet the goal of 65% of the adult population having earned an industry-valued post-secondary credential or degree by 2025.”

Middlesex County College

Interim President Mark McCormick:

“Now more than ever, it is important for the state, colleges, high schools, and employers to work together to help more of our residents earn a high quality college degree or credential. The State Plan for Higher Education offers a strong, innovative and student-centered vision for

higher education in New Jersey. Middlesex County College looks forward to working with the Governor and the Secretary of Higher Education to implement this plan.”

County College of Morris

President Anthony Iacono:

“As a recognized leader in higher education and a partner to more than 400 businesses and organizations throughout New Jersey, CCM whole-heartedly supports this state plan. CCM works very hard to support its students and partners. This plan puts their needs first and helps focus the conversation about the future of higher education, affordability, quality, and outcomes. These factors, amongst others included in the state plan, will enable our state’s institutions of higher education to work in an even more effective manner to change lives, strengthen communities and help build a stronger New Jersey.”

Ocean County College

President Jon Larson:

“The new State Plan for Higher Education is a clear and insightful roadmap for addressing strengths, equity gaps and progress needed. We are all pleased with the plan and to have been asked for input.”

Passaic County Community College

President Steven Rose:

“The plan for higher education in New Jersey presented by Governor Murphy and Secretary Smith-Ellis provides a strong vision and foundation for the development of initiatives to ensure that students receive an accessible and affordable world-class education.”

Raritan Valley Community College

President Michael McDonough:

“This comprehensive vision for higher education in New Jersey is bold, innovative and, most importantly, inspiring. Its promise is inclusive, serving all residents and sectors of our vibrant state.”

Rowan College at Burlington County

President Michael Cioco:

“Our 3+1 path to high-quality affordable college degrees aligns with the goals of the new State Plan for Higher Education and we look forward to working with Secretary Smith Ellis to increase the number of graduates, eliminate achievement gaps and reduce the costs of college in New Jersey.”

Rowan College at Gloucester County

President Frederick Keating:

“We are eager to work with the Governor and the Office of the Secretary of Higher Education to bring this thoughtful plan for higher education to fruition.”

Salem Community College

President Michael Gorman:

“Education is essential to our quality of life, both as an individual and a community. Salem Community College is excited to be working with the Office of the Secretary of Higher Education in providing affordable, quality and empowering educational opportunities.”

Sussex County Community College

President Jon Connolly:

“New Jersey is at a pivotal moment in its history. Augmenting our human capital, properly, will make the difference for our collective future. Getting more students, of all ages, on a pathway to a post-secondary degree or credential and supporting their efforts to succeed will strengthen New Jersey. We thank Governor Murphy and Secretary Smith Ellis for making these priorities in the State Plan for Higher Education.

Union County College

President Margaret McMenamin:

“Union County College enthusiastically endorses the State Plan for Higher Education released by Secretary Zakiya Smith-Ellis today. We appreciate Secretary Smith-Ellis’ and Governor Murphy’s support of New Jersey’s community colleges.”

Warren County Community College

President Will Austin:

“New Jersey’s workforce must be fueled by highly-skilled, credentialed employees. The State Plan for Higher Education will ensure that all New Jerseyans can join and prosper within this highly-skilled workforce.”

New Jersey Council of County Colleges

President Aaron Fichtner:

“For New Jersey to remain competitive in a global economy, it is critical that 65 percent of the working population hold a post-secondary degree, certificate or credential by the year 2025. The State Plan for Higher Education will help us reach this critical goal. We look forward to working closely with Governor Murphy and Secretary Smith Ellis to implement a student-centered vision for higher education in our state.”

The New Jersey Council of County Colleges joins the leadership of trustees and presidents to serve as a resource that strengthens and supports the state’s 19 community colleges.