



21st Century Report - Implementation

Messages and Talking Points

These are brief messages, sound bites, and talking points to use to write and talk about the implementation plan. These do NOT take the place of more detailed description but will be common, easy-to-say statements that avoid jargon and include multiple audiences.

- Community colleges are the institutions of the American Dream. Our students' dreams are our mission.
- To fulfill our student success mission, we are taking on the obstacles that get in the way. It's time we take more responsibility to ensure our students achieve a family-supporting job.
- Together we have committed to become stronger, work smarter, and push harder to get them there.
- Two years ago AACCC created a roadmap to transform community colleges to promote student success in the 21st-century.
- Hundreds of educators and leaders from across the country have examined and researched what it will take to deliver on the three R's of reform: redesign, reinvent and reset.
- **Community colleges leaders are advancing a plan to be the change.**
- It's time to implement these recommendations. These changes will ensure our colleges deliver on the promise of educational and economic opportunity to 13 million diverse students in search of the American Dream.
- A few major ideas will take time and investment, but they will make the difference.
 - We must ensure all of our strategies **increase college completion**. We will marshal all forces from technology to policy to regulatory changes to drive 50% more students towards their finish line by 2020.
 - There is a **skills gap** in our country, causing employers to have unfilled positions and too many Americans unable to find family wage supporting jobs. Our colleges have solutions for both the employers and the students. We can orient our student through programs that position them for in-demand careers and into sectors where there is growth.
 - Our colleges will voluntarily embrace ways to measure their own progress and make their institutions increasingly **accountable** to students and society. We must know and

share transparently how many students are earning degrees, prepared for the work force, and achieving their goals.

- We now know enough about where students get stuck or lost on the path through college to create clearer and more coherent paths for students to complete degrees that prepare them for family-supporting careers.
- We cannot achieve our degree completion goals if we don't fix **college readiness** on a national scale. AACC will lead a **national summit** to deliver on this priority. We know that one key way to ensure students complete college is to ensure they're ready when they arrive. Our colleges will combine forces with high schools and other partners **to reduce by half those who are unprepared for college level work**. By shoring up developmental education we **will double the number of students that progress to credit courses**.
- Colleges must act to *mind the gaps* and make **college-to-career seamless** for students. We owe it to our students to guide them through our institutions to success in the work force.
- Community colleges can ensure students earn **credentials and degrees that stack up** and position them for career growth. This way, students can work and earn an income, and return to our colleges in their own time to build on their education and plan for further career advancement.
- Community colleges can and will utilize both public and private investment in strategic ways to deliver the most bang for the buck. We know that a community college education offers both students and society high ROI and we will reinforce these messages.

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As the voice of the nation's community colleges, the American Association of Community Colleges (AACC), delivers educational and economic opportunity for 13 million diverse students in search of the American Dream. Uniquely dedicated to access and success for all students, AACC's nearly 1,200 member colleges provide an on-ramp to degree attainment, skilled careers and family-supporting wages. Located in Washington, D.C., AACC advocates for these not-for-profit, public-serving institutions to ensure they have the resources and support they need to deliver on the mission of increasing economic mobility for all.