Guided Pathways to Advance Student Success

Positioning Bakersfield College for Success with a New Funding Formula

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1) Can you walk me through/explain the new rules/regulations regarding funding from the state and graduation rates for community colleges? What are the requirements that need to be met?

Historically, California community colleges have been funded based on access, which has been defined as the number of students who enroll in the college. The technical term is Full-Time Equivalent Student or FTES. The funding formula shift is designed to capture new policies from the state chancellor's office focused on student success. In this case, student success is defined as students completing degrees and certificates.

While there are no requirements colleges must meet, colleges will now be funded based on three broad categories: Base, Equity, and Success.

- Category one is the base which focuses on access or number of students enrolled as the college.
- Category two is an equity measure that addresses the number of students enrolled who rely on financial aid to attend the college.
- Category three is based on student success – completing certificates, CTE associate degrees, transfer associate degrees, and our baccalaureate degree. To take it a step further, the funding formula considers in the third category of success students' wage after they graduate from BC's programs or their transfer programs.

2) How is this going to affect our local students here at BC? What is the BC graduation rate? What are we aiming to raise the rate too?

Long before news of a new funding formula, Bakersfield College adopted a guided pathways framework to advance student success. To implement this framework, faculty, staff, and students have come together to identify and remove barriers in our systems and processes, and replace them with structures designed to support students in attaining their educational goals. Several years into our implementation, we're seeing major results.

BC's graduation rate has been climbing steadily for several years, with last year's graduating class the largest in the colleges 104 year history. Here is some evidence of BC's work

- Grew Associate Degree for Transfer awards by over 1,400%, contributing to overall BC degree completion by 58.8% since 2012.
- Increased transfers to CSU Bakersfield by 36.2% in the last 5 years, with a total of 78.82% of all CSU transfers choosing CSUB.

We will not be satisfied until 100% of students who begin at the college complete their educational goals. That's why you've seen BC reach into the high schools to offer dual enrollment courses, open campuses in rural communities, and expand support services like our Summer Bridge to ensure students have all the tools they need to be successful.

BC will continue to do whatever it takes to reach students where they are – to take instruction to students like our campus in the Southwest, in Arvin, in Delano, and in Shafter, so students can get on their pathways and complete on time.

3) Specifically, what are some of the steps that the school is planning to implement to raise the graduation rate and meet your goal?

In addition to what is detailed above, BC is fully committed to partnering with our high schools to ensure students can get on their pathway early. We visit over 50 high schools, hosting more than 200 workshops before they even set foot on campus so students can complete their educational plans and enroll in courses right at their high school. Here is some data on our high school outreach work:

- First-time Student (FTS) enrollment has increased **33.46%** from 3,296 (Fall 2016) to 4,399 (Fall 2017), which is 20.25% of the total student population at Bakersfield College.
- Fully matriculated FTS's before priority registration increased **14%** from 2,953 (Fall 2016) to 3,368 (Fall 2017).
- Registered 2,386 FTS at High School Registration Rocks (2nd day early registration event), up **250%** from fall 2017.
- For fall 2018, we have 209 dual enrollment sections scheduled, representing a 40% increase over last year.

Once enrolled, we've designed a robust orientation called Summer Bridge, which has grown by over 1,400% in the past year. We commit to support student learning outside of the classroom by offering academic support services like tutoring, the Writing Center, Supplemental Instruction, and a math lab – all of which are integrated with the classes students are taking.

Our entire campus community has transitioned to a cohort management approach to student success through which students are organized by their major so that a team of expert Completion Coaches support the students individually and in groups. These Completion Coaches are discipline faculty, counseling faculty, student support service personnel, and even students who monitor student progress and proactively connect with students.

BC has been recognized statewide for this innovative work to increase completion rates. In May 2018, the Board of Governors of the California community colleges recognized BC with a $2.3M Innovation Award. We were one of just 11 of the 114 community colleges in the state to earn such a recognition.

4) **What about a timetable? What time frame have you set (or the state set) to meet your goals?**

Bakersfield College is well-positioned because we have been relentless in our focus on student completion for years now. Each year we refine our focus, and our data show that it's working as detailed previously. Over 2,000 students graduated with degrees and

certificates last May, including our first cohort of students with a bachelor's degree from BC.

5) **Across the state, only around 30 percent of community college students complete their associate's degrees or transfer to a four-year institution. Why are the numbers so low? What are some of the largest barriers that students face?**

Our students arrive to our campus from many different backgrounds and have many different goals. Last year, we awarded more degrees and certificates than ever before in the history of the college, and our transfer rates are soaring thanks to our amazing partnerships with CSU and UC schools throughout the state. We know the barriers our students face are complex, and we're committed to providing the resources and support they need to be successful using a guided pathways framework.

With a critical lens on issues of equitable educational attainment, Kern County educators and industry leaders have been working to provide opportunities for applied learning through internships with business and industry partners, to embed academic support services for first generation and low- income students throughout the students' pathways, and create pathways for success. In 2016, educational leaders established The Kern Promise. The Kern Promise is characterized by a targeted effort to engage students in a holistic experience through a shared responsibility model where students commit to uphold academic standards while the colleges commit to provide quality support. The Promise is focused on two primary goals: Timely Completion and Financial Assistance.

A defining feature of The Kern Promise is the reduction of excess unit accumulation. By addressing college readiness, pathway clarity, and adequate support for timely completion, BC will substantially reduce the cost to completion for participants in the Promise, while saving taxpayers money in the long-term.

To take the Promise to the next level, Bakersfield College and CSU Bakersfield established the Finish in 4 project, through which BC and CSUB faculty completed the mapping of thirty associate degrees for transfer that will allow students to follow a four-year bachelor's degree pathway from BC to CSU Bakersfield.

6) Is there a backup plan in place if we don't see the results that we want and funding is reduced from the state?

Bakersfield College has always been very nimble and innovative in finding solutions to meet the needs of our students. We are confident that we will continue to see student success, and the work we've done over the past few years has set the stage for continued success.

7) **How detrimental to BC's budget would it be if the funding was indeed cut?**

Inevitably, the state economy is cyclical. California community colleges have seen good years and bad years; yet, BC has always planned well to ensure our services are not interrupted. Over the years, the Kern Community College District and our Board of Trustees have had the foresight to ensure our financial planning is done in such a way we can weather external fluctuations in funding.

In addition, both KCCD and BC have worked hard to be fiscally prudent and aggressive in our pursuit of multiple funding sources to ensure we have a strong budget and reserve. Our priority is and will always be to ensure we offer the programs and services our students deserve.

8) Anything I missed on this topic that you think I should know? Or anything you want to tell me that I haven't asked you?

Education is the key to equity, social mobility, and economic prosperity. This drives the work of educators throughout Kern County, and been the foundation for envisioned and implemented institutional, instructional, and student service policy changes locally and statewide in recent years. By strengthening our partnerships across educational entities in our community, we have created a seamless experience for students as they move toward their educational and employment goals. This has resulted in tangible improvement in outcomes: improvement in completion of degrees and certificates, improvement in meeting the workforce demand of our industry sectors, and improvement in the overall health of our community.

Bakersfield College is laser- focused on improving outcomes for students across the educational spectrum, having invested substantial resources in improved placement practices, restructured support, and alignment with high school and university partners. Without the collaboration of education and industry partners, these successes will not be possible.