



Strategic Plan South Suburban College 2014-2019

**Board Approved:
October 9, 2014**



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A message from President Manning

Dear South Suburban College Community:

It is with pride and gratitude that I present South Suburban College's Strategic Plan 2014-2019.

The strategic directions and goals outlined in this plan draw upon the collective wisdom, experience, passion, and hopes of many dedicated members in our college community.

SSC's plan has a dual focus: supporting student success and advancing community prosperity. The plan is comprehensive, forward thinking, and aligns with the American Association of Community College's 21st Century Commission on the Future of Community College's 2012 report, *Reclaiming the American Dream: Community Colleges and the Nation's Future*.

The plan is the culmination of a campus wide effort that actively engaged community educational and business leaders, faculty, staff, and students.

South Suburban College purposely chose a broad, collaborative, and community-based strategic planning process. The values of openness, inclusiveness and transparency guided the entire planning process.

The college examined the three areas most relevant to the college's mission, vision, values, opportunities, and priorities:

- 1. Increasing students' readiness to undertake college-level work.**
- 2. Improving completion rates.**
- 3. Closing skill gaps; aligning graduates' learning and credentials with industrial and occupational demands.**

I invite you and others within our community to continue engaging and contributing to the exciting, necessary, and demanding work before us. I am confident that through our collective efforts and combined expertise, the college and our community will achieve the goals and priorities identified in the plan.



Donald Manning
President

History of the College

South Suburban College, a public, two-year college, was founded in 1927 as Thornton Junior College, an extension of Thornton Township High School in Harvey, Illinois, which provided space for the college. On September 19, 1927, Thornton Junior College, under the jurisdiction of the Board of Education of Cook County High School District 205, began classes for forty-seven students with a faculty of fifteen.

Although Thornton Junior College was the fifth junior college established in Illinois, there was at the time no legal sanction for such an institution. In 1931, legislation established the legality of the junior college in the public school system. In 1937, additional legislation validated existing junior colleges outside of Chicago and permitted the founding of others. With the passage of the Illinois Public Community College Act in 1965, college district 510 was established to include Thornton Township High Schools District 205 (presently Thornton, Thornridge, & Thornwood), Thornton Fractional High Schools District 215 (presently Thornton Fractional South & Thornton Fractional North), and Bremen Community High Schools District 228 (Bremen, Tinley Park, Hillcrest, & Oak Forest). District 510 has twenty communities in the south suburban area of Chicago.

In 1969, the name of the institution was changed to Thornton Community College, to reflect more accurately its mission as a comprehensive community college and to dispel the notion that the college was merely an extension of the local high schools. With plans to construct a permanent campus, the college moved in 1971 to an interim campus in South Holland, and the first phase of the main campus was completed in 1972. By 1976, with the exception of a few classes held at local high schools, Thornton Community College offered programs and courses at its new 437,596 square-foot campus facility.

In June of 1988, the Board of Trustees unanimously voted to change the name of the institution to South Suburban College. The trustees concluded that since the college serves more than just Thornton Township (Bremen and parts of Bloom and Calumet Townships as well), a broader name was appropriate; thus, the name South Suburban College of Cook County was chosen. For day-to-day purposes, the name South Suburban College is used.

In 1992, the Trustees opened the University and College Center in Oak Forest, to serve the district's western portion. Recently, the college renamed the facility as the Oak Forest Center (OFC) highlighting the facility's close proximity for students residing in the western portion of the district.

Strategic Planning Process Background

This document captures the essence of South Suburban College's strategic plan. SSC's strategic plan will provide focus, guidance, and direction for the next five years. The strategic plan includes the college's mission and vision statements, core values, four strategic priorities and directions, and a strategic planning monitoring process.

South Suburban College chose a broad, collaborative, and community-based strategic planning process. South Suburban College looked beyond the campus to engage diverse stakeholders, as well as, college personnel and students to provide input to strategic plan priorities and development. This planning was inclusive and transparent, market-focused, and data-driven. The efforts included: an online survey regarding SSC's performance and desired directions from internal and external stakeholders; the gathering of economic and workforce data and program gap and surplus analysis; and developing and distributing an environmental scan report (released in February 2014) that synthesized stakeholder survey findings, economic and workforce data, and program gap and surplus findings. SSC then convened approximately 100 internal and external stakeholders in a strategic planning retreat, held February 12-13, 2014, to gather input, discuss critical needs and opportunities, and craft directions for the college's strategic plan.

SSC's strategic plan has a dual focus: supporting student success and advancing community prosperity. The plan aligns with the American Association of Community College's (AACC) 21st-Century Commission on the Future of Community College's 2012 report, *Reclaiming the American Dream: Community Colleges and the Nation's Future*.

Within the broader AACC 21st-Century Commission framework of recommendation, SSC examined three areas most relevant to the college's vision, opportunities, and priorities:

- 1. Increasing students' readiness to undertake college-level work.**
- 2. Improving completion rates.**
- 3. Closing skill gaps; aligning graduates' learning and credentials with industrial and occupational demand.**

Woven throughout all three elements of planning were themes related to SSC's advocacy role, its institutional accountability, and its policies and investments.

Taken together, the three framework elements - college readiness, college completion, and closing skill gaps - combined with advocacy, accountability, and policy and investment, drove SSC's strategic planning, structured the February 2014 retreat, and guided the college's development of the plan.

During the February 2014 retreat, participants developed, refined, and came to consensus on specific strategic directions. These directions are the basis for the goals, strategies, activities, and performance metrics in the college's strategic plan.

Mission And Vision

Our Mission

The mission of South Suburban College is to **S**erve our **S**tudents and the **C**ommunity through lifelong learning.

Our Vision

South Suburban College is a welcoming, attractive, efficient, safe, transparent, and financially secure institution that fosters creative communication and synergy within the campus community and between that community and its partners.

Through innovative teaching, integration of technology, modeling sustainable practices that value the environment, cultivation of external partnerships and a culture of assessment, SSC will play a pivotal role in transforming the lives of its diverse student population.



South Suburban College's mission and vision are supported by the following values:

Core Values

Service

We serve our students, partners, and the community.

Student-Centered Environment

We are dedicated to student achievement and promote innovative strategies and initiatives to maximize our students' opportunity for success.

Community

We value our partners in business, industry, government, school districts, and fellow educators.

Collaboration

We value collaboration among SSC employees and SSC constituents.

Accessibility

We offer accessible, affordable programs to a diverse community of learners.

Respect

We admire differences and treat others with civility. We respect the rights, differences, and dignity of others.

Excellence

We support excellence in teaching, learning, and all supportive services.

Sustainability

We will be recognized for our commitment to sustainability, education and training, and the implementation of green initiatives and practices.

Strategic Planning Management and Accountability Structure

Individuals will assume various roles to ensure progress and accountability for all aspects of the strategic plan. The roles and functions of the positions are described below:

Strategic Directions Leaders (SDL): SDL will provide executive leadership and oversight for all activities supporting a strategic direction. SDL will identify resources and staff to ensure that the college supports each strategic direction. SDL are Steering Committee Members.

- Strategic Direction Leader 1
- Strategic Direction Leader 2
- Strategic Direction Leader 3
- Strategic Direction Leader 4

Strategic Goal Leaders (SGL): SGL will provide leadership and oversight on all initiatives identified within a goal. SGL will monitor progress and coordinate efforts across strategy teams. SGL will design and implement accountability plans to ensure progress is made on goals identified in the strategic plan. All accountability plans will identify timelines and measurable outcomes. SGL are co-led by an administrator and a faculty member.

- Developmental Education Leaders
- Academic Pathways Leaders
- Completers Leaders
- Stackable Degrees Leaders
- Student Advising Leaders
- Testing and Placement Leaders
- College Readiness Leaders
- Career Readiness Leaders
- Industry/Education Connection Leaders
- Innovation Leaders
- Grant Leaders
- Facilities Improvement Leaders

Strategy Team Leaders (STL): STL are responsible for leading strategy teams. Strategy teams will develop and implement action plans. All action plans will identify specific goals, timelines, and measurable outcomes. Strategy teams are led by a faculty member and/or appropriate staff.

- Math Remediation Team Leader
- English Remediation Team Leader
- Reading Remediation Team Leader
- Student Orientation Team Leader
- Student Advising Team Leader
- Career Readiness Certification Team Leader
- Employability Skills Team Leader
- College Readiness High School Transition Team Leader
- Adult Education Transition Team Leader
- Service Learning Team Leader
- Internship/Clinical/Apprenticeship Team Leader
- Financial Aid Team Leader
- Community/Business Partnership Team Leader
- Articulation Agreement Leader
- Internal Review Process Team Leader
- Facilities Sustainability Team Leader
- Facilities Technology Improvement Team Leader
- Facilities Modernization Team Leader



2014-2019 Strategic Plan and Directions*

(*The development of Strategic Directions incorporated the framework recommended by the American Association of Community Colleges (AACC)'s report "Reclaiming the American Dream: Community Colleges and the Nation's Future, A Report from the 21st Century Commission on the Future of Community Colleges).

Strategic Direction #1 (College Readiness)

South Suburban College will shorten remediation time and accelerate transition to college-level coursework.

Goals:

- CR 1.1: Develop and implement a plan to identify, assess, and place students in developmental education.
- CR 1.2: Investigate and potentially incorporate multiple measures for diagnostic assessment.
- CR 1.3: Accelerate developmental education completion.
- CR 1.4: Increase success in developmental course/sequence.
- CR 1.5: Develop and implement a system to track student progression through the developmental curriculum.



Strategic Direction # 2 (Student Success and Completion)

South Suburban College will engage students individually to ensure success and completion based upon best- practice models and rigorously measured through outcomes assessment.

Goals:

- SSC 2.1:** Provide credit courses and associate degree programs for an academically prepared student body to assist them in preparing for effective transfer to baccalaureate programs or placement directly into the job market. The college will be accountable for the quality of academic programs and utilization of assessment data for effective instructional changes.
- SSC 2.2:** Provide high quality, accessible and affordable credit courses and associate degree and certificate programs for a diverse academically prepared student body to assist them in preparing for occupations that require career education beyond high school level.
- SSC 2.3:** Design and implement programs that develop student leadership, ethical decision-making, and international cultural understanding.
- SSC 2.4:** Provide student orientation and create opportunities for students to develop skills for college success.
- SSC 2.5:** Provide early and continuous educational pathway advising, ensuring that all students enter a pathway as early as possible.
- SSC 2.6:** Engage students in all aspects of their college experience.
- SSC 2.7:** Integrate advising into every student's ongoing educational experience.
- SSC 2.8:** Leverage technology to monitor student progress and intervene when appropriate with intrusive support.



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- SSC 2.9:** Celebrate student success milestones.
- SSC 2.10:** Incorporate hands-on learning through apprenticeships, internships, clinical placements, fieldwork, service learning, etc.
- SSC 2.11:** Streamline automatic graduation when students meet requirements.
- SSC 2.12:** Establish reverse transfer processes that apply university credits towards associate degrees that can be awarded after transfer.
- SSC 2.13:** Align credentials with business and industry partners.
- SSC 2.14:** Establish stackable credentials.
- SSC 2.15:** Design and implement a competency-based vs. program/course based approach to curriculum and credential design and development.
- SSC 2.16:** Develop and implement a plan to review and examine internal processes that may improve or impede student completion and success.
- SSC 2.17:** Develop a process to allocate and/or reallocate resources based on the college's strategic plan directives and goals.
- SSC 2.18:** Develop a grant initiatives plan to secure support from government and private sources to meet the funding requirements and partnership needs of the strategic plan activities.
- SSC 2.19:** Develop a process to modernize all classrooms, labs, and other areas utilized by students, faculty, and staff as set forth by the college's master facilities plan.
- SSC 2.20:** Develop a plan to access and improve technology support systems that advance student learning.
- SSC 2.21:** Provide an attractive, safe, healthy, and welcoming learning environment for all students.

Strategic Direction # 3 (Educational Pathways)

South Suburban College will enhance collaboration with all K-12 stakeholders (district staff, guidance counselors, parents, students, etc.) to raise awareness about career opportunities at the certificate/associate degree level.

Goals:

- EP 3.1:** Create early educational pathway assessments.
- EP 3.2:** Work with K-12 systems to align high school and college curriculum.
- EP 3.3:** Develop educational pathways/dual enrollment programs for high school students and pathways for adults.
- EP 3.4:** Assist high school students and prospective adult students in obtaining financial aid and developing college success skills.
- EP 3.5:** Communicate specific expectations for college and career readiness to middle and high school counselors, students and parents/guardians. Work with K-12 systems to create seamless pathways with aligned standards and curricula.

- EP 3.6:** Inform middle/high school faculty and parents/guardians about college predictors. Support early assessments (e.g., college placement assessments in sophomore or junior year of high school) and interventions (e.g., academic skill building and student success courses for high school student).

Strategic Direction # 4 (Partnership Development)

South Suburban College will engage employers in targeted industries to identify, develop, and fill career pathways marked by relevant, work-driven certificates and degrees.

Goals

- PD 4.1:** Engage in community and business partnerships to develop programs and enhance existing programs in career areas.
- PD 4.2:** Engage with partners to match education and training with job requirements.
- PD 4.3:** Enhance the availabilities and use of internships, apprenticeships, service learning and contextualized learning.
- PD 4.4:** Encourage local and regional business partners to apply for adjunct faculty positions.
- PD 4.5:** Foster relationships with our business partners to facilitate employment opportunities for our students.
- PD 4.6:** Coordinate partnerships between career programs and community employers to bridge skill gaps.



Community Engagement

1. Community Forum- February 12 & 13, 2014

A. **Keynote Address:** Dr. Harry Berman, Former Executive Director, Illinois Board of Higher Education

B. Panel Presenters

1. *Discussion Panel #1: Increasing College Readiness*

- ◆ Dr. Creg E. Williams, Superintendent, District 215
- ◆ Dr. Bill Kendell, Superintendent, District 228
- ◆ Tom Porter, Director of Pupil Personnel Services, District 205
- ◆ Jennifer Foster, Associate Vice President for Adult Education and Workforce Development/State GED Administrator, Illinois Community College Board.

2. *Discussion Panel #2: Improving College Completion*

- ◆ Gerald Doyle, Vice Provost, Illinois Institute of Technology
- ◆ Dr. Reinhold Hill, Dean, College of Arts & Sciences, Governors State University
- ◆ Genevieve Boesen, Executive Director, South Metropolitan Higher Education Consortium
- ◆ Dr. Linda Uzureau, Assistant to the President, Governors State University



Dr. Creg E. Williams, Superintendent, District 215 and Dr. Bill Kendall, Superintendent, District 228, engage with community forum participants.



Tom Porter, Director of Personnel Services, District 205 listens to a question from a community forum participant.

3. Discussion Panel #3: Closing Skill Gaps

- ◆ Reggie Greenwood, Director of Economic Development, Chicago Southland Economic Development Corporation
- ◆ Marie Hoyer- Lareau, Chief Nursing Officer and Vice President of Patient Services for Franciscan St. Margaret Health
- ◆ Byron Zuidema, Regional Administrator, U.S. Department of Labor-Employment and Training Administration Region 5/ Chicago
- ◆ Lavon Nelson, Senior Director of Workforce Development, Illinois Community College Board



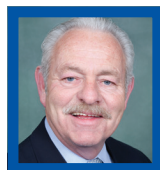
Improving College Readiness panel (left to right): Dr. Creg E. Williams, Superintendent, District 215, Dr. Bill Kendall, Superintendent, District 228, Jennifer Foster, Associate Vice President for Adult Education and Workforce Development/ State GED Administrator, Illinois Community College Board, and Tom Porter, Director of Pupil Personnel Services, District 205

Board Of Trustees



Frank M. Zuccarelli, Chairman

Zuccarelli, a South Holland resident, has served as a member of the South Suburban College Board of Trustees since 1978 and has been Board Chairman since 1987. A former student of the college, Zuccarelli is committed to maintaining an affordable educational system for the working person while keeping local taxes at the lowest possible level. During Frank's tenure, SSC has expanded its academic programs, initiated tuition deferments, and developed partnerships with DePaul, Governors State, Chicago State University and the University of St. Francis among other institutions. In addition to his role at SSC, Zuccarelli has served as Thornton Township Supervisor since 1993.



John A. Daly, Vice-Chair

Daly, an Oak Forest resident, has served as a member of the SSC Board of Trustees since 1991. He became Vice-Chairman in 1994 and served as Chairman of the Presidential Search Committees. Daly also serves as the Village Administrator for Orland Hills.



Terry R. Wells

Wells, a Phoenix resident, was appointed to the SSC Board of Trustees in 2001. He currently serves as Chairperson of the Board's Legislative Committee, and represents SSC as a legislative liaison in Springfield through the Illinois Community College Trustee Association. He also serves as President of the Village of Phoenix, a position he has held since 1993.



Anthony DeFilippo

DeFilippo, a Calumet City resident, has served on the SSC Board of Trustees since 1989. As a registered pharmacist, DeFilippo works in the medical affairs sector and is responsible for the advancement of medical education and clinical trial opportunities at academic and medical centers. He serves in this capacity throughout the country.



Joseph Whittington, Jr.

Whittington, Jr, a Harvey resident for over 24 years has served as a member of the SSC Board of Trustees since 2005 and serves as Chairman of the Board's Audit Committee. Married with four children, Whittington has been an Alderman of the second Ward in Harvey since 2003, and is working with the city and developers to initiate programs to revitalize the business area. He recently retired after 36 years of service as a Senior Facilitator at P.A.C.E. Institute, located within the Cook County Department of Corrections in Chicago.



Jacqueline Martin

Martin, a Lansing resident, was appointed to the Board in 1997 and serves as the Chairperson of the Architectural Committee. Employed as an administrative assistant, Jacque also serves on the Advisory Board for Disabled Students.



Rebecca Garcia, Student Trustee

Rebecca Garcia was newly elected to the position of Student Trustee in April of 2012. Ms. Garcia, a resident of Dolton, IL, has returned to school to pursue her degree and is studying Political Science at SSC. Garcia is looking forward to listening and learning about the issues to better advocate for the students of the college. Garcia is the first president of the recently established SSC Green Club and also participates in SSC Student Leadership.



Janet M. Rogers

Rogers, a Harvey resident, was appointed to the SSC Board of Trustees in 2013 and serves as Chairperson of the Policy Committee. She retired from Bloom High School in 2009, where she was a Culinary Arts and Special Education teacher for 30 years.