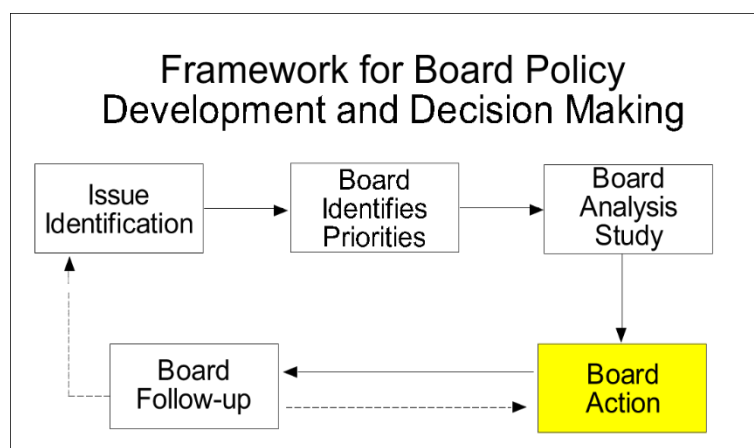


# Iowa State Board of Education

## Executive Summary

June 19, 2025



**Agenda Item:** Eastern Iowa Community Colleges Interim Accreditation Report

**State Board Priority:** Goal 4

**State Board Role/Authority:** Iowa Code section 260C.47(3) grants authority to the State Board of Education to determine whether the programs of a community college shall remain accredited.

**Presenters:** Robin Shaffer Lilienthal, Administrative Consultant  
Bureau of Community Colleges

From Eastern Iowa Community Colleges:

Liang Chee Wee, Chancellor

Jeremy Pickard, Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs (VCAA)

Brian Kelly, Vice Chancellor of Strategy, Support, and Planning/President

Megan Hills, Director of Strategic Initiatives and Assessment

Erin Snyder, Chief Communication Officer

**Attachments:** Two

**Recommendation:** It is recommended that the State Board grant continued accreditation for Eastern Iowa Community Colleges (EICC). A

state comprehensive visit will be conducted in the academic year 2029-2030.

**Background:**

Attached is a report of the evaluation of EICC for continued state accreditation as an associate degree-granting institution. The Iowa Department of Education conducted the interview portion of the evaluation on February 12-13, 2025. This report reflects the Department team's observations and determinations made during EICC's interim visit. As mandated by Iowa Code section 260C.47, the accreditation team, including two external peer reviewers, assessed EICC's compliance with eight Iowa State Accreditation Standards via a structured process of document review and interviews. The team also reviewed the most recent Higher Learning Commission (HLC) institutional accreditation report to ensure that any findings have been addressed. Iowa's process has been designed to complement rather than duplicate the HLC accreditation process.



# Accreditation Report

## Interim State Evaluation

Eastern Iowa Community Colleges

February 12-13, 2025



Department of Education

State of Iowa  
Department of Education  
Grimes State Office Building  
400 E. 14<sup>th</sup> Street  
Des Moines, IA 50319-0146

### **State Board of Education**

Brooke Axiotis, Des Moines  
Cindy Dietz, Cedar Rapids  
Cassandra Halls, Carlisle  
Brian J. Kane, Dubuque  
Mary Meisterling, Cedar Rapids  
John Robbins, Iowa Falls  
Beth Townsend, Iowa Workforce Development  
Grace Bechtel, Student Member

### **Administration**

McKenzie Snow, Director and Executive Officer of the State Board of Education

### **Division of Higher Education Bureau of Community Colleges**

Amy Gieseke, Bureau Chief

### **Accreditation Team Members**

Amy Gieseke  
Bureau Chief, Community Colleges  
Iowa Department of Education

Kelly Friesleben  
Education Program Consultant, Student Success  
Iowa Department of Education

Heather Meissen  
Administrative Consultant, CTE  
Iowa Department of Education

Lisa Washington  
Education Program Consultant, Senior Year Plus  
Iowa Department of Education

Robin Shaffer Lilienthal  
Administrative Consultant, Community Colleges  
Iowa Department of Education

Laurel Klinkenberg  
Vice President, Academic Affairs and Student  
Learning  
North Iowa Area Community College

Derreck Calkins  
Education Program Consultant, Program  
Quality and Faculty Support  
Iowa Department of Education

Angie Shilling  
Director of Nursing Programs  
Northwest Iowa Community College

It is the policy of the Iowa Department of Education not to discriminate on the basis of race, creed, color, sexual orientation, gender identity, national origin, sex, disability, religion, age, political party affiliation, or actual or potential parental, family or marital status in its programs, activities, or employment practices as required by the Iowa Code sections 216.9 and 256.10(2), Titles VI and VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (42 U.S.C. § 2000d-2000e), the Equal Pay Act of 1973 (29 U.S.C. § 206, et seq.), Title IX (Educational Amendments, 20 U.S.C. §§ 1681 – 1688), Section 504 (Rehabilitation Act of 1973, 29 U.S.C. § 794), and the Americans with Disabilities Act (42 U.S.C. § 12101, et seq.). If you have questions or complaints related to compliance with this policy by the Iowa Department of Education, please contact the legal counsel for the Iowa Department of Education, Grimes State Office Building, 400 E. 14th Street, Des Moines, IA 50319-0146, telephone number: 515-281-5295, or the Director of the Office for Civil Rights, U.S. Department of Education, Cesar E. Chavez Memorial Building, 1244 Speer Boulevard, Suite 310, Denver, CO 80204-3582, telephone number: 303-844-5695, TDD number: 800-877-8339, email: OCR.Denver@ed.gov



# Contents

- Purpose of the Evaluation ..... 4
- Institutional Overview ..... 4
- Institutional Profile ..... 5
- Visit Overview ..... 5
- Assurance Summary State Standards..... 6
  - Compliance with Higher Learning Commission (HLC) Criteria ..... 6
  - Faculty Qualifications..... 6
  - Faculty Teaching Load..... 7
  - Special Needs and Protected Classes ..... 7
  - CTE Program Evaluation and Review ..... 8
  - Promising Practice Profile..... 10
  - STICS Curriculum Review ..... 10
  - Strategic Plan ..... 10
  - Physical Plant and Facilities ..... 11
  - Quality Faculty Plans ..... 12
  - Senior Year Plus Programs ..... 13
  - Compliance with Non-Accreditation State or Federal Requirements ..... 14
- Department Team Recommendation..... 14

## Purpose of the Evaluation

The purpose of this review was a scheduled accreditation evaluation of Eastern Iowa Community Colleges by the Iowa Department of Education (Department) as mandated by Iowa Code section 260C.47.

## Institutional Overview

### **Eastern Iowa Community Colleges (EICC)**

Founded in 1965 by the Iowa General Assembly, Eastern Iowa Community Colleges (EICC) was established as one of Iowa's 15 community college districts. The formation unified Clinton Junior College, Muscatine Junior College, and the vocational-technical programs of the Davenport schools, aiming to provide comprehensive educational opportunities across the region. EICC encompasses Clinton, Muscatine, and Scott Community Colleges, serving a diverse student population along the Mississippi River corridor. Today, EICC spans Clinton, Jackson, Muscatine, and Scott counties, as well as parts of Cedar and Louisa counties, covering over 120 miles from north to south. The district offers a blend of urban and rural campuses, reflecting the rich diversity of the communities it serves.

### **Clinton Community College (CCC)**

Established in 1946 as Clinton Junior College and began with 86 students, half of whom were World War II veterans. Initially operating within Clinton High School, the college moved to its own facility in 1965. In 1964, it was renamed Clinton Community College (CCC) to reflect its broader mission and became part of EICC in 1966. Today, CCC serves over 2,400 credit students annually, offering a range of academic and career programs. The main campus in Clinton provides modern classrooms equipped with the latest technology and expert faculty committed to student success. CCC also operates the Clinton Career Advancement Center, DeWitt Career Advancement Center and the Maquoketa Center, extending its reach to students in surrounding communities.

### **Muscatine Community College (MCC)**

Founded in 1929 as Muscatine Junior College, is the oldest institution within EICC. It was renamed Muscatine Community College in 1962 to signify its expanded educational offerings and joined EICC in 1966. The main campus, situated on a 27-acre site in north Muscatine, has undergone extensive renovations to provide state-of-the-art facilities, including modern study areas, advanced labs, and vibrant student spaces. MCC has expanded to include specialized centers such as the Muscatine Industrial Technology Center, Button Factory, Muscatine Career Advancement Center, the Muscatine Agriculture Learning Center, and the McAvoy University Center. Additionally, the college serves the communities of Wilton and West Liberty through partnership satellite centers, offering both academic and continuing education programs. MCC serves over 2,000 students annually.

### **Scott Community College (SCC)**

Established in 1966, Scott Community College originated from the vocational-technical programs previously managed by the Davenport school system. In 1979, SCC expanded its offerings by merging with Palmer Junior College, incorporating arts and sciences programs into its curriculum. The main campus, located on 181 acres in Bettendorf, was developed on land donated by ALCOA. SCC has grown to include multiple facilities: the SCC Urban Campus in downtown Davenport, the John T. Blong Technology Center, and the West Davenport Center. These centers provide a range of programs, from advanced manufacturing training to adult education and English language learning, serving nearly 7,000 credit students annually. In fall 2023, SCC opened a newly expanded and renovated Health Science Center and Student Services entrance, enhancing both program capacity and the overall student experience on campus.

## **EICC Urban Campus and Nahant Marsh**

The EICC/SCC Urban Campus, located at 101 West Third Street in downtown Davenport, houses the district's administrative offices and serves as a satellite center for SCC. EICC also partners in the Nahant Marsh, a 300-acre wetland offering educational opportunities in conservation and environmental studies.

## **Institutional Profile**

Eastern Iowa Community Colleges is a single, accredited institution comprised of three campuses: Clinton, Muscatine, and Scott Community Colleges. As a public, open-access college system, EICC awards all academic degrees under the name of Eastern Iowa Community Colleges. While each campus maintains its own identity and serves the unique needs of its community, they operate as part of one unified institution. The district is governed by a shared Board of Trustees and led by a Chancellor, with Presidents providing leadership at each campus and collaborating closely across the system.

EICC's centralized structure ensures alignment in academic programming, student support services, workforce development, and administrative functions. This integrated approach allows the college to maintain high-quality standards, expand access to educational opportunities, and respond effectively to regional workforce and community needs. In addition to credit-bearing academic programs, EICC offers a robust catalog of noncredit continuing education, adult education, and short-term workforce training programs, including customized training for local employers.

In academic year 2022–2023, EICC served 11,482 credit students, ranking as the third largest community college in Iowa by credit enrollment. The district also ranked:

- 5th in noncredit student enrollment
- 7th in total continuing education contact hours
- 8th in regional adult literacy
- 9th in joint enrollment (high school students taking college courses)
- 10th in transfer rates
- 13th in distance education enrollment, with 61.5% of students taking at least one online course
- 5th in total credit awards granted, and 14<sup>th</sup> as a percentage of enrollment
- 15th in overall student success (a combination of graduation and transfer rates)

EICC offers two primary academic pathways: career and technical education programs that prepare students for immediate entry into the workforce, and transfer programs that provide the first two years of a bachelor's degree. With a strong commitment to access, equity, and community impact, EICC continues to serve as a regional leader in education and economic development across eastern Iowa.

*Note: Information in this section was obtained from the EICC website and the 2024 EICC Community College Profile Report.*

## **Visit Overview**

Staff from the Department's Bureau of Community Colleges performed an interim accreditation review of EICC on February 12-13, 2025. Due to severe weather, the accreditation interviews were held via Zoom, so the team made a site visit on April 2, 2025, to tour facilities at the Scott and Muscatine Community College campuses and interview students. The Department team was impressed with many aspects of the institution. The college has experienced significant leadership change in recent years, and exhibited evidence of navigating it well. EICC has completed a chancellor search that was

grounded in preparing for a successful onboarding and transition with the new leader, establishing a shared vision for the college's future and implementing a new strategic plan to guide the focus of the new chancellor. The college also maintains a deep commitment to students as evidenced by faculty and staff across the accreditation interviews expressing an appreciation for the opportunity to support students in achieving their goals. The college also strives to create a sense of community for all, enhance shared governance opportunities and focus on improving processes, structures, and systems.

## Assurance Summary State Standards

At EICC's last comprehensive state accreditation visit in 2020, the college had no findings.

## Compliance with Higher Learning Commission (HLC) Criteria

The Department accreditation team reviewed the most recent HLC report and information available at the time of this evaluation. HLC conducted EICC's Reaffirmation of Accreditation visit in October 2024. The HLC team recognized EICC's approach to shared governance, evidence of strong community partnerships including workforce engagement, effective student success initiatives and fiscal sustainability.

HLC found non-compliance with the Federal Compliance requirement 1, which is "assignment of credits, program length and tuition." Federal non-compliance also resulted in a Met with Concerns for Criteria 3A. EICC is expected to file an Interim Report by December 1, 2025 which gives the college "an opportunity to review and increase the contact hours for shortened term courses to ensure that they are equivalent to regular 16-week contact hours, to achieve the same expected student outcomes regardless of the number of weeks of instruction."

**Recommendations:** Iowa Administrative Code (21.2(12)) also outlines requirements related to calculating credit hours. Specifically, subsection 4f says the college must establish a policy and evaluate effectiveness for alternative instruction which includes among other methods accelerated courses and distance education. The Department team **recommends** the college evaluate and improve policies and processes to ensure compliance with this rule. The Department requests a copy of the HLC interim report due in December 2025 and any related correspondence and actions as the issue is resolved.

The college's next Reaffirmation of Accreditation is during the 2034-2035 cycle.

**Finding:** No accreditation compliance issues were noted during the evaluation.

## Faculty Qualifications

All community college-employed instructors who are under contract as of July 1, 2011, who teach in career and technical education or arts and sciences (including adjuncts) are required to meet minimum faculty standards (Iowa Code section 260C.48).

To ensure compliance with the standard, the Department team provided EICC a random list of 25 faculty members who taught credit courses the previous year. The college submitted documentation of qualifications for these faculty, including supporting documentation such as college transcripts, employment applications, to illustrate related work experience and third-party licensure/certification, if applicable. The Department team examined the files to determine whether the qualifications of each faculty member complied with Iowa Code for the courses they taught during the 2023-2024 academic year.

During the site visit, the Department team met with the Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs, the Director of Human Resources and other academic administrators to learn more about the college's faculty qualification review process and to discuss a few concerns raised during the desk review. These



questions were addressed during the site visit and it was determined that all faculty members are qualified to teach in their assigned courses.

**Recommendations:** The Department team **recommends** that when an arts and science faculty member does not possess the required master's degree for the discipline taught, the college should clearly document on the teaching qualifications form the specific transcript courses being used to meet the teaching qualifications for each relevant discipline. Additionally, the Department team **recommends** that when qualifying CTE faculty based on work experience and special training, details related to qualifications are also thoroughly documented on the teaching qualifications form to ensure credentialing clarity.

**Finding:** No accreditation compliance issues were noted during the evaluation.

## Faculty Teaching Load

The teaching loads of full-time instructors must not exceed the faculty teaching load limits set forth in Iowa Code. This is the case for both career and technical instructors and arts and sciences instructors. If the instructor and the community college administration mutually consent then the instructor may be assigned additional teaching load. (Iowa Code section 260C.48).

To confirm compliance with this standard, the Department team reviewed documentation of the academic year (AY) 2022-2023 instructional load for 25 randomly selected faculty members. During the review, the team learned that EICC career and technical faculty are not formally offered a specific opportunity to decline overload due to long-standing language in their faculty master agreement. Rather than receiving an individual-basis consent, EICC uses the master faculty contract as a form of collective consent. The contract states: "Assignments beyond (16) equated hours are not optional for Career and Technical Education instructors." This language prevents individual CTE faculty members from denying an assigned overload duty.

EICC administrators explained that although the contract language could result in instances where the faculty member cannot decline an overload assignment, the current agreement was developed with faculty involvement and the college makes efforts to seek faculty input regarding overload. Faculty are consulted each semester regarding teaching assignments and their knowledge of instructional assignments is documented via signed load sheets.

**Finding:** Iowa code and rule require mutual consent for overload assignments for both Arts and Sciences and CTE faculty (260C.48 (2)). Because current master contract language violates an individual right to decline overload assignments, EICC must remove said language from the master faculty. The contract revision must be completed by the time that the next negotiated contract takes effect on July 1, 2026. In the interim EICC must continue the practice of seeking faculty consent for overload by signing the faculty teaching load sheets prior to the beginning of a semester. Signed load sheets, which include overload assignments, are considered mutual consent between the individual and the college. As a follow up EICC will submit final contract language to the Department team within 60 days of the negotiated contract taking effect.

## Special Needs and Protected Classes

Community colleges shall provide equal access to the full range of program offerings and services including, but not limited to, recruitment, enrollment and placement activities for students with special education needs or protected by state or federal civil rights regulation. Students with disabilities shall be given access to the full range of program offerings at a college through reasonable accommodations

(Iowa Administrative Code 281 chapter 24.5(3)), with information regarding how to access such accommodations provided in a disability statement. In addition, community colleges shall have continuous and annual nondiscrimination statements ensuring access to educational programs and employment for state and federally protected classes. This nondiscrimination statement must list all state and federally protected classes; provide the name/title and contact information of the person(s) designated to coordinate equity, Title IX and Section 504 compliance and provide contact information for the Office for Civil Rights (OCR) regional office. The nondiscrimination and disability statements may be separate or the college may choose to combine them.

The Department team conducted a desk review prior to the visit to review EICC's Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and nondiscrimination policies, statements, and practices in marketing and recruitment publications, handbooks, the college catalog, the college website and sample course syllabi. During the visit, the team reviewed additional documentation and conducted interviews with faculty, students, and staff associated with student special needs and disabilities services to ensure compliance with this standard.

While on site, the Department team saw evidence of numerous collegewide efforts to create a welcoming environment for all students, provide accommodations for students with special needs, and provide opportunities for underrepresented students in particular programs of study. A sample of evidence includes:

- Disability services personnel are located at all three campuses.
- Accommodation request processes are simplified for students and faculty.
- Maxient software collects complaints and routes them to the proper contact to facilitate quick responses.
- Title IX website is comprehensive including a list of confidential resources, definitions and explanations of processes that describe to whom, how and when the annual notice of nondiscrimination is communicated each year, along with the personnel responsible for various institution populations.

During the desk review and site visit, the team noticed the continuous nondiscrimination statement was placed on the back cover of the College Connections Instructor Handbook and College Connections Faculty Liaison Handbook but using color and font elements that made it difficult to read. Additionally, the annual nondiscrimination notice indicated the Title IX/equity coordinator but did not indicate the contact person for Section 504/ADA coordination for the district.

**Recommendations:** The Department team **recommends** EICC improve oversight to ensure the continuous notice of nondiscrimination is produced in a readable font size and color on all publications and handbooks. In addition, the Department team **recommends** that the contact person(s) designated to coordinate Section 504 compliance activity is included in the annual notice of nondiscrimination on the EICC website.

**Finding:** No accreditation compliance issues were noted during the evaluation.

## CTE Program Evaluation and Review

Iowa Code chapter 258, Iowa Administrative Code chapter 281-46.6(4) and Iowa Administrative Code 281-21 include a variety of state standards related to the offering CTE programs. These standards include numerous requirements related to program and award length, program content, labor market demand, articulation, advisory committees and more. All CTE programs (including new programs and changes to existing programs) must be approved by the Department. Standards for CTE programs are

included in the “Program Approval: Guidelines for Iowa Community Colleges” and in the “State Accreditation Guide,” both of which are posted on the Department website.

Community colleges are required to review at least 20 percent of their CTE programs annually, standards for which are provided in the aforementioned program approval guidelines. The Department team reviewed EICC’s CTE program review process, schedule and a random sample of recent CTE program reviews to ensure compliance with the CTE program review standards. For the standards regarding program advisory committees’ composition, roles and responsibilities, the Department team reviewed a random sample of CTE advisory committee membership lists and meeting minutes to ensure compliance.

Based on the documents submitted for the desk review, EICC follows a four-year cycle to review all CTE programs. To prepare for the program review process, EICC offers multiple training sessions related to the CTE program review process for program faculty members. These program review training topics include orientation, leader and member training, process workshops, and program action planning. The college also provides the following data for each program: a labor market profile that provides the current state of the market analysis for the occupations for which students are being trained; student profile and enrollment data, including enrollment, headcount, enrollment status, high school enrollment counts; and course completion, program retention and graduation rates. During the program review process, program faculty complete a thorough self-study document that includes reflection on various aspects of their CTE programs. After completion of the self-study document, program faculty develop action plans which are shared with the Academic Leadership Council (ALC). Discussion includes funding requests for the program.

The Department team was impressed with the additional following practices related to program review at EICC:

- The college uses peer review teams during the program review process. These teams are faculty members and staff from different areas of the college which ensures that self-studies are thorough and comprehensive.
- The program review process includes a detailed assessment of how CTE programs remove barriers for all students to access educational and employment opportunities. For example, the self-study asks program faculty members to identify which courses are “critical” and “light the fire” and which courses present the most challenge to student progression in the program.
- EICC ensures that action plans are achieved by scheduling yearly check-in meetings to discuss progress towards completing action steps.
- The college is intentional about incorporating career and technical student organizations (CTSO) and other co-curricular opportunities into programs. Faculty members reflect on CTSO engagement during the self-study process by asking them to discuss the value the CTSO brings to the program.

**Recommendations:** Iowa Administrative Code chapter 281-46 requires that CTE program review include specific components, including assessing how program costs are proportionate to educational benefits received. During the accreditation visit, the team found that, although faculty members are engaged in informal conversations around program finances, average salary/wage of employees and cost effectiveness for students, program review documentation does not explicitly ask faculty members in the program to reflect upon this standard. The Department team **strongly recommends** that the college formalize how program costs are proportionate to educational benefits received (i.e., return on investment) by including questions about this standard in their self-study template. To help faculty members connect their program’s role with institutional priorities, the Department team also **recommends** that EICC formalizes how the program review process aligns with the strategic planning process.

During this visit, the team noted inconsistencies among program advisory committee meeting minutes indicating that the college does not utilize a standardized template for meeting minutes. Because this was a recommendation during the last visit, the Department team **strongly recommends** that EICC use a template for capturing consistent meeting minute topics, discussions and decisions across all programs. EICC is commended for including non-CTE staff, such as representatives from marketing, on program advisory committees, but also **recommends** that the college ensure that advisory committees include members from different industry roles to represent a variety of viewpoints and perspectives.

**Finding:** No accreditation compliance issues were noted during the evaluation.

## Promising Practice Profile

*The Department team identified a promising practice within the CTE Program Evaluation standard related to EICC's partnerships with high schools in the region. This is evidenced by the involvement that EICC has with its Regional Planning Partnership (RPP). For example, instead of locally determining how Perkins V funds are allocated for secondary CTE programming, the RPP, which includes various representatives from area high schools, are engaged in these discussions. In addition, several of the college's CTE programs host joint advisory committee meetings with RPP meetings. The broad representation of perspectives enhances the program advisory discussions at these meetings. EICC has also been working with high schools in the region to integrate industry-recognized credentials (IRCs), which are an important component of CTE programs, concurrent enrollment courses and career academies. For example, EICC has embedded IRCs into certificates within the HVAC and Construction Technology community college programs which are also career academy opportunities for high school students. These noteworthy efforts for interacting with secondary institutions could be beneficial for community colleges across the state to emulate.*

## STICS Curriculum Review

The Department utilizes the State of Iowa Curriculum System (STICS) web-based platform for its program approval process, and maintains a database of approved programs and courses. STICS performs compliance checks on all programs offered by each college. The Department team conducted a compliance check of EICC's programs to ensure they meet state standards. Additionally, the consultant compared EICC's approved academic programs in the state's database with those provided in the college catalog.

The Department team discussed minimal misalignments between the college catalog and STICS. There were no instances of any programs being out of compliance in regards to technical core, general education or credit hour requirements. The college has agreed to make the edits and the team anticipates completion in a timely manner.

Additionally, the Department held an interview session with campus stakeholders involved in the curriculum process. It was apparent from the session that EICC has a robust curriculum timeline and a strong shared governance model. The multi-step approval process includes, academic deans, financial aid staff, the Educational Policies and Procedures Committee and the Academic Leadership Committee.

**Finding:** No accreditation compliance issues were noted during the evaluation.

## Strategic Plan

Community colleges are required to update their strategic plans at least every five years as a guide for the community and its decision making (Iowa Code section 256.31(4)(a)).

The Department team reviewed EICC's most recent strategic plan and interviewed selected staff to ensure compliance with this standard. The college is concluding its 2021-2024 Strategic Plan and undergoing the development of its 2025-2030 plan in preparation for the transition to its next chancellor. The Department team identified several areas of strength related to strategic planning.

- Engaging a broad spectrum of perspectives in the plan development process.
- Shared governance through faculty forums.
- Utilizing Core Teams focused on both strategic direction and operations to provide participation opportunities.
- SMART goals measure the success of each Strategic Pillar.
- New strategic plan established as new chancellor transitions to the college which provides the new leader a vision and strategies for implementation.
- Institutional effectiveness process cycle includes planning, resource allocation, implementation, evaluation, and reporting.

**Recommendations:** The Department team recognizes the college's effort towards improving the connection between outcomes and strategic planning through adopting a SMART goal structure. The Department team **recommends** using this structure to build unit-level plans connected to institutional plans.

**Finding:** No accreditation compliance issues were noted during the evaluation.

## Physical Plant and Facilities

Each community college must present evidence of adequate planning to the Department team, including a board-approved facilities plan. The community college's plan must meet state and federal requirements as outlined in the state accreditation guide.

The Department team reviewed EICC's most recent facilities plan and interviewed the vice chancellor of academic affairs, director of facilities, director of operations and resource development, director of business services, maintenance managers, purchasing specialist, faculty and other personnel regarding the college's facility planning process and decision-making structure to ensure compliance with this standard.

EICC is changing its facilities plan from a 3-year to a 5-year plan to expand opportunities for long-range planning. The Department team saw evidence in both the virtual site visit meetings and campus tours where faculty are a partner in the decision-making process regarding facility improvements, especially related to updates and expansions of classrooms and labs. Examples include designing an office space for adjunct faculty, creating a quiet learning space for students, expanding culinary options to all three campuses and building a windowless classroom for the Criminal Justice program to accommodate training needs. EICC strives to provide consistency in program classrooms so students have similar experiences no matter which location they attend.

The Department team was impressed with EICC's dedication to improving the physical plant and facilities for students, staff and community including:

- Building a new Community Health Care facility on the MCC campus and expanding the Blong Technology Center for research, training and certification opportunities.
- Dedicating annual resources to address ADA needs and identifying opportunities for student access improvements with the Disability Services staff.
- Implementing a Behavior Intervention Team to review potential threat situations for risk assessment and develop response plans.



- Providing access to the library's vast repository of books and research materials and resources that includes a laptop and hotspot rental program for students.

Safety communication with students and staff is evidenced by the Emergency Procedures Manual which is available in student handbooks, on the website and in every classroom. Extensive safety and security training is regularly scheduled for EICC staff and faculty including "Run, Hide, Fight," "Stop the Bleed," situational awareness and cybersecurity.

**Finding:** No accreditation compliance issues were noted during the evaluation.

## Quality Faculty Plans

Iowa law mandates that community colleges plan for faculty hiring and professional development, with institutional Quality Faculty Plans (QFPs) needing to meet the standards outlined in Iowa Administrative Code 281 chapter 24.5(5).

The Department team reviewed HCC's Quality Faculty Plan and conducted interviews with members of the college's QFP Committee to ensure compliance with these standards. The team also reviewed the documentation plans for a random sample of 25 faculty members.

The QFP Committee Membership is balanced with both college administrators, CTE faculty and arts and science faculty. Faculty are appointed by the certified employee organization representing them and administrators are appointed by the college leadership. The committee makes recommendations for updates to the Professional Development Recordkeeping system, maintains a record of approved requests for Advanced Credit under the Faculty Rank System and makes recommendations to the Educational Programming, Policies, and Curriculum Council prior to seeking final approval from the Academic Leadership Council. The committee reviews the Quality Faculty Plan annually with the EICC Board of Trustees approving the plan every other year, or every time significant changes are made. The college provided minutes from the past two years confirming the board's annual review and approval of the Quality Faculty Plan.

EICC provides an extensive onboarding program for new faculty which includes a New Faculty Training Institute, a Faculty Development Course and a mentoring program. New faculty receive three hours of release time per semester during their first year of teaching to attend a monthly three-hour training session. During the site visit, both new and veteran faculty commented on the value of the program. In addition to the program for new full-time faculty, EICC requires new adjunct faculty to meet with their department coordinator to review relevant instructional topics including curriculum, lesson planning, rubric design, classroom management and evaluation procedures.

The performance review system includes three components including observation of instructional process, instructor's reflective narrative and instructor performance and development review. The components are focused on three evaluation criteria: instructional competencies, professional development and responsibility to the college. The professional development cycle involves each faculty member setting goals, completing professional development to achieve those goals and setting new objectives for the following year.

**Recommendations:** EICC's Quality Faculty Plan identifies 12 instructional competencies, but professional development is not directly linked to instructional competencies. The Department team **recommends** clarifying the connection among instructional competencies, faculty professional development goals and institutional priorities.

**Finding:** No accreditation compliance issues were noted during the evaluation.

## Senior Year Plus Programs

There are a variety of requirements for Senior Year Plus (SYP) programs offered to high school students jointly enrolled in Iowa's community colleges. These requirements are included in Iowa Code section 261E. The Department utilizes the National Alliance of Concurrent Enrollment Partnerships (NACEP) accreditation process to ensure compliance with statutory requirements.

The Department team reviewed EICC's accreditation status with NACEP, interviewed SYP program staff and reviewed documentation to ensure compliance with this standard. The last NACEP accreditation report made recommendations for improvements to standard E2 and requested a report to be completed by December 13, 2019. The Department team verified those recommendations were addressed by EICC and accepted by NACEP. The next NACEP re-accreditation is scheduled for spring 2026. The college has developed a plan in preparation for their next accreditation visit that is structured to focus on a different standard each month. This approach serves to ensure ample time is available to complete all requirements.

EICC's concurrent enrollment program, College Connections, provides Senior Year Plus programming to 25 school districts. Redesigned a few years ago, College Connections has an extensive staffing who coordinate and monitor programming within and outside of the districts. Their work focuses on maintaining continuity of SYP processes and procedures across all districts and ensuring that rigor within the courses and programs offered at the high schools aligns with those taught on the college campus. EICC monitors SYP compliance with regard to access and concurrent enrollment opportunities by striving to address issues in collaboration with school districts.

New concurrent enrollment faculty have a thorough onboarding process including access to a pre-orientation guide and monthly newsletter that provides information on services and support. New faculty are observed by experienced college faculty for three consecutive semesters then every three years thereafter, barring noncompliance or adjustments that must be made. EICC utilizes the Canvas learning management system to align course content and competencies, verify common assessments and approve textbook selection. Professional development is provided for concurrent enrollment faculty including technical and discipline specific training as well as participation with regional planning partners.

The Department team observed the college's commitment to improving their Senior Year Plus program and supporting students by:

- Sharing disaggregated participation data annually with area high schools, including work-based learning and industry-recognized credential attainment. This data provides multiple data points within each district. Data collection tracks concurrent enrollment students through graduation to postsecondary education and employment. The College Connection team supports the school districts' efforts to provide opportunities and access for all students.
- Dedicating significant resources for the College Connections program which included full-time administrative staff responsible for verifying faculty qualifications, providing instructional support, coordinating NACEP and covering student support services. EICC has staffing to provide direct student support and advising in nearly all of their school districts. EICC's website provides contact information for College Connections personnel assigned to each district.
- Supporting students with accommodation services needs by providing an exceptional guide explaining the difference between postsecondary accommodations and K12 modifications so students, parents and district personnel have a clear understanding.

**Recommendations:** The Department team **recommends** developing a policy and process for ensuring EICC is informed when a concurrent enrollment instructor has completed a background check

and is notified if a license is revoked. This could be accomplished by outlining expectations in the contract with the district, in the SYP handbooks and on the College Connections website.

**Finding:** No accreditation compliance issues were noted during the evaluation.

## **Compliance with Non-Accreditation State or Federal Requirements**

**Finding:** No compliance issues were noted during the evaluation.

## **Department Team Recommendation**

The Department of Education community college accreditation team recommends continued accreditation for Eastern Iowa Community College.

A state comprehensive accreditation evaluation is scheduled for AY 2029-2030.



# Eastern Iowa Community Colleges

# Strategic Plan 2025–2029

*Plans don't succeed because they're written.  
They succeed because people bring them to life.*

## Envision



### Enrollment & Retention

We help students see what's possible and support their decision to take important steps with us.

- **Concurrent Enrollment Conversion**  
Accelerate the conversation rate of concurrently enrolled high school students by 1% annually.
- **Continuing Education**  
Grow continuing education contact hours by 2% annually.
- **Online Retention**  
Implement targeted strategies that increase online student retention by 3 percentage points.
- **Non-Traditional Enrollment**  
Achieve a 5 percentage point increase in non-traditional student enrollment.
- **Non-Traditional Retention**  
Boost the retention of fall-to-fall non-traditional students by 5 percentage points.

## Ignite



### Student Success

We fuel potential by challenging and supporting students to achieve their goals—inside and outside the classroom and beyond EICC.

- **Graduation Rate**  
Increase Arts and Science IPEDs (150%) graduation rate to 40%.
- **Full-Time Student Enrollment**  
Grow post-secondary full-time enrollment to 45%.
- **Transfer Rate**  
Raise the one-year post graduation, four-year institution transfer rate of Arts and Science students to 70%.
- **Support Services Awareness and Access**  
Develop and implement a district-wide campaign to expand student awareness and usage of support services, increasing each by 5%.

## Cultivate



### Campus Climate & Efficiencies

We grow and strengthen a culture where students and employees can do their best work and thrive together.

- **Employee Retention**  
Raise employee retention by 2 percentage points.
- **Center for Teaching, Learning, and Development**  
Create a Center for Teaching, Learning, and Development and provide at least four supplemental professional development opportunities to faculty and staff by 2027.
- **Deferred Maintenance, Technology, and Space Utilization**  
Construct a district Deferred Maintenance, Technology, and Space Utilization Plan by 2027. The plan will address maintenance, space use, program growth, and future enrollment, and include projects and cost estimates through 2035.

## Convene



### Community Outreach & Engagement

We bring together community collaborators, resources and ideas to expand opportunities and strengthen our region.

- **Advisory Board Model**  
Create a district-wide advisory board model based on best practice by August 2027. Pilot the model in at least three programs during the 2027–28 academic year, followed by full implementation across all programs.
- **Grants Office Team**  
Build a district-wide Grants Team by July 2028 to increase grant submissions by 15% and grant awards by 5%.
- **District Community and Partner Directory**  
Establish a new internal directory to build engagement with community, business, and industry partners. Have at least 6 interactions with each contact annually.
- **Business and Industry Survey**  
Survey at least 150 employers by March 2026 to assess business and industry training needs. Analyze results and publish recommendations by June 2026 to guide workforce and program planning.

Strategic goals will be accomplished by 2029 unless otherwise stated.

At EICC, we Envision what's possible. We Ignite the potential of every learner. We Cultivate environments where people thrive. We Convene partners to strengthen our communities.