

# Focused on Student Success

Strategic Plan 2017-2022



**New Mexico Junior College**

New Mexico's Premier Community College

### **NMJC Mission**

New Mexico Junior College, as a comprehensive community college, promotes success through learning

### **NMJC Vision**

New Mexico Junior College's mission will be achieved by building a culture that values and promotes excellence, effectiveness, responsiveness, access, and community involvement.

## The Planning Process

This plan evolved from an extended series of conversations among campus and community stakeholders, and review of key data that provides a clear picture of current operations and outcomes.

The first organized activity of this process involved a formal review of the college mission and vision. All NMJC staff and faculty were surveyed for their views and thoughts about the current mission and vision statements. In addition, electronic surveys were presented to current NMJC students as well as NMJC community supporters (as identified by the NMJC Foundation and using electronic mailing lists of community leaders throughout Lea County). Results of the surveys suggested strong support for the current expression of the college mission and vision. These results were reported to the NMJC Board for discussion. Following a public discussion of the information, the NMJC Board formally voted to support the current language of the college mission and vision.

Early planning conversations began among the executive team and then expanded to a working session of campus managers. Following those conversations, a survey was sent to campus managers asking for their detailed thoughts on a number of issues that had been identified in the early conversations. These topics included efficiency and effectiveness, enrollment, student success, academic quality, resource management, community education and workforce training, and language acquisition.

The conversations then moved to open sessions for faculty and staff. All faculty and staff were invited to a series of meetings where they could voice their thoughts on these issues as well as their own priorities. Two separate, open sessions were held for staff and two for members of faculty.

A number of individual conversations were conducted with community leaders from throughout Lea County. The NMJC Board has been engaged with the conversation during regular meetings when progress on the plan was reported. The Board members then provided direct feedback to the plan following their own day-long planning session.

Planning staff then worked to collect the varied feedback and suggestions into a working draft of a new strategic plan. Various parts of this draft have been reviewed by different members of the campus team throughout the weeks of writing.

The final draft of the plan was sent to the college president and members of the executive team for review and comment prior to presenting the plan for review and adoption by the Board at their July 2017 meeting.

### Structure of the plan:

- I. Context – the context of the plan describes recent developments over the past five years, and highlights some of the very specific challenges and opportunities confronting NMJC over the next five years.
- II. Institutional and Participant Commitment – describes the philosophical and personal commitments that will be necessary for stakeholders to be successful in their efforts to implement the plan activities and to help more NMJC student achieve their goals.

- III. Primary Institutional Goals – these are the “big” ones, the major institutional goals that will be central to transforming student outcomes and guiding NMJC into the next five years.
- IV. Areas of Focus and Strategic Goals – these are the key operating areas that were identified as central to supporting efforts to achieve the institutional goals.
- V. Focused Activities – these are the active operating plans that support achievement of the strategic goals and the broader institutional goals.

## I. Context of the Plan –

### The Past Five Years:

A new president took office in August 2016

Early College High School and dual credit comprise 20% of enrollment

Selection of NMJC to serve as a Pathway Pioneer for the Higher Learning Commission

Successful re-accreditation by the Higher Learning Commission in 2015

Significant community activities

- Creation of the New Horizons Foundation

- Titanic: The Artifact Exhibition

- Active partner in development of the new CORE facility

Workforce training programs that are consistently #1 or #2 in the State of New Mexico

Successful athletic programs including national championship outcomes

Stable enrollment including above average graduation rates (compared to IPEDS peers)

Steady reduction in external funding from the State of New Mexico

The nursing program consistently ranks in the top 10% nationally of student testing outcomes

Approval of funding for the new Allied Health Building

### Looking Forward:

**Regulatory and Financial Uncertainty:** NMJC is entering an extended period of financial pressure, uncertainty of funding sources, and regulatory ambiguity.

- Regulatory uncertainty
  - Federal issues include the future of student aid, immigration policies and processes, and requirements for gainful employment.
  - State issues include changes in common curriculum requirements, dual credit funding, and pressure for some form of college system within New Mexico.
- Escalation of expectations and restrictive rules related to accreditation
  - Changes in faculty credentials, a new system of accreditation, and increased oversight are examples of new directions and focus for the Higher Learning Commission.
  - A prime example of these changes is the new Year 4 Assurance Argument that is peer reviewed and carries the risk of significant punitive actions by the HLC in response to any perceived issues. NMJC's argument will be due in 2019.
- Financial uncertainty
  - NMJC continues to be dependent on the strength of the local economy (local property tax levels do not shift rapidly but oil and gas tax revenues are directly tied to daily field production).
  - State funding is always a question, and currently higher education is in a cycle of annual reductions with no near-term end in sight. The current budget crisis has caused massive uncertainty and concern within the higher education community, and casts a shadow on

the future of state funding for higher education in New Mexico. Further, changes in state policies related to dual credit have the potential of affecting (for better or worse) a segment of students that account for 18%+ of NMJC's current enrollment.

- Federal funding for students is always a question, particularly in the current political climate in Washington, DC. Although Pell funding and student loans account for a relatively small portion of NMJC's student revenue, the fact remains that the new administration – backed by a conservative Congress – could implement changes that will have a dramatic impact on the student aid landscape.

**Student and Community Expectations:**

- Student expectations with regards to college are rising. Students perceive that they need to have a college education as part of their credentials, and they expect to have access to colleges that can deliver those credentials. Students are living in an environment where the flow of information is reaching flood stage proportions, and colleges are being challenged to help students manage and comprehend that flow to their advantage. Finally, students recognize that the skills they need are changing based on shifts in the economy, and they expect that colleges will deliver relevant education that is valued by current and potential employers. Further, students expect that the personal resources (time and money) that they spend on their education will pay dividends in terms of their quality of life and income potential.
- Communities expect that the college will be relevant, offer students the skills they need to contribute effectively to the *local* economy, that the college will play a role in the community that goes beyond simple offering of classes and degrees, and that the college will maintain a positive image which highlights the college role in the fabric of the overall community. More to the point, local communities have an expectation that significant local support for the college will be reflected in the college placing local needs at the top of any list of priorities, and that decisions about future directions will always include consideration for local needs and desires.

**Current student outcomes are unacceptable:**

- The majority of community college students, NMJC students included, do not complete a program of study or transfer to another school.

## II. Institutional and Participant Commitment:

The culture of an organization is created by the individuals who do the work, make the decisions, and determine the values by which they act. Successful implementation of the activities outlined in this plan will require all stakeholders to:

Act with intentionality –

- Work with a sense of purpose

- Work with a clear direction and common effort

- Work with a sense of urgency

Engage in critical conversations –

- Informed conversation

- Cross functional

- Right people at the table

- Safe conversations (yet recognize that risk has to exist)

- Difficult topics

- Recognize difference between strategic and tactical issues

Work with knowledge that is based on information that is –

- Accurate

- Timely

- Relevant

- Common to all

Establish and sustain an institutional commitment to –

- Relentless focus on goals

- Drive efforts to scale

- Focus on high impact activities

### **III. Primary Institutional Goals:**

1. Create a great student experience
2. Double the program and degree completion rates by 2022.
3. Increase institutional enrollment
  - a. 4,000 credit bearing students by 2020
  - b. Increase workforce and professional training enrollments
  - c. Increase community education enrollments



## IV. Areas of Focus and Strategic Objectives

Area of Focus	Strategic Goal(s)	Tactical Objectives in Support of Goal(s)
Student Success	<p>Increase student success at NMJC as evidenced by an increased percentage of completions (degree and certificate).</p> <p>and</p> <p>Increase student satisfaction and engagement (create a great/positive experience).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase % of graduates (for both full time and part time cohorts)</li> <li>• Reduce time and credits to completion</li> <li>• Increase semester x semester retention</li> <li>• Increase course persistence &amp; completion</li> <li>• Benchmarks               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ CCSSE measures</li> <li>○ Noel Levitz measures</li> <li>○ Direct feedback</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
Educational Quality	<p>Improve the quality of instruction and learning outcomes across all modes of curriculum delivery at NMJC.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assessment of learning outcomes               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Institutional</li> <li>○ Course/program level</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Parity of outcomes across all modes</li> <li>• Focus on faculty credentials and professional development</li> <li>• Increased student engagement               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ CCSSE measures</li> <li>○ Student feedback</li> </ul> </li> <li>• 3<sup>rd</sup> party recognition/evaluation</li> </ul>
Enrollment growth	<p>Expand credit-bearing enrollment through a combination of additional enrollments as well as significantly improved retention rates.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase semester x semester retention</li> <li>• Increase course persistence &amp; completion</li> <li>• Increase persistence of part-time students</li> <li>• Increase overall enrollment levels of full time and part time students</li> </ul>
Resource Management	<p>Continue conservative management of existing resources and develop additional sources of institutional and student support.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Benchmark operations (NCCBP)</li> <li>• Increase 3<sup>rd</sup> party grant resources</li> <li>• Increase NMJC Foundation endowment and annual income</li> </ul>

<p>Workforce and Professional Training</p>	<p>Increase the number of students served and the number of companies served (continue to prioritize local training needs).</p> <p>and</p> <p>Secure additional 3<sup>rd</sup> party funding.</p> <p>and</p> <p>Improve revenue:expense margin</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase number of workforce students</li> <li>• Increase number of companies served</li> <li>• Ranking within state workforce programs</li> <li>• Student &amp; Client satisfaction</li> <li>• Increase external, non-fee revenue</li> <li>• Improve revenue:expense margin</li> </ul>
<p>Community Education &amp; engagement</p>	<p>Increase the number of students served and the number of courses offered throughout the county.</p> <p>and</p> <p>Improve the revenue:expense margin</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase number of students</li> <li>• Increase number of classes</li> <li>• Improve revenue:expense margin</li> <li>• Student satisfaction</li> </ul>

## V. Focused Activities

Activities:

Description:

Focus on relevant programs	Working with community, faculty, and students, the college will identify those programs and offerings which most closely align with community/student needs. Priorities for resource allocation will be placed on those programs that have opportunity for growth/expansion and most closely align with community and student needs.
Extend program lines	Review NMJC academic programs for opportunities to extend program lines to include more opportunities for students within their chosen course of study (e.g. extend health care options beyond nursing to include other health-related professions).
Revise degree structures	Based on outcomes of the “trifecta initiative” from HED, review NMJC degree plans and requirements to a) ensure that the degrees are in line with the revised general education requirements outlined by HED, and b) simplify the plans to better serve student needs and expectations.
Course scheduling	Conduct a deep review of course scheduling including modes of delivery to ensure that schedules and alternative modes of delivery are meeting the full range of student needs.
Update Articulation agreements	Update articulation agreements with targeted four-year institutions. This activity will, of necessity, follow the revision of NMJC degree plans that will take place as part of the HED “trifecta initiative.” As part of this process, study the effectiveness of NMJC transfer curriculum (through direct connection with students who transferred to four-year institutions).
Guided Pathways	Implement the Guided Pathways model for advising students. In addition, evaluate opportunities for establishing a credit-for-prior learning initiative to help bring students back to college for completion of their degrees.
Customer service	Create a specific effort to improve the “customer service” relations with students, their families, and potential students.
Part-time students	Conduct a deep study of NMJC part-time students and identify issues and opportunities to help them be more successful. Build on the findings from CCSSE and develop specific initiatives in support of part-time students.
Retention	Evaluate current retention of students, and identify intervention strategies to target and retain students at risk of dropping or stopping out. Begin the process with active conversations (focus groups) and then detailed study of outcomes.

New revenue	Actively seek to develop new sources of revenue such as third-party grants, active fundraising through the NMJC Foundation, and thoughtful review/revision of the current tuition business model (seeking to better align revenue with costs).
Professional development and recognition	Continue to provide expanding professional development activities on and off-campus for staff and faculty. Evaluate the current recognition activities with the objective of creating more expansive and meaningful recognition of faculty and staff success.
Marketing plan	Develop an integrated enrollment marketing plan that clearly identifies target student groups, opportunities for new programs/degrees, key messages, and coordinated advertising and marketing plans.

The “next steps” after adoption of this plan will be assignment of these focused activities to specific groups on campus. These working groups will then be responsible for developing the detailed plans, including timelines, for implementation.