

**Date:** June 27, 2025

**To:** Chancellors, Superintendents, Presidents, and Accreditation Liaison Officers of ACCJC Member Institutions; Other Interested Parties

**From:** ACCJC President Mac Powell *MP*

**Subject:** Updates from ACCJC June 2025 Commission Meeting

At its June 2025 Commission meeting, the Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges (ACCJC) reviewed a number of remarkable institutions, engaged in thoughtful and productive conversations, and heard from experts and thought leaders about the challenges facing higher education in a volatile and quickly evolving federal landscape.

As part of ACCJC's commitment to transparent and regular communication with ACCJC's member institutions, the Commission and staff are providing an update to the field.

**Celebrating Progress: 2025 Annual Reporting Highlights from ACCJC Member Institutions**

The 2025 Annual Reporting period reflects the ongoing resilience, innovation, and student-centered commitment of ACCJC's member institutions. Across the region, institutions have demonstrated measurable progress in key student achievement and institutional performance indicators, reinforcing their role as engines of opportunity and workforce readiness.

Enrollment across member institutions increased by 8.9%, reversing multi-year trends of decline and signaling renewed community trust and student demand for accessible, affordable postsecondary education. This growth was matched by improved academic outcomes, with course success rates rising by one percentage point to 76%, reflecting sustained institutional investment in evidence-based teaching practice and student support systems.

Credential attainment surged in 2025. Associate degrees awarded increased by 6.6%, and certificate achievement—following last year's dip—rebounded sharply with a 13.8% year-over-year gain. Notably, the number of bachelor's degrees awarded by ACCJC institutions nearly doubled, increasing by an impressive 93%, highlighting the expanding role of community colleges in meeting baccalaureate-level workforce needs.

Licensure pass rates, a critical indicator of program quality and workforce alignment, rose to an average of 88%—a one-point increase from last year. Although job placement rates declined slightly by one percentage point to 75%, institutions continue to adapt to dynamic labor

markets, and ACCJC remains committed to supporting members in aligning program offerings with high-demand sectors.

These accomplishments underscore the remarkable work happening across ACCJC's accredited institutions. As the landscape of higher education evolves, ACCJC will continue to champion transparency, continuous improvement, and student success – and wants to thank member institutions who have contributed to the forthcoming whitepaper on ACCJC's member institutions' efforts to support the future of workforce partnerships.

### **Renewed Collaboration Across Accrediting Agencies**

To address the role of accreditation in the changing landscape in higher education, ACCJC is expanding collaboration with other institutional accreditors to strengthen communications and responsiveness to state and federal policy activities. This includes the hiring of additional communications staff and coordinating our respective responses to Dear Colleague Letters, Executive Orders, and proposed legislation. This renewed commitment to collaboration across accreditors and institutions will make all of us more informed and well-positioned to navigate the evolving complex legal and policy landscape while also improving collaboration and engagement with policymakers.

### **ACCJC's Comprehensive Review of Standards, Policies, and Practices**

ACCJC recently undertook a comprehensive review of its Accreditation Standards, Eligibility Requirements, policies, practices, and training materials in order to ensure continued alignment with the federal Higher Education Act of 1965, relevant federal regulations, updated Department of Education guidance, and conversations with the leadership of the Department of Education's Accreditation Group.

The review and conversations with the Department of Education resulted in several required revisions to bring all agency publications and materials into compliance with current directives from the Department. Additionally, a review of all ACCJC Institutional Policies showed a need to reorganize, and in some cases eliminate, particular policies not directly related to ACCJC's work around student success and academic quality as defined by the Higher Education Act (HEA).

The proposed edits, revisions, and deletions were discussed by the ACCJC Policy Committee and recommended for Commission action ([policy memo](#)). The Commission made the difficult decision to replace the phrase "equitable student success" with "success for all students." Additionally, five policies that are neither aligned with or cite HEA/federal regulations or have become obsolete under the 2024 Accreditation Standards were recommended for deletion. Another four policies were recommended for reclassification as Guidelines and to be moved into the *Substantive Change Manual*. For more information on these changes, see the ACCJC website.

The difficult decision to revise our Standards was undertaken with great solemnity and consideration. **The Commission wants to make absolutely clear that ACCJC's mission remains**

**unchanged.** The work to advance educational quality by fostering institutional excellence and continuous improvement through innovation, self-analysis, peer review, and the application of the Standards continues to guide every action and decision. ACCJC's commitment to encouraging member institutions' support of vulnerable student populations and valuing, protecting, and uplifting all students is unwavering. Our cycle of accreditation, streamlined processes, data transparency initiatives, and focus on institutional improvement to advance the lives of all students will boldly continue.

Thank you for your continued commitment to educational excellence. We look forward to learning from your work, sharing your successes, and representing your voices across the country.

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