

To: SUNY Chancellor John B., King, Jr.
From: Ken Knelly, Administrator in Charge
Subject: 2023-2024 Academic Year Annual Report to the Chancellor
Date: October 30, 2024

In accordance with the expectations outlined in Article IX of the Polices of the Board of Trustees of the State University of New York, please accept this report detailing campus affairs over the course of the 2023-2024 year.

Since its founding in 1966, nearly 50 years ago, Clinton Community College has been an educational catalyst for generations of students and families who have learned from, given to and been a part of the institution.

As a part of the 64-campus State University of New York system, the College now offers 21 associate degree programs with many transfer pathways and advisement options, six certificates, credit and non-credit microcredentials, multiple non-credit professional credentials, and flexible learning options including hybrid, online, and evening courses.

While its history of service is deep, the College in its most recent times has faced significant operational challenges, most recently with the decision in June 2022 by the Middle States Commission on Higher Education to place its accreditation on warning status. This has dominated College operations since, with the most profound times over the past year.

Considering such foundational aspects, this annual report will focus on work toward reaffirmation of accreditation and the future of the College, extending beyond the end of the academic year.

Since the beginning of calendar 2024, the College has increasingly turned its attention to the success measures that can ensure its continued operations and benefits for the next generations of Clinton County students, families and employers. These include securing Middle States accreditation, enrollment growth, financial sustainability, the move to a new location and human resources.

Additionally of note, Dr. John Kowal resigned from the presidency in May 2024, ending a tenure that began in 2021.

Ken Knelly, previously serving at chief of staff at SUNY Plattsburgh and, since February 2024, as special advisor to SUNY for the planned campus transition, was named administrator in charge. The appointment was in the interest of both institutions, with work immediately beginning on the noted focus on success measures, faculty, and staff.

Middle States Accreditation

Clinton Community College publicly announced a relocation plan to the SUNY Plattsburgh campus in early January 2024, about a week before its next monitoring report was due to Middle States. The College's leadership said it would work toward completing the move for the start of the 2025-2026 academic year.

This decision, made to address enrollment declines and financial challenges, was designed to maintain the College's independent status while co-locating its operations on the nearby university campus.

In June 2022, following an action by the Commission, the College was first warned that its accreditation may be in jeopardy because of insufficient evidence that the institution is currently in compliance with Standards VI and VII. The College remained on warning status following a March 2023 visit and action by the Commission in June 2023.

A subsequent monitoring report was directed, due in January 2024. This was required to provide evidence the institution has achieved and can sustain ongoing compliance with Standard VI, including but not limited to sufficiency of resources to fulfill its mission and goals and to support its educational purposes and programs, and further evidence of qualified administrators, sufficient in number, to enable the chief executive officer to discharge his/her duties effectively.

Following that monitoring report and a March 2024 site visit, and a supplemental request for information, the Commission placed the College on probation in June 2024, resulting in a new monitoring report due in August 2024 and an implementable teach-out plan.

These were completed and a new monitoring report prepared, with input from a cross section of faculty, staff and board members. Preparation meetings were also held, with a follow-up team visit in September 2024.

Additionally, a substantive change request to move campus operations was submitted to the Commission, along with all relevant materials and appendices for their consideration.

The team visit read-out was positive and indicated in its findings that it recommended no requirements, which if followed by the full Commission at its November 2024 meeting would result in a reaffirmation of accreditation for the College. This would be a substantial step forward for the College's relocation plans and its efforts to grow its reputation and influence in the region.

The read-out report noted that due to extensive preparation, follow through, and leadership, the framework provided on the College's behalf to the team was concise, consistent, and well thought out.

The College continues to monitor this process and respond to any requests for additional information or evidence.

Enrollment

Among the keys to success for the College – indeed one of the two “must pass” aspects along with reaffirmation of accreditation – is sustaining and growing enrollment up to and through the relocation.

Enrollment remained relatively flat in the 2023-2024 academic year, with a total aggregate headcount of 1,961 and FTE of 494. This has been about the same since the 2020-2021 academic year, with an increasing proportion of high school College Advancement Program (CAP) students, who earn credits at their schools with tuition at about one-third the cost.

The College’s fall 2023 on-campus student population, excluding CAP, was 411 (232 full-time; 179 part-time). Age distribution showed a concentration in younger demographics, with students under 20 and those in their 20s each comprising about 39% of the total, collectively representing about 78.5% of the student body. The remaining 22.5% were 30 years or older, with a gradual decrease in numbers as age increased.

In terms of racial and ethnic diversity, the majority of students (67.6%) identified as White, followed by 6.4% Black or African American, and 4.5% Hispanic. Notably, 17.3% of students did not specify their race or ethnicity. The data revealed that younger students, particularly those under 20, were more likely to be full-time, while part-time attendance was more common among older students. Additionally, racial and ethnic diversity appeared to be more pronounced in the younger age groups, especially among students under 20.

Work toward fall 2024 enrollment was a paramount focus through the summer. David Tracy, an enrollment management professional with decades of experience, was retained through The Registry to upgrade operations in admissions, financial aid and marketing. He is focused on increasing connections with prospects-to-enrollment and improving current practices, including better integrating the application and communication processes. He is following the College’s enrollment plan, which was adjusted after the March site visit. Work to develop a new SEM plan will take place after completion in 2024 of an updated Strategic Plan for the College.

Into the fall 2024 semester, the College’s enrollment, excluding CAP, was 458, or an increase of 11.4%. The breakdown was 250 full-time and 208 part-time. Two other factors bode well for enrollment ahead – continued growth of CAP and the development of a prison education program initially with the Altona Correctional Facility.

The CAP program has been a strong contributor financially for the College and continues to have growth potential. It is a feeder for future students. College leadership met with all area school district leaders over the fall semester to help advance the program.

While this population nets lower returns, CAP continues to be an important factor in our overall enrollment and a key source of low-cost higher education in our surrounding community. With a senior faculty member coordinating CAP, the high schools are more frequently accessed. This allows for more collaboration with the high school counselors and parents, a clearer pathway to

further higher education and better positioning the College itself as a viable option for high school students. The CAP program is increasing in popularity as a cost-effective way to have students complete at least one year of college at reduced rates.

Fall 2024 CAP enrollment currently totals 597, an increase of 5.4% over a year earlier.

Given increased outreach and opportunities for students, Clinton forecasts an increase in this population. Ongoing conversations with the University of Vermont Health Network Champlain Valley Physicians Hospital have yielded students in the nursing program, a potential cohort of LPN students in spring 2025 and other opportunities for future growth. These conversations with the hospital CEO and other staff are productive and positive. We are working for this program to be at full capacity of 60 students by fiscal year 2025.

Additionally, the program with Altona Correctional Facility is set to launch on October 28. We expect an initial yield of up to 10 FTEs in fall. We are working with SUNY system administration to enable further growth and funding options for the program, with Middle States limitations due to accreditation status hopefully being lifted.

The spring 2024 semester also marked the pilot launch of the Advancing Success in Associate Pathways, or ASAP, program. This SUNY-supported program offers valuable workshops and support to students. Throughout the semester, participants built strong relationships with program staff and received academic, financial, and student support to help them overcome obstacles.

ASAP began planning for fall recruitment, partnering with admissions at the Accepted Student Open House on April 20 to recruit an additional 125 students. The program also organized an academic forum and lunch with faculty, where students learned about upcoming courses and engaged in community-building activities. Additional workshops were also offered. ASAP students benefited from priority registration and financial support for summer classes.

In fall 2024, the ASAP program successfully achieved its enrollment target, reaching the established goal of 131 students. Throughout September, academic advisors conducted comprehensive initial meetings with enrolled students to finalize course schedules and develop individualized degree completion plans.

New Location

Following the announcement of a new location for fall 2025, efforts began to plan for, coordinate and execute myriad logistics associated with the transformation.

Initially, a joint coordinating committee was created to examine initial options. These were coordinated by Ken Knelly in his role as special advisor. Other task groups were created with emphasis on the library system, registration and scheduling, and specialized academic spaces.

The joint committee was comprised of individuals from both campuses, with work also including representatives from the chancellor's office and the State University Construction Fund.

Initial spaces in Algonquin and Adirondack halls on the SUNY Plattsburgh campus were explored. Rickes Associates, a specialized higher education space consultant, was hired to help formulate a comprehensive plan. During the assessment, these initial spaces were determined to be unsuitable as they would have required broad alterations and potentially compromised the independence of both institutions.

Further examination led to the identification of a more appropriate solution: Redcay Hall on Beekman Street and 133 Court Street. These buildings, currently in use on the SUNY Plattsburgh campus, would not require large scale capital improvements. The new locations offer significant advantages, including space for windowed individual offices for all permanent faculty and capacity for at least a one-third increase in on-campus enrollment. Rickes Associates coordinated a detailed layout addressing the College's needs.

The College's existing classes and schedules align with the new location, with limited exceptions. These include nursing, science and art labs, which can be shared or obtained elsewhere at SUNY Plattsburgh. Technology courses will continue to be taught in the Institute for Advanced Manufacturing (IAM) on the current College campus.

The College's move to a new location places the campus in a location that fits its size, at a manageable cost, and at a place where future additional shared services and savings – coupled with expanded opportunities for enrollment growth and better student services – are realistic and achievable.

With the appointment of an administrator in charge, the joint coordinating committee ceased to exist, with the coordinating work done by liaisons at each institution in conjunction with the two campus leaders and the chancellor's office.

Work for fall 2024 includes detailed development of a timeline by the construction fund, a memorandum of agreement between the institutions, plans to move existing occupants in the SUNY Plattsburgh buildings and to move the College campus.

The College has prepared by moving surplus items into the Stafford Building on campus, which has not classes or activities for 2024-2025, and is donating much of the property to Clinton County, SUNY Plattsburgh, area school districts and local nonprofit organizations. These donations are being tracked.

Financial Stability

The College's finances and financial future have been at the center of Middle States concerns since its June 2022 change in status. It has accordingly been a focus of all monitoring reports and is the primary driver of the planned relocation, with Controller Sheri Brienza-Wypyski playing a critical role in coordination and reporting.

The Commission for the January 2024 monitoring report asked the College to provide evidence demonstrating a record of responsible fiscal management, including preparing a multi-year budget and submission of the external financial audits for fiscal year 2023

confirming financial viability and proper internal financial controls, with evidence of corrective measures taken to address any material findings cited in the audit or an accompanying management letter.

In response, the College notes the external financial audit for fiscal year 2023 confirmed its financial viability and proper internal financial controls. No corrective measures were necessary to address any material findings.

Of note: the College met with its auditing firm to discuss the timely completion of the next fiscal year audit. It is anticipated this can be completed in December 2024. The failure of the College to have a completed audit in time for the March 2024 follow-up team visit was a factor in the June decision to move the College's status to probation.

Relative to the current year, the College expects to end its 2023-2024 fiscal year with a deficit of about \$564,695, leaving an end-of-year fund balance of nearly \$1.8 million. Though substantial, the projected annual deficit is far less than the \$814,383 originally budgeted, with the gap driven by a combination of cost-cutting, unfilled position and summer enrollment increases.

The College's budget for fiscal year 2025 was approved by the board of trustees in July 2024. A presentation was made to a committee of the Clinton County Legislature in August 2024 and the request was approved the following month.

In developing a sustainable multi-year budget for Middle States, the priority was on creating an ongoing and sustainable financial future. It included the following assumptions stemming from reasonable expectations, the draft MOA with SUNY Plattsburgh and commitments from SUNY system administration:

- Eliminates the maintenance of current buildings and grounds, Clinton County Sheriff's Office security details and utilities, reducing annual costs by roughly \$1.2 million.
- Adds a rental for SUNY Plattsburgh, based on a first-year rate of \$350,000. This is offset in part by a state fund that can pay 40% of the cost of instructional space. Such spaces are estimated at 30% of the footprint, providing the offset and resulting in a first-year net cost of \$308,000. This net amount was provided by SUNY System Administration and will be noted in the final agreement.
- The State University Construction Fund will manage required upgrades of the buildings and will be financed through the traditional funding process for both SUNY System and community colleges in New York State.
- Existing student lab and tech fee dollars may also be allocated to these related services at SUNY Plattsburgh, with the exact amounts to be further explored in the final agreement developed with SUNY System and SUNY Plattsburgh.

- While not included in the multi-year budget, it is anticipated that savings and synergy opportunities will be further developed in time with SUNY Plattsburgh after the move and with the meshing of campus cultures. As noted, these are most likely initially in the areas of information technology and transactional services.
- Additional enrollment growth opportunities are anticipated with the move to the new campus location and will be further pursued after and as institutional and professional relationships grow with SUNY Plattsburgh. The opportunity provides a path to better retain College and support Plattsburgh students with greater academic need. However, for the purposes of a conservative bottom-line approach, these opportunities are not included in the multi-year projection.

On the revenue side, the multi-year projection keeps state aid, sponsor contributions and chargebacks flat for the entire period through fiscal year 2028. It assumes modest student revenue increases of 3.5% annually from fiscal year 2026 through 2028. On the expense side, it assumes 4% annual increases in benefits, 2% annual increases in non-personnel services and 1% annual increases in the combined salaries line. These are sustainable and reasonable assumptions.

Academic Affairs

The College continued to develop and hone its academic core and opportunities for students over the course of the academic year under the leadership of Vice President Carey Goyette. A sampling of developments is included in this section.

The Human Services AAS and Alcohol & Substance Abuse Counseling Certificate has been aided by a substantial new state Office of Addiction Services and Supports scholarship fund (covering tuition, paid internships, certification for students, and college-received administration fees). Because the program is delivered remotely, increased enrollment of out of region students is possible.

Growth opportunities are also being advanced in emergency services (EMT, AEMT, and CFR). There is a high need in the region for trained EMTs. The College's program produces the highest pass rates in the region, resulting in first-responder departments sending individuals through the program. The College offers the program with flexible delivery options and for credit.

Microcredentials and credits in the area of human services will enhance professional development in agencies, such as the Department of Social Services and Behavioral Health Services North. This microcredential stacks into the human services AAS and Alcohol & Substance Abuse Counseling Certificate. Police academy/criminal justice credit will be awarded to Zone 9 Police Academy cadets who graduate.

We are also expanding prior learning assessment (e.g. – standardized testing, military credits, etc.). The policy and processes have been drafted and various grant funds have been identified to help encourage and expand PLA opportunities for students. Clinton's fall 2024 Welding

Academy graduates were the first group offered the opportunity to receive PLA credits if they enrolled in a certificate of degree program.

Workforce development revenues have trended higher due to agreements with the local chamber of commerce, increased marketing, and outreach to other organizations and businesses. The College has access to SUNY workforce grants beneficial to our region. These include an Office for People with Developmental Disabilities (OPWDD) grant for a direct support professional certificate program partnering with the local ARC and a workforce development training grant partnering with MRP Solutions and CITEC/Nova Bus.

As noted, ongoing conversations with the University of Vermont Health Network Champlain Valley Physicians Hospital have yielded students in the nursing program, a potential cohort of LPN students in spring 2025 and other opportunities for future growth. We are working for this program to be at full capacity of 60 students by fiscal year 2025. Similar conversations are developing around the creation of a paramedic pathway.

The prison education program is now in place. We expect this to yield from 20-40 FTEs in the next academic year.

Student Life, Athletics, Student Support Services

Both student support services and an active campus life, critical elements for recruitment and retention, are a focus across the College's divisions. This engagement has allowed students to feel like they have creative and social outlets apart from academics and the chance to connect with peers and mentors.

Patti LaDuke, a 20-year campus professional, was named interim dean of students in July 2024, adding wide experience with students and a renewed focus on support, retention and programming, such as College clubs, athletics, and Student Senate. She has also added training in Title IX and focused attention on examining the opportunities for student organizations and how best to serve students now and with the move.

Over the course of the academic year, the College – with assistance from the Phi Theta Kappa honor society, student athletes and the Student Senate, sponsored food drives for the Cougar Cupboard. Students and the College also participated in the Clinton County Department of Social Services Adopt-a-Child program, with more than 90 gifts shared with local families.

Other events and programming included the College and its DEI committee hosting a Taste of the Islands event in February, partnering with a local Jamaican Restaurant in Plattsburgh, and a history of the Underground Railroad in the North Country event, with speakers from a local museum and open to the public. In March, a Mental Health Day was featured, with therapy dogs and donkeys. The popular therapy animals attended other campus events, including Springfest.

Intercollegiate athletics was also a growing, important component of campus life and institutional pride, as well as FTEs. We added men's soccer to men's basketball and men's and

women's cross-country teams. Efforts to launch both women's basketball and soccer did not succeed, so we are looking at other alternatives to broaden offerings and enrollment.

Men's basketball had its first winning season, and most wins in a season (17), since 2013-14. The College hosted its first home playoff game since 2008, resulting in one-point, buzzer-beater win over Jefferson Community College to advance to the Final 8 in Herkimer. The team reached the Final Four of the Region 3 playoffs, the deepest run since 2013-14.

Among student support services, the College's accommodative services continued to assist those with special needs to meet their educational goals. Collectively, this and related outreach ranged from work with classroom and testing alterations to the promoting visitation by remedial classes to the academic support services area.

Recognitions

Two Chancellor's Awards were presented to faculty and staff during the academic year.

Julie Hanson, Professor of Mathematics, Excellence in Teaching.

With an illustrious 23-year tenure at the College, she has demonstrated an unwavering commitment to academic excellence and student success. Her dedication extends beyond the classroom, where she imparts knowledge in quantitative literacy, statistics, pre-algebra, and pre-algebra supplement courses. Additionally, she serves as an academic advisor, nomination coordinator for the PTK All-USA / All-State Academic Team Competition, and a valued member of the academic standards committee. She also champions sustainability efforts by spearheading recycling initiatives on campus.

Fadi Helwanji, Adjunct Professor of Business, Adjunct Teaching.

His academic journey is distinguished by a Ph.D. in education with an organizational leadership concentration from the University of the Incarnate Word. Fluent in Arabic, French, and English, he brings a rich multicultural perspective to his teaching and leadership roles. His extensive experience spans various countries, including Lebanon, Canada, China, and the United States, where he has excelled in educational, pastoral, and business leadership capacities. His transformative contributions extend to co-founding both profit and non-profit organizations, reflecting his commitment to innovation and societal impact.

Additionally, two Chancellor's Awards were presented to students during the academic year.

Lili Morello, a senior in the nursing program.

She exemplifies dedication and excellence in her field of study. As she prepared to graduate in May 2024, she secured a position at CVPH on the progressive care unit. Her passion for patient care and commitment to excellence make her a shining example of the caliber of students.

Shaileigh White, a senior majoring in liberal arts.

Graduating in May 2024, she continued her education, pursuing a degree in counseling. Her goal is to become a counselor dedicated to helping children navigate difficult situations and develop crucial coping skills.

Advancement and Foundation

At the end of the fiscal year, the Clinton Community College Foundation's endowment stood at \$4.086 million, up from \$2.88 million a year earlier.

For the fiscal year, 67 alumni made gifts for a total of \$4,889.00 (out of 10,350 living alums on record). An additional 88 gifts came from non-alumni, for a total of \$133,213. A total of 39 donor visits/meetings were held, with alumni activities including four board meetings with the alumni association, and Reunion 2024 with 55 alumni and guests attending.

The work over the past academic year comes off a four-year decline in fundraising activity, donor communications, and stewardship, now under the leadership of Vice President Steve Frederick. Goals for the next year include increasing donor acquisitions by 10% (TO X) and securing four new donors contributing \$10,000 each through the New York State Charitable Tax Program via the SUNY Impact Foundation.

Additionally, we plan to boost alumni donor participation by 10% and to achieve full participation in giving from our board of trustees, CCC Foundation board, and alumni association board members.

Other key objectives include increasing faculty and staff participation by 25% (to 18) through payroll deductions, establishing four new endowed scholarships of \$10,000 or higher, reaching an Athletics Booster Club donation goal of \$50,000, and achieving a 15% increase in annual fund gifts by December 31, 2024.

Looking Ahead

The College expects, and intends to sustain, enrollment growth and accreditation standards that are foundational to its future. This is critical to our region, the State University of New York system, our Clinton County sponsors, the board of trustees, community leaders and our friends, alumni and donors who love, support and invest in this College.

Accordingly, it is important to the community we have served since 1966 to continue to offer, adapt and grow our unique set of degrees and other pathways from an open access campus. We place students at the center of all we do. We fill a unique niche and provide partnerships with organizations and institutions across the spectrum of our area.

The College's move places the campus in a location that fits its size, at a manageable cost, and where future additional shared services and savings – coupled with expanded opportunities – are realistic and achievable. This is the primary focus of the year ahead.