

**Baltimore City Community College**  
**Budget FY 2017 Testimony**  
**House Appropriations Committee**  
**Education and Economic Development Subcommittee**  
**March 2, 2016**

Baltimore City Community College (BCCC) is a mission-driven institution. Our mission is to provide quality, affordable, and accessible educational opportunities that meet the professional and personal goals of our students, while improving communities in the greater Baltimore area. In sum, BCCC serves the citizens of Baltimore City and Maryland at large. For 69 years, BCCC has been an important and vital part of the community. As our 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary approaches next year, we want to continue to educate our students, increase workforce development, and work with our partners in education and business to expand job training and placements.

BCCC offers 29 associate degrees and 16 certificate programs. The Career Pathways create clear alignments between BCCC's credit programs in five areas: business; behavioral and social sciences; pre-health professions; science, technology, and engineering; and mathematics. In addition, through our Business and Continuing Education Division (BCED), students receive training, certification, and licensure for several positions including, medical technicians, telecommunications, and pharmacy technicians. We also offer career training, English language services, adult literacy, and GED preparation courses. The goal of BCCC is to get students educated and employed.

As the only community college in Baltimore City and the only State-funded community college in Maryland, BCCC enrolls more Baltimore City residents than any other college or university in the state. We are open to all, have a diverse student body that is reflective of Baltimore City, and educate a unique population with vast needs and various challenges.

For example, BCCC serves more students who have issues of college readiness than any other community college in the State. In fall 2015, 96% of BCCC's first-time students placed into developmental mathematics and 78% placed into developmental reading. BCCC offers integrated developmental mathematics, ranging from pre-algebra to intermediate algebra, at the ninth and tenth grade levels. BCCC also offers integrated developmental Reading and English courses, at the ninth and tenth grade levels, and 17% of our fall 2015 credit students were enrolled in these classes. Additionally in 2015, 3,939 students were enrolled in English as a Second Language (ESL) courses. BCCC fulfills a critical State need; with the support of our partners, elected leaders, and concerned citizens we can continue to fulfill that need for many years to come.

In September of 2014, I was appointed President and CEO of BCCC. Since that time, my administration and I have been busy making structural changes, improving our service to students, and moving forward. Because of our hard work, we have had several accomplishments, including but not limited to the following:

- The Middle States Commission on Higher Education (MSCHE) removed BCCC's warning status and BCCC's accreditation is secure. The next full comprehensive site visit is scheduled for 2025.
- BCCC added eight new degree and/or certificate programs to its educational offerings.
- ESL and Adult Basic Education (ABE) courses serve thousands of students each year.
- In March 2016, BCED will add new training classes in cyber security and home inspections.
- BCCC created a new 25 member President's Advisory Council that is chaired by Dr. Gregory Thornton, CEO of Baltimore City Public Schools. The purpose of the Council is to advise the President on strategies to enhance student success and institutional sustainability as a comprehensive community college.
- Made significant progress on the Joint Chairman's Report (JCR) study that was ordered last year in order to expand insight and facilitate improved operations and administration of BCCC.

We are proud of the above successes, but the college is facing many challenges and increasing demands, while simultaneously dealing with limited and stagnant resources. Like our sister community colleges, BCCC has seen a decline in enrollment despite our focus on operations and allocation of resources. We are concentrating our efforts growing enrollment, improving retention, and increasing graduation and completion rates. Some of our recent changes include:

- The launch of new degree and certificate programs in cyber security, assurance, and paramedicine.
- Reduction of all degree programs to 60 credits or the accepted exception level in accordance with the CCRCCA mandate.
- Approval of new Arts and Sciences Transfer programs with Areas of Concentration (AOCs) in Art, Music, Psychology, and Theatre.
- Drafted proposals for new programs in Actuary Science, Pure and Applied Mathematics, Science, and Information Technology Coding that will be submitted to the Maryland Higher Education Commission for approval in the Spring of 2016.
- Empowered underserved young adults, ages 18-24, by providing real-world experience and a college education through the BCCC/Year Up partnership.

- Established and increased new workforce development partnerships.

To increase enrollment and to remain competitive, BCCC needs to expand credit program offerings as well as articulations from noncredit to credit—and, of course, ensure alignment with regional workforce training needs. In regards to workforce training, BCCC is on track to launch at least 10 new programs relevant to the needs of business and industry by FY 2018. In addition, we have aggressively pursued partnerships with employers in the private and public sectors to create training opportunities in high-demand career fields. A memorandum of understanding with the Johns Hopkins Health System was recently signed for our new Supply Chain Management program. In this program, students will receive training and pursue the professional designation of a Certified Logistics Associate (CLA), as well as certifications in Forklift Operation & Safety, OSHA 10-hour General Industry Training, and Warehousing and Inventory Control. BCCC is also moving forward with new noncredit career and technical education programs for the following positions or areas:

- Patient Transporter
- Medical Office Assistant
- Medical Unit Coordinator
- Medical Records Clerk
- Health Information Technician (online)
- Warehouse Technician
- Weatherization & Energy Conservation (Expanded)

BCCC is also in partnership discussions with Dr. Maria Thompson, President of Coppin State University, and Kurt Schmoke, Esq., President of the University of Baltimore. We recently expanded these discussions to include our respective Chief Academic Officers to create additional opportunities for all of our students.

To fulfill our mission, we must have the financial means and support of the State. We request your support for the Governor's budget recommendations for FY 2017. Over the last two years, BCCC's budget and fund balance has been reduced by almost \$7.2 million. These reductions have had real consequences to the students and to the institution's ability to serve the students. BCCC has never received the full formula funding that was set up by the General Assembly over a decade ago. Thus, programming, student services, student retention, and the ability to attract faculty have all been diminished. We ask that these funds be restored so that BCCC can continue to provide quality education to the residents of Baltimore City and prepare workers for an ever changing competitive workforce.

BCCC remains highly committed to providing a high quality education to an increasing number of students and helping Maryland meet its statewide workforce development goals. With your support, assistance and approval of our budget request, we can not only achieve our current goals but exceed them to reach greater heights.

I thank you for this opportunity and for your continuing support of BCCC and our students. This concludes my testimony. Please note that included in your folder is a brochure that highlights BCCC's programming, student activities, and recent events. I hope you take an opportunity to review it at your convenience. Next, we will answer the specific questions posed by the Department of Legislative (DLS) Analyst and take any additional questions that you may have.

**Recommended Actions:**

1. Add language to correct State support for Baltimore City Community College’s English for Speakers of Other Languages grant.

**President’s Comment:**

The President agrees.

2. Add budget bill language for a comprehensive report.

**President’s Comment:**

The President agrees.

**The President was asked to comment on the following:**

*Page 8: The President should comment on how the college is working with developmental completers to ensure that they graduate or are able to transfer to another institution.*

**President’s Comment:**

The College is working with developmental completers to ensure that they graduate or are able to transfer to another institution in the following ways: using the intrusive academic advising model; curricular changes in Reading/English and Mathematics; and accelerated course offerings.

As stated in the budget analysis, over 90% of incoming first-time students test into at least one developmental course, with Math being the highest and over 75% placed into developmental reading. Hundreds of students test into two and even three developmental courses. All students are assigned an advisor based on their intended major, which is linked to a particular degree pathway (i.e., Business, Behavioral and Social Sciences, Pre-Health Professions, STEM, and Visual and Performing Arts). The advisors work under an intrusive advising model that assists the student through his or her appropriate degree pathway. The College has also instituted “hard-stops” during critical milestone periods (15 credits, 30 credits, and 45 credits) to ensure that students are meeting with their advisors and are on schedule to graduate and/or transfer.

In addition to academic advising, BCCC has instituted some “game changers” that involve restructuring of developmental education at BCCC and how instruction is delivered. These changes include:

- Combining Reading and English developmental courses. These courses are now called RENG. There are three levels of RENG courses. Research has shown that the more levels of developmental courses a student must go through, the less likely that the student will complete college-level English or Math. [Bailey,

*Thomas. (February 2009). Rethinking Developmental Education. CCRC Brief. Community College Research Center. Teachers College, Columbia University]*

- Developmental Math, now includes modular classes that are self-paced.
- STEM and Non-STEM math courses are now readily available.
- In the case of developmental RENG and Math, 8-week classes are available which enable students to register for the next course in sequence, thereby completing two courses in one semester.

All students at BCCC, including developmental completers, benefit from access to a dedicated Transfer Coordinator and renewed efforts to update and forge new articulation agreements.

*Page 11: The President should comment on whether this is a realistic goal for BCCC, given the budgeted assumption of declining enrollment in fiscal 2017.*

**President's Comment:**

At the time when the 2013-2018 Strategic Plan goals and their targets were set, the trajectory of the data in combination with recruitment, retention and programmatic efforts supported the FY 2018 goal of 6,250 total (credit and noncredit) full-time equivalents (FTEs) eligible for State funding. Over the past few years since then, the unanticipated rate of decline has necessitated the re-evaluation of progress toward the goal. Currently, reaching the goal of 6,250 total eligible FTEs is unlikely. The College is currently projecting FY 2018 total eligible FTEs to be 4,612.

*Page 14: DLS recommends recalculating the ESOL grant using the fiscal 2015 actual enrollment figure. This reduces the ESOL grant by \$140,567 from the allowance.*

**President's Comment:**

The President agrees.

*Page 17: The President should comment on how BCCC will balance its budget given declining tuition and fee revenue and essentially flat State support in the foreseeable future.*

**President's Comment:**

To maintain a balance budget and prudent fiscal stewardship, BCCC has implemented actions that will enhance revenue and reduce spending. For revenue enhancement, the College is implementing an indirect cost recovery rate that is expected to generate up to \$500,000 in additional revenue. Additionally, through increased grant funding, the College anticipates up to an additional \$2 million in revenue that would cover existing expenditures. While those two revenue enhancements may be sufficient to ensure a balanced budget, BCCC continues to analyze the spending within all departments and divisions of the College for potential reductions,

including deferring additional facility maintenance projects and reductions to contractual employee levels.

We have seen a decline in enrollment despite our emphasis on operational improvements, streamlining processes, and strategic allocation of resources. We are focused on the need to grow enrollment and the revenue that comes from increased enrollment. We are constantly reviewing our finances and resources, while continually working on being better financial stewards.

We also recognize that our expenditures per student are pronounced and that our scholarship levels are not in line with our student enrollment decreases. We will look at these statistics and determine the best way to continue to provide for our neediest students with the recognition that we must also seek and enroll a more financially diverse student body.

*Page 17: The President should comment on when the college will resume previously scheduled facilities maintenance using fund balance.*

**President's Comment:**

Given the dollar amount within the fund balance, the restrictions placed on those funds, and the requirement to pay for ERP through fund balance, the College anticipates deferring most non-emergency facilities projects until after fiscal year 2017. The total value of those projects exceeds \$1.6 million. For the facilities maintenance items deemed critical, the College intends to release internal restrictions on the Facilities Capital fee, which is a component of the fund balance. However, the Facilities Capital Fee portion of fund balance is less than the spending need for facilities maintenance need. Thus, less critical items will be deferred by BCCC.

*Page 19: The President should comment on how much of the planned net \$5.2 million fund balance transfer in fiscal 2016 is expected to be spent this fiscal year and for what purpose.*

**President's Comment:**

The College expects to spend most of the fund balance transfer amount on ERP and related spending. Anticipated spending amounts total \$4.3 million in fiscal 2017. For any remaining amounts, the College will determine what amounts are available given existing fund balance restrictions and designations. Current BCCC fund balance levels include external restrictions for its WBJC radio station of approximately \$1.5 million and Facilities Capital Fee Reserves of approximately \$1.4 million. Additionally, internal restrictions against fund balance include Lockwood Real Estate Development Reserves of approximately \$2.2 million. When these various restrictions, designations, and ERP spending requirements are combined, the amounts exceed available fund balance.

*Page 20: The President should comment on whether the college will allocate more funding to need-based aid, especially now that the college has recognized tuition increases as necessary for*

*balancing the budget and because the college will spend \$0.2 million less on institutional aid in fiscal 2017. The President should also comment on whether BCCC will reexamine participation in federal loan programs*

**President's Comment:**

While we agree with the DLS Analyst that we do a very good job of encouraging our students to maximize federal aid, we also agree that we need to regularly evaluate if we are utilizing all of our financial options. BCCC periodically reexamines its participation in federal loan programs. In light of the financial needs of the student population, the current tuition and fee structure, and potential programmatic risks of a high loan default rate, BCCC currently does not participate in the federal loan program.

Additionally, our student demographic and student need indicates that approximately 57% of our student body are financial aid eligible. Therefore, based on the current tuition and fee structure BCCC remains one of the most affordable two year institutions at this time. If the current default rate goes higher than 30% for 3 years, then the College can jeopardize its chance of participating in federal grants such as, STEM, TRIO, PBI, state grants, and Title IV funding. These sources provide critical financial support to our students who are among the neediest in Baltimore City and the State.

*Page 23: The President should comment on any plans to change tuition rates again and the amount of unrestricted funding budgeted in institutional aid.*

**President's Comment:**

Based on its five-year projection, the College expects to continue annual increases to tuition rates. BCCC had its first tuition increase in several years in fiscal year 2016. For fiscal 2017, the proposed credit tuition rates included in the budget will be at \$99 per credit for in-state and \$260 for out-of-state. As it did in fiscal 2016, BCCC will continue to evaluate its tuition levels, balancing the need for affordability with the need for fiscal stewardship and prudence.

*Page 24: The President should comment on whether BCCC will remove the fees as a barrier to student enrollment and graduation.*

**President's Comment:**

The College has been reviewing all of its fees, including those related to enrollment and graduation. For example, the College expects to consolidate its application fee into other fees to reduce a potential enrollment barrier. Additionally, it should be noted that no fees are required to graduate from the College. A discretionary fee is needed for those that wish to participate in the optional commencement exercises; however, if a student does not choose to participate, he or she will still graduate from the College if the academic requirements are met.

As stated in the DLS Analyst's report, BCCC has reported additional barriers to student admission and enrollment, including incomplete admission materials, placement testing, paying for college and registration fees. We are reviewing these processes, and based on our findings we will adjust accordingly.

*Page 25: The President should comment on how BCCC can become a destination of choice for more Baltimore City high school students.*

**President's Comment:**

BCCC and Baltimore City Public Schools (BCPS) are collaborating to ensure that all City School programs and pathways align with BCCC certificate and degree pathway programs. This alignment will make BCCC more attractive as students will view the institution as a natural choice in completing their career pathway.

While in high school, BCPS students are also afforded the opportunity to become dually enrolled. Dual enrollment enables students to complete high school courses and certification exams that meet BCCC credit criteria allowing students to complete college-level credentials faster and become credentialed in the workforce.

BCCC is partnering with BCPS to launch a pilot program that will allow BCCC faculty and staff to work within designated high schools on a specified day and time of each week in order to recruit students who:

- were not accepted into four-year institutions, but still have aspirations of going to college;
- are undecided regarding whether higher education is right for them; or
- want to earn certification in order to immediately enter the workforce.

*Page 27: The President should comment on the conversion rate of BCCC's dually enrolled students after high school graduation. The President should also comment on the reasons for the decline in fiscal 2016 enrollment in the fall, winter, and spring semesters and what a reasonable target enrollment is for the college in fall 2016.*

**President's Comment:**

*Conversion rate of dually enrolled students*

In spring 2014, 210 students from any Maryland high school were dually enrolled at BCCC and 52 of them enrolled at BCCC in academic year (AY) 2014 – 15 for a conversion rate of 25%. In spring 2015, 149 students from any Maryland high school were dually enrolled at BCCC in spring 2015 from any Maryland high school and 31 of them enrolled at BCCC in AY 2015-16 for a total conversion rate of 21%.

### *Enrollment decline*

The decline in fiscal 2016 enrollment in the fall, winter, and spring semesters is multifaceted. Issues related to outstanding financial aid regulations, financial obligations, and academic standing are among the most impactful for BCCC's students.

Each institution is required to have a financial aid Standard of Academic Progress Policy (SAP). This policy monitors three components of a student's academic progress and is federally-mandated to be stricter than BCCC's Academic Standing Policy. For students in associate degree programs, BCCC monitors their SAP progress at the end of the spring semester. The SAP progress of students enrolled in certificate programs and those in developmental courses is monitored at the completion of each semester. At the end of the spring 2015 semester, 1,579 students were identified as out of compliance due to their completion rates and 1,452 students were identified as not having the appropriate grade point average. Many of these students were out of compliance in both areas.

BCCC is exploring all possible factors to identify strategic areas of improvement to address the continuing decline in enrollment. Of the 4,726 students enrolled in fall 2015, 1,712 students that did not graduate also did not re-enroll in spring 2016. Of those students, 25% had outstanding financial obligations and 7% were academically dismissed in accordance with institutional standards.

As part of the JCR report being conducted by the Schaefer Center, a survey will be administered to the remainder of this population. BCCC has worked closely with the Schaefer Center's research team to construct the survey instruments. Additionally, there will be surveys and interviews conducted for other key constituent and stakeholder groups to provide further insight into our enrollment decline.

### *Fall 2016 target enrollment*

BCCC is projecting fall 2016 credit headcount to decline by 3% from 4,726 (fall 2015) to 4,571 (fall 2016). These calculations are based on the following for fall 2016:

- Due to outreach efforts and State legislation, dual enrolled high school students are projected to increase by 2% to 119 students.
- With an emphasis on intrusive academic advising, curricular changes, and other retention initiatives, the current decline in continuing students, those persisting from the previous spring and returning stop-outs, is expected to slow to -5% (2,996).
- Due to new programs, increased recruitment efforts and possible fee changes, students new to BCCC are projected to increase by 1% to 946 first-time to college students and 510 transfer students.

*Page 29: The President should comment on whether BCED expects to meet its noncredit enrollment goal in fiscal 2016. The President should also comment on whether students are more*

*interested in job placement or credit program credentials after completing noncredit training sequences.*

**President's Comment:**

BCED is currently on target to meet its noncredit enrollment goals for fiscal 2016. The students that BCED serves are typically interested in short-term training that leads to a certification or other credential that will enhance their immediate employment opportunities. All noncredit students are made aware of career pathways requiring additional training, including for-credit certificates and degrees options offered by the college.

*Page 31: The President should update the committees on the status of the consultant's review, particularly the opportunity analysis that is underway and how the results of the analysis will be used to alter BCCC's academic and noncredit offerings. The President should also discuss whether BCCC is coordinating with Baltimore City and the business community to align its institutional focus and offerings with the needs of Baltimore City and its employers.*

**President's Comment:**

The JCR report is currently underway, with the operational review for facilities, budget, and information technology completed or near completion. During this current phase of the study, the consultant is administering surveys to populations critical to the College's sustainability. Specifically, the College is surveying:

- Institutional stakeholders (faculty, staff, and students).
- External stakeholders (i.e., Baltimore City officials, State agencies, the President's Advisory Council, community, religious, and academic advisory boards, and the Board of Directors for the BCCC Foundation).
- BCCC governing board (BCCC Board of Trustees).
- Special populations (dual-enrolled students, applicants, non-returning students).

Feedback from the surveys is critical to the sustainability of the College. Understanding the populations surveyed will help the College to best find where it is aligned in the state higher education system and develop recommendations on how the institution can be successful filling that niche. Moreover, the surveys will help the College discover the areas that require expansion, enhancement, improvement, or significant overhaul.

Further analysis of this data may help BCCC develop new program offerings on both the credit and noncredit side to meet the demands of the marketplace, and also serve as a mechanism to ensure that the College's courses are in line with current and future demand. Once the survey data is analyzed, the College will be able to take a comprehensive look not just at program offerings, but also determine if the College is maximizing its contribution toward addressing the post-secondary education and training needs for young people and adults in Baltimore. Essential to this analysis will also be a review of the institution's governance structure, board composition,

relationship with Baltimore City, and role in the City's economic and workforce development plans.

BCCC is continuing to partner with Baltimore City and the business community to insure that its focus and offerings are meeting the needs of the Baltimore City. In keeping with the goals of the Maryland Postsecondary Plan for Higher Education, BCCC is supporting the completion agenda through its program delivery. BCCC is helping move the "completion needle" by offering career programs that respond to the needs of Baltimore City and Maryland's workforce. Meeting this demand is critical in light of the fact that Maryland's goal of credentialing 55% of residents ages 25-64 will have some form of academic credential (Associates degree or higher) by 2020. Working collaboratively with the BCED, the Academic Affairs division is designing course and programs to create opportunities for BCCC students to enhance personal growth and professional development. Additionally, the College monitors workforce and career opportunities by membership on the Baltimore Workforce Investment Board, and through the assistance of the president's advisory council.

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