

**Community College of Denver
AQIP Annual Update Process
September 14, 2005**

WITH REVIEWERS COMMENTS

Action Project: Develop Early/Middle College Model

A. Describe the past year's accomplishments and the current status of this Action Project.

This fall, as we began the third year of our partnership with the Career Education Center (CEC) Middle College of Denver, we found ourselves looking for an additional classroom to accommodate more juniors and seniors attending classes on the Auraria Campus. CCD is also providing an Early College office space for CEC Middle College. The office space accommodates four three to four faculty, a high school counselor and a college case manager on a rotating basis.

CEC Middle College students have access to CCD's Vocational Tutoring Services computer lab on the Auraria Campus for assistance with their college-level coursework. In addition, CCD has implemented at Bridge to College lab on-site at the Career Education Center Middle College location to assist students who are not yet on the Auraria Campus with basic skills development in the areas of reading, writing, math and ESL.

CEC continues to increase student enrollment in the early college program. Again this year, there were more applications for the Early College program than there were spaces available. And again this spring, CEC's graduation ceremony was held on the CCD Auraria Campus with great success. We believe this sends a powerful message about our partnership and high expectations for CEC Middle College students. The founding principal of CEC Middle College retired this spring and we are building a positive relationship with the new principal. The coordinator of the Early College initiative has been named to an assistant principal's position, maintaining a focus on Middle College growth.

CCD has hired the retired CEC principal on a special contract to help us expand our efforts within Denver Public Schools. Through a new GEAR UP grant, CCD will work with two middle schools to reach underserved students beginning in the seventh grade. Programs will be developed and delivered to increase the number of students moving from middle school to high school with the expectation of early college enrollment and degree completion.

We continue a successful partnership with Southwest Early College (SEC), a partnership between CCD and the Denver Public Schools newest charter school, which opened on the Teikyo Loretto Heights University Campus in the fall of 2004. This year, SEC enrolled an additional 130 students as incoming freshmen. As has been the case with CEC, SEC was not able to accept all students who applied. Enrollments were determined by a lottery system and a waiting list was kept. The former West Campus of the Community College of Denver relocated to Teikyo Loretto Heights and was renamed CCD Southwest. We began immediately serving the SEC students in our CCD basic skills lab which enabled many of the 2004 freshman and sophomore classes to increase their skills and Accuplacer scores, allowing 31 students to enroll in college-level coursework at our Southwest campus this fall.

Building on the success of that experience, our partnership was further strengthened when SEC hired four of CCD's basic skills faculty to work directly with SEC faculty in the areas of developmental reading, writing and math. This team of eight faculty is working throughout the year to align curriculum, materials, outcomes and activities to facilitate skill development toward the preparation and enrollment of this year's freshman and sophomore students into college coursework as early as possible. This effort began with a week-long orientation during the summer with scheduled time for collaborative meetings continue throughout the year.

Teikyo is currently negotiating with CCD to offer the first two years of an International Business baccalaureate degree on the TLHU campus. This will expand our programs on that campus, better serve the community and create greater options for SEC students.

In a further expansion of the partnership between Denver Public Schools and the Community College of Denver, CCD's East campus relocated to the first floor of a vacant DPS middle school building. We share the facility with Skyland Community School, a Big Picture charter high school within DPS. Skyland occupies the second floor of the school and the third floor is occupied by a middle school DPS charter, KIPP. Also on the campus is a pre-K through 8 school. We have been working with the Skyland Community School staff to enroll students in college classes at Auraria for two years prior to the move. We will be working much more closely now that we are co-located in a multi-age educational environment. We have opened our basic skills lab to the Skyland students under the same model that we use at Southwest Early College. Nine Skyland students are enrolled in a Spanish 111 class at the East Campus location. Next semester, we will offer expanded general education classes for traditional CCD students, community members, students from surrounding high schools and students at Skyland. We anticipate a rich exchange among all partners at this location.

At Abraham Lincoln High School, a comprehensive high school in southwest Denver, we have partnered in a new program, "College Now", a pilot program to increase the college-going rate among seniors at ALHS. This semester 65 College Now students are enrolled as full-time students at the Auraria Campus. An ALHS counselor has an office in the CCD advising office at Auraria. CCD also offers on-site college-level courses at ALHS under the Post Secondary Options (PSEO) program, as well as delivering the developmental series in reading, writing and math as high school elective classes designed to prepare students for college-level coursework by their junior year.

CCD's efforts to expand the Early College model in Adams County School Districts #1 and #14 have not progressed as planned. Over time, these opportunities will develop but they are on a much slower timeline.

As a result of our success with the Bridge to College Labs, The Piton Foundation has extended grant funding for this year. In addition, CCD was awarded a grant from the Mayor's Office of Workforce Development to help support the labs. This project was designed to create academic momentum in high school and ensure that underserved, low-income, first-generation DPS students graduate and enter college at college level. It provides *Accuplacer™* assessment, advising/case management, and tutoring support for high school students who are preparing to enroll in PSEO courses as juniors and seniors. It also provides these same services for students who are currently enrolled in PSEO courses. Initially implemented at Abraham Lincoln High School, a comprehensive DPS high school, we have now expanded to the Career Education Center Middle College of Denver, a DPS school of choice; at Emily Griffith High School, a DPS dropout retrieval program. Labs are also available to our partner early college/high school students at CCD Southwest and CCD East campuses. Postsecondary Education Options (PSEO), a dual enrollment program at area high schools has expanded. This fall we are serving more than 345 students at ten area high schools.

Review (10-06-05):

You have created and implemented various methods of bridging the educational boundary between the last two years of high school, and the first two of college. You have worked with a variety of partners and learning situations in this process. This shows attention to several of AQIP's 'Principles of High Performance Organizations'. The first of these is 'Collaboration'. You have partnered with a variety of educational providers often using existing faculty and structures. This shows a respect for 'People' which AQIP indicates is another 'Principle of High Performance Organizations'. By assisting high school students to better meet college level

requirements through curriculum changes (as measured by Accuplacer scores), you are, in effect, building your college enrollment – which shows ‘Foresight’, a third AQIP principle. There are a variety of ways to approach the issue of the high school to college transition. By using faculty and/or locations with which participants of your programs may be familiar, you have selected an approach which has a good chance of increasing program usage and retention. Unfortunately you did not include any outcome statistics in your annual update so that this aspect could be evaluated. It is apparent from your response to item J. in your initial declaration for this action project that you realize the importance of the quality improvement cycle (plan – do – check – act). The measurement and reporting of relevant statistics should not be undervalued. The hard numbers – such as persistence rate, college degree attainment, and job placement - are often what tell the success story of your program the best. Assuming the evaluation measures are generally positive, you would appear to have a model in place that is working well for you. Remember to celebrate your successes with everyone involved – HS and college faculty, staff facilitators, and especially student participants. You did not complete the timeline section of the action project general information, so I cannot tell when you had intended to close out this action project. From the information that you have shared, however, you seem to have multiple functional models in place, and a system for implementing, evaluating and ‘tweaking’ them. It would be my suggestion that you retire this particular project and move on to another area that would benefit from having the same concerted focus that you seem to have given this action project.

B. Describe how the institution involved people in work on this Action Project.

The leadership for this effort comes from our college president. There is a director of High School/Early College Partnerships who reports directly to the president and is assisted by a full-time coordinator for PSEO. Two additional full-time positions have been added this year; a director of the Bridge to College Labs and a full-time case manager for early/middle college partnerships. The dean of the Center for Learning Outreach is also responsible for Early/Middle College partnership efforts, is a member of the College’s Learning Team and takes major responsibility for working with the vice president for Learning and Academic Affairs and the academic deans to ensure consistent communication, collaboration, and responsiveness.

The Dean for the Center for Educational Advancement is integrally involved in the Bridge to College Labs and the collaboration among faculty who are teaching the developmental series in English, reading and math at Southwest Early College and Abraham Lincoln High School. He is in close communication with his faculty coordinators and teaching faculty at those locations. Across the college, discipline chairs and coordinators work closely with the PSEO coordinator and the early college director to recommend and approve adjunct faculty to teach at the high schools and early colleges and to ensure the content and delivery of college-level curriculum.

The Early/Middle College Steering Committee (E/MCSC) continues to provide leadership and direction to this initiative. The E/MCSC involves more than 30 individuals college-wide and provides a focused approach to strategic planning activities, evaluation of existing activities, and development of additional resources necessary to continued growth and development of this initiative. Six subcommittees (Planning, Evaluation & Assessment, Policies & Procedures, Marketing, Recruitment & Communications, Curriculum, Professional Development, Advising, Retention & Success) guide the college’s early/middle college activities and come together quarterly for full E/MCSC meetings in conjunction with CCD Executive Staff meetings to offer top-level leadership support for this critical initiative. The E/MCSC has followed its comprehensive plan and is on track with timelines, responsibilities, outcomes, and evaluation measures defined for each subcommittee’s activities.

Review (10-06-05):

The fact that your college president supports this action project, and provides active leadership for it, says a lot for the priority that this initiative holds at your institution. Involvement at the highest level of the organization usually encourages provision of the needed resources for implementation and maintained focus. It sounds as if you have members of administration, mid-management, and faculty working together in committee structures. Broad-based involvement is important in that it encourages better decisions and strengthens ownership of created systems, activities and initiatives. You may want to consider having a ‘graduate’ of one of your early college initiatives as a meeting participant. Their input may include valuable information, and it would add the ‘insider’ perspective to committee discussions. You may want to consider creating a shared electronic space so that members of committees and subcommittees have a place to conduct relevant discussions and sharing of resources between quarterly meetings. A project webpage may also help to disseminate information (AQIP Category 5, Leading and Communicating) and success stories.

C. Describe your planned next steps for this Action Project.

We are in the third year of implementation with the Career Education Center Middle College of Denver. Juniors and seniors from CEC have increased in number and will continue to do so until we reach the fourth year of implementation and will have a full complement of 400 students—including freshmen, sophomores, juniors and seniors. This fall we have 80 CEC juniors and seniors taking classes on the Auraria Campus.

Southwest Early College has a student enrollment of 260 this year. We are in conversations with Teikyo Loretto Heights University to partner in an International Business program that will bring students from Southwest Early College, CCD and Teikyo together to study for associate and/or baccalaureate degrees. We are still working to bring a full-scale CCD presence on the campus with SEC.

We are continuing talks with Adams County School District #14 for expanded PSEO leading to the Early College model on their campus.

We will expand services in the Bridge to College Labs by administering the *Accuplacer* exam to new freshmen this fall, expanding to all students by the end of the year. This assessment will give students, faculty, and staff the information needed to prepare students for college-level work while in high school. By providing assessment, tutoring, mentoring, and advising, we expect to significantly increase the number of students who enroll in PSEO and continue on to high school graduation and college enrollment and completion. ALHS was the first comprehensive high school in DPS to participate in an extensive early college effort and has enrolled the first cohort of 65 College Now students at CCD Auraria. We are expanding those Bridge efforts to Emily Griffith and Skyland Community School this year and will continue our programs at CEC Middle College and Southwest Early College. We continue to seek grant funding to expand this concept to other high schools in DPS and are working closely with the Mayor’s Office to serve “at risk” out-of-school youth by bringing them into the Bridge lab locations in an effort to increase basic skills and re-engage them in schools of their choice.

Review (10-06-05):

Your planned ‘next steps’ appear to be expanding on your already functioning model and structure. As indicated previously, I believe that the goals established at the creation of this action project have been for the most part fulfilled. It may be time to celebrate the successes achieved in this action project, institutionalize the process, and move on to the next improvement opportunity.

D. Describe an “effective practice(s)” that resulted from your work on this Action Project.

This effort has the full support of CCD’s president and Executive Staff. Without the strength of this commitment it would be much more difficult to integrate this work into the work of the college. Visible and consistent commitment at the highest levels is critical.

Partnerships can be challenging. The merging of secondary and postsecondary entities to serve high school students requires constant communication and flexibility. Attention to policies, procedures, combined data collection and reporting requirements; and the paper trail is only the tip of the iceberg. Greater challenges appear when defining areas of responsibility and control. Diplomacy, flexibility and faculty-to-faculty communication are keys to success.

One of the most effective practices resulting from CCD’s work is the collaboration among college and high school faculty in connection with the Southwest Early College (SEC). This work was expanded this summer with the hiring of four CCD adjunct faculty to teach on-site and to work closely with four SEC faculty in the areas of reading, writing and math. A one-week intensive orientation coupled with regularly scheduled meeting times throughout the semester will inform the partnership about how to more effectively align curriculum, materials, outcomes, etc. for greater student learning and success.

Having a point person for PSEO and a second point person (now a full-time position) for Early College has been effective. While both efforts merge at some point, there are too many demands for one position. It is imperative that these two positions work very closely together to support each site. The same is true for the Bridge Labs and CCD has hired a full-time director for this project. The director ensures stability and consistency among lab locations. While it is true that every location will have unique needs and should operate in a way that serves the site population, consistency in expectations, curriculum content, student outcomes and assessment measures must be consistent. The director has responsibility for ensuring this at all sites.

The increasing demand for Early College and PSEO partnerships with area high schools requires that we continue to write grant proposals. It is a constant challenge to secure adequate start-up funding and to find money in existing budgets to move to sustainability.

We believe these efforts have the potential to lead to significant high school reform. Last year, there were two high school commissions studying reform options to make recommendations to DPS and the Colorado legislature. Their recommendations are consistent with the work of DPS and CCD and stress rigor, relevance and relationships as the “other 3 r’s” needed for student success. We believe our work in the early/middle college initiatives and individual student support through the Bridge Labs are significant contributions to the reform movement.

Review (10-06-05):

You have listed a wide variety of effective practices that have contributed to the achievements in this action project. Your president and executive staff have placed their full support and leadership behind this action project. You have amply demonstrated the AQIP principles of ‘Collaboration’ and ‘Foresight’ (which of course also relate to AQIP Categories 9 and 8) through your many partnerships with other learning institutions and the faculty within them, and your approach to increasing access to education for low income and underserved populations. You have allocated appropriate levels of staff and funding to make the fulfillment of your goals possible. This demonstrates part of what is meant by AQIP Category 10 (Supporting Institutional Operations). By increasing the learning options that are available to populations within your district, and making those options more accessible and user-friendly, you may be making a significant impact on your local economy for years to come. I encourage you to publicize your successes both internally and externally.

E. What challenges, if any, are you still facing in regard to this Action Project?

The Denver Public Schools has just selected a new superintendent and several top-level administrative positions have changed. CCD's president has established good connections with the new leadership and public statements of support for our partnership are gratifying. CCD will continue to raise awareness and support for our combined efforts with new and veteran faculty and staff. While declining budgets can create opportunity for greater collaboration, we need to ensure that we focus on the student. We must create opportunities that provide quality learning experiences that retain students and serve them well as they become full-time college students at any institution of higher education. It will be a challenge to resist creating or modifying programs for "institutional expediency" at the expense of student success.

Colorado has converted its formula for postsecondary student support. The Colorado Opportunity Fund (COF) which took effect on July 1, 2005, creates stipends that follow students to the postsecondary institution of their choice and limits the number of credits any one student can take with state support. There are still discussions about how this will be applied to students in high school programs. Some of the implementation issues still to be resolved include decisions on how concurrent high school/college enrollments will qualify for COF this year; however funding for students enrolled during the next fiscal year and beyond is secure. We will face the challenge of uncertainty this year and continue to serve our dual enrollment students. It is clear that all partners need to redouble efforts to effectively prepare and advise students as early as possible so that they will be able to make good decisions about college. The Community College of Denver has committed to meet these challenges.

Review (10-06-05):

It is great to see the level of commitment that your leadership team and implementation staff have for the activities encompassed within this action project. You have been creative in creating funding streams for this project up to this point. I encourage you to continue to seek alternative sources to maintain and expand the early college/middle college initiative (have you tried the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation?). I presume from other statements you have made within your annual update that you have collected a wealth of data regarding retention, satisfaction, degree and job attainment, etc. You may be able to use this data to make a clear case for the efficacy of the early college/middle college initiative (using pre- and post-implementation data broken down in these areas by ethnicity and income level would probably work well). Hard data, along with good use of participant testimonials, may be able to encourage policy decisions in your favor. It is hard to argue with success. Effective use of data speaks to the AQIP principle of 'Information' and AQIP Category 7 (Measuring Effectiveness).

F. (Optional) If you would like to discuss the possibility of AQIP providing you help to stimulate progress on this Action Project, explain your needs, and tell us who to contact and when?

**Community College of Denver
AQIP Annual Update Process
September 14, 2005**

WITH REVIEWERS COMMENTS

Action Project: Create Strategic Campus Expansions

A. Describe the past year's accomplishments and the current status of this Action Project.

Accomplishments of community campuses:

1. Adopted flexible enrollment within traditional semesters
2. Faculty became nine-month employees
3. New campus coordinators were appointed to monitor day-to-day campus activities- growing new leaders
4. New allied health programs were begun/re-invigorated: psychiatric technician, massage therapy. electroneurodiagnostic (END) technology
5. DPS partnership in place with East campus at Cole
6. Expansion of partnership with CCDSW and Teikyo/Loretto Heights University in International Business
7. GED testing serving the Denver Metro area through our North campus
8. Successful relocation of our East campus
9. Total Learning and Academic Affairs focus on marketing. recruiting and retaining students
10. Southwest Campus also added 4 general education classes to serve the Early College students

Last year the AQIP reviewer comments suggested that CCD focus efforts on a few more streamlined initiatives to maximize our efforts at strategic expansion. Taking that advice, CCD combined our efforts around three key activities, each designed to expand the college's offerings.

The first involves strategic expansion of services to high schools in our service area. The Postsecondary Education Options (PSEO) program allows high school students to take college courses during their junior and senior years of high school and to receive dual credit for these courses. In addition, the college continues strategic expansion through partnerships with area school districts to offer expanded services in connection with the Early/Middle College model.

The second key activity, encouraging the growth and development of online course offerings provides opportunities to grow the college without the necessity of growing in physical space. This is particularly important as Colorado continues to face budget challenges that limit capital construction projects.

Finally, the college continues efforts targeting strategic expansion in the area of Workplace Learning, a division of the college's Center for Learning Outreach that targets development and training of low-income workers and low-skilled adults (including TANF participants) for high-demand career tracks. Workplace Learning collaborates closely with the Denver Office of Economic Development, Division of Workforce Development, playing a pivotal role in shaping employment and training policy for emergent and underemployed workers. In the coming year, Workplace Learning and Performance Solutions, the customized training arm of the college, will collaborate under the umbrella of the Career College. The goals of Career College are to identify new employer partnerships in demand industries and create a pipeline for

individuals with pre-college skills to enter these sectors through accelerated remediation and vocational training.

Collaborative relationships between the Denver Public School District and the Community College of Denver continued throughout 2004-2005. CCD offers approximately 40 PSEO courses at nine instructional sites that include Denver high schools and charter schools. These courses serve 350 students. The full-time PSEO coordinator is now in her second year and continues to ensure success in the growth and development of the PSEO program. This individual provides focused leadership and outreach to all of the schools, as well as to faculty who teach these courses.

The CCD branch campuses received a new name: "community campuses," and a new focus: flexible enrollment within traditional semesters. This means students won't have open-entry, but now have flexible scheduling of 16-week, 12-week, 10-week and five-week classes. The decision to move from open-entry to flexible enrollment within traditional semester terms was a function of COF and the need to make the community campuses more efficient and cost-effective.

Strategies to increase enrollment were implemented: the development of allied health programs (psychiatric technician) -- the Board of Nursing asked CCD to re-open its psychiatric technician program to meet a Denver Metro need; a massage therapy and electroneurodiagnostic (END) technology program through a partnership with Swedish Medical Center, Children's Hospital and CCD. Rotating general education courses at each campus has begun this fall. Developmental education classes continue to grow. There is an attempt being made to "brand" each campus, for example, North - the trades campus, SW - the international business campus, and East - the allied health campus. Branding may make an impact on name recognition for our community campuses.

Community campuses have focused specific attention on the communities they serve by using community surveys to determine what the people of the area want from CCD and then providing those classes and services to them.

Focus has occurred on partnership development, such as, the partnership with DPS to move our East campus into a former DPS middle school at Cole. The inclusion of CCD in a building that houses a middle school academy, a charter high school and an elementary school half a block away provides the Cole community with a multi-age learning community that is unique to Denver and the state.

The opening of the Southwest Early College in August 2004 presented an opportunity to strengthen CCD's partnership and presence in this area of Denver. Southwest Campus continues to offer Business Technology and Accounting Classes. They also have a strong Developmental Education Department that includes GED. Flex learning (which is one-third in the classroom and two-thirds online) is also continuing at the Southwest campus. The flex learning area decreased following the relocation of the campus, but we are working diligently to grow it again. The newest development is the addition of general education classes for the high school students who are college ready with Southwest Early College.

Creation of the CCDSW Campus is part of our mission to support the Southwest Early College (SEC) in meeting its goal of providing associate degrees for all students at the end of the fifth year of high school by forging a strong partnership between the Community College of Denver and the Southwest Early College. CCD hired an educational case manager devoted to serving SEC students. Joint curriculum meetings were held beginning this summer with CCD and SEC faculty working together to map curricula from high school to college and will continue throughout the year. CCDSW also plans to serve the greater community by offering English as a Second Language (ESL), basic skills, entrepreneur, health, and other appropriate general and career education courses.

The Cole neighborhood celebrated the reopening of the former Cole Middle School, the new home of Community College of Denver's East campus, Skyland Community High School and Cole College Prep, a Knowledge is Power Program charter middle school. All three new tenants share the parking and a playing field with Mitchell Elementary School at 1350 E. 33rd Ave.

All four schools opened in August, and now neighbors have an incredible education opportunity – from kindergarten through the second year of college – all in one square city block. The Cole building will also house the Junior ROTC and DPS Costume Shop programs. The community campus traditionally has offered educational opportunity to a diverse group of students of all ages and from all walks of life. Many students have walked in the doors of CCD East with the hope that an education would help them find a better job, a higher salary and a brighter future. The campus offers business, technology, general education core classes and an extensive Medical Office Technology program with internships that lead to good, high-demand jobs. In its new location at Cole, CCD East will have the space to grow and expand its programs to include more continuing education and allied health programs.

Ethnic diversity is another feature of the Cole learning complex. African-American, Hispanic, Latino and Caucasians meet to study and learn from each other. Materials are produced in English and Spanish. Community outreach is a goal of the East campus at Cole. There are plans to hold open houses, along with free blood pressure checks, oral health screenings and free chair massages. Open houses are planned at the other community campuses also.

Skyland Community High School – Opened since 1993, Skyland relocated to Cole from 5900 E. 39th Ave. in August with 160 students who are focused on learning through internships that are centered on real work. Mentors and advisers work closely with students as they gain education and job skills, while simultaneously exploring their own interests. Skyland is a Denver Public charter school. The partnership between Skyland and the Community College of Denver provides a unique setting to host the “middle college” concept of which there are only twelve such partnerships throughout the United States.

Cole College Prep -- Opened in August as a new charter middle school administered by the non-profit group KIPP – *Knowledge is Power Program*. DPS closed Cole Middle School at the end of the 2004-05 school year because of a Colorado law that mandated a charter conversion for schools that don't show improvement over three years. Under KIPP's leadership, Cole College Prep students will have unique requirements such as a 9.5-hour day, alternating Saturday attendance and extra weeks of school in the summer.

The Trades Campus. CCD North is devoting an increased focus to trades-related training where there is potential to building enrollment. The Welding program at North continues to experience substantial growth, and the Machine Tool program is poised to do the same. CCD North recently purchased a \$50,000 state-of-the-art CNC machining station and is working with the vendor to provide training to employees who need skills upgrades in this new technology. Staff at North will also be attending the Adams County Construction Days fair where they will have the opportunity to both showcase their trades programs as well as to network with others in the field to determine training needs and establish new partnerships.

GED in Spanish. There are both morning and evening courses to help Spanish speakers prepare for and pass the GED in Spanish, with instructors reporting a 75% pass rate, higher than the national 65% pass rate.

GED Testing. CCD North is working to increase the College's presence in the Denver community through their GED testing program. In addition to testing at the North campus, North's GED Examiners travel to four other sites across the city to offer this service. Expanded testing schedules were implemented, with the possibility of weekend GED Testing for the fall. CCD is also one of the few GED testing sites that offers the GED Tests in Spanish.

Partnership with Language, Arts, and Behavioral Science (LABS). Efforts have begun to combine art with trades and offer an artistic welding course at the North campus.

Partnership with Performance Solutions. Staff in the Performance Solutions department of the College are bringing non-credit training opportunities to the North campus, including skills upgrade sessions in machine tool technology and welding.

WIA grant activities. In conjunction with the GED Institute at CCD Auraria, the North campus offers ESL, ABE, and GED courses through the Workforce Investment Act.

Open houses and *enroll-a-thons* were held during August at all of CCD's branch campuses (CCD North, CCD East, and CCD West/Southwest) to highlight each campus's special offerings and encourage community members to enroll in fall semester classes. Channel 9, a local television station, was a co-sponsor of these events.

Online learning has grown rapidly over the past two years as the result of targeted online course development, strategic expansion of online learning formats, and strong outreach and support services to students. Online enrollments have increased by more than 200 percent in the last two years (an increase of more than 200 full-time equivalents (FTE) per year) demonstrating the efficacy of these targeted activities. Course offerings increased from only 10 offered in 2001 to 180 class sections offered for the fall 2004 semester.

CCD Online now provides multiple options for students to learn in technology-enabled environments, with at least five different start dates for online classes, including:

- traditional online (fully online 15-week classes);
- accelerated online (7-week classes utilizing active, adult learning model);
- flex-learning classes (2/3 online, 1/3 traditional classroom learning);
- CCC Online (expanded course offerings via Colorado Community Colleges Online);
- Late start online (starts two weeks after traditional classes);
- 10 week late start (starts five weeks after traditional classes);
- Open-entry, self-paced online classes (starts three weeks after traditional classes and students can register as late as the end of the 10th week);
- hybrid and Web-enhanced classes; and
- online nursing classes (model LPN to RN completion program).
- AAA 101, First Year Experience class is now available online
- AAA 175, Enhanced Learning Lab is now available online with a rich Internet resource as part of the activities
- Several developmental classes have been added (ENG 090, MAT 060, MAT 090, REA 090)

In addition to the variety of technology options, CCD's online learning services provide high quality educational standards and "high touch" student support. Online faculty are expected to participate in professional development and training each semester and all online courses and faculty undergo annual evaluations to assess their strengths and areas needing improvement. A new Online Faculty Certification program provides additional incentive for faculty to participate in online workshops and other professional development activities. During peak times (the week before and after classes start), Online Learning handles approximately 75-100 calls and 10-20 e-mail messages per day from students, in addition to calls and e-mail from faculty, advisors, and educational case managers. This year, CCD hired an additional online Student Support Specialist to maintain the high level of student support services as online enrollment continues to grow. The value of this investment in professional development and student support services is evident in the achievement rates of CCD's online learners, who are retained and succeed in their courses at rates that meet or exceed those of students in traditional classroom settings.

Workplace Learning added an additional track, the Early Childhood Education Career track, this year, and will add a fourth track in fall, 2005. The addition of the track came after the funding agencies, the Mayor's Office of Workforce Development, and Denver Human Services reviewed a longitudinal analysis that demonstrated high placement, retention, and wage appreciation among former track participants. A half-time track coordinator will be funded through Carl Perkins funds along with grant funds from the Mayor's Office. In addition, the Mayor's Office has requested CCD consider operating the city's on-site child care center at Denver Human Services. Contract negotiations are currently under way for this project to begin next year.

One of Workplace Learning's crowning achievements this year resulted in the Community College of Denver being selected as the lead college among three Colorado community colleges receiving funding from the Lumina Foundation for Education, as part of its initiative to expand access and success to higher education for disadvantaged adults. The two-year, \$300,000 project will research strategies and services proven effective in supporting academically under-prepared students to achieve successful college and career outcomes. Some of the strategies being investigated are educational case management, instructional support, mentoring, learning communities, and career guidance. Research is conducted using a semi-experimental design to track costs and outcomes of these strategies. The project began with a six-month planning phase in which these colleges examined their existing programmatic and fiscal resources, which concluded in December, 2005. Initial implementation focused on providing support services to ESL Learning communities, followed by the development of a cohort approach to accelerated developmental education, which began in fall, 2005.

Through continued activities focused on these three key areas, The Community College of Denver moves forward toward its goal of strategic campus expansion despite great budget constraints limiting the college's ability to expand physically. Rather than allowing this goal to fall victim to budget cuts, the college continues to target its efforts at expanding its services and partnerships. This spirit of creativity and innovation allows CCD to continue its commitment to serve our diverse student population, as well as our community at large.

Review (10-14-05):

This reviewer hardly knows where to start in providing feedback given the immense number of fine accomplishments you have reported here. You have provided the reviewer with a lengthy assessment of your progress and I can only assume that you have already conveyed these accomplishments to each of your constituencies through various print and web-based vehicles. Everyone at the College should really learn of your important accomplishments as well as your enthusiasm for taking the next steps. You have clearly moved forward toward your goal of strategic campus expansion despite what would appear to be substantial budget constraints limiting your ability to expand physically. Rather than allowing your goal "to fall victim to budget cuts," you have forged ahead in a spirit of creativity and innovation and have demonstrated your collective ability to serve your diverse student body in strategically targeted fashion. It seems clear that you have not been intimidated by the need to concurrently manage a broad set of programs and initiatives that, together, focus on your larger Action Project objective. The courage and steadfastness that you appear to display has helped bring you to this point and will serve you well in the near future. If you have not already done this, it may be important at this point in your project to secure an institution-wide opportunity to stage a "celebration event" once again positioning the criticalness of this initiative before your many constituencies. Keep up the good progress with this initiative.

B. Describe how the institution involved people in work on this Action Project.

This Action Project is articulated as one of our high-profile, all-college goals in our 2004-2005 Strategic Plan (see Action Project #3 below). As one of our top goals, strategic campus expansion receives regular and focused attention and involvement from dozens of individuals across the college. Regular meetings are held with the college's Executive Staff focused on each of the college's Action Projects. The aspect of this project involving partnerships with the Denver Public Schools requires consistent communication at the highest levels of both DPS and CCD, as well as with leaders from specific Early/Middle College partners. Similarly, the college's strategic campus expansion initiatives in Online and Workplace Learning call for direct involvement with key leaders from all parts of the college: academic deans, directors, faculty from Learning and Academic Affairs; deans, directors, recruiters, and advisors from Student and Enrollment Services; marketing, grant writers, and staff from Institutional Development; as well as leaders and staff from Human Resources, Institutional Research, Technology Services, and Administrative Services.

The addition of key individuals to the CCD staff as described previously, aids in involving people from all areas of the college who have particular skills and expertise to offer in connection with various activities throughout the year. Strategic planning sessions involving associate deans, deans, and the vice president for learning and academic affairs, faculty, and staff of branch campuses provide valuable input in formative decision making as each of these projects continues. The college's strategic planning process, *Thin to Win* allowed for further development of goals related to specific activities planned for the upcoming year. This provides for a more structured time line and includes identification of measurable outcomes.

Review (10-14-05):

One of your critical goals has been to allow branch campus students to have greater program and course selection as well as more readily available site-specific student services. You appear to have done a great job making this a reality thus far. You also appear to have developed an effective model of communication with and among your various partners and, especially, with the Denver Public Schools. You have effectively amalgamated all the principle players and services through which to create a laser-like focus on student success and achievement. Broad based campus involvement grounded in a solid approach to heightened communication gives evidence that you are internalizing APIQ principles on a daily basis.

C. Describe your planned next steps for this Action Project.

In terms of the activities involving Denver Public Schools, CCD will continue to explore the offerings at all the different schools. Continued support to the newly opened Southwest Early College will include the joint professional development and curriculum meetings described previously. Development of an early college with Skyland Community High School (our neighbor at Cole) is in the discussion stages.

Online course development will continue with a goal of increasing online enrollments by an additional 10 percent through development of open-entry, self-paced online classes and non-credit online classes.

The Lumina project is the key activity for the Workplace Learning initiative over the next year. Grants are also in progress to expand the scope of work begun under Lumina, with a focus on new models for accelerated developmental education that incorporate contextualized curriculum and career guidance.

We are continuing the growth in enrollment at CCD's East and North and SW community branch campuses with a goal of five percent enrollment increases for this year.

Review (10-14-05):

You appear to have established a sustainable model of strategic planning and program expansion which will allow all of your programs to succeed. I applaud your target of 5 percent enrollment increases, it appears prudent during times of rapid change and not too aggressive. Having been involved with the development of an Early College program, I also applaud your initial conversations with Skyland Community High School. Be aware, however, that Early College programs have the potential to cause some misunderstanding with faculty if they are now carefully rolled out and with involvement of senior, well-regarded, and "champion" faculty who can understand and communicate to others the value of such initiatives. Finally, I applaud your online course development and your goal of increasing online enrollments by 10 percent -- again, I would maintain that this is a reasonable expectation and number.

D. Describe an "effective practice(s)" that resulted from your work on this Action Project.

As mentioned in the previous sections of this update, CCD created several new positions over the past year. The addition of an online Student Support Specialist, a PSEO coordinator, and an Educational Case Manager for the SEC provided targeted expertise making possible more rapid progress in strategic expansion of our services throughout the community we serve. The addition of these key individuals to the staff enabled and facilitated communication among various stakeholder groups both within the college and among our various partners. Perhaps most important, by creating these positions, the Community College of Denver makes clear its commitment to the strategic campus expansion as one of our premier college goals. No new people will be added to this initiative this year, but engaging the entire college community by requiring each full-time employee in Learning and Academic Affairs to adopt a goal of helping to market the community campus offerings will put the weight of numbers behind this initiative. This high level of commitment helps to promote and encourage "buy-in" from the college and its partners.

Review (10-14-05):

The creation of an online student support specialist as well as establishment of the educational case manager role for the SEC is one of the more valuable things you have done to support this project in my judgment. This has been a large commitment of financial resources and clearly provides evidence of your commitment to promote the program both within the College and with your partners. You have pushed this initiative in a good direction I feel by requiring grass-roots buy-in, i.e., requiring full-time employees in Learning and Academic Affairs to adopt a goal of helping in the marketing of community campus offerings. This should result in everyone understanding your curriculum and offering better and providing them with the stronger ability to match students with offerings.

E. What challenges, if any, are you still facing in regards to this Action Project?

Starting July 1, 2005, Colorado enacted legislation dramatically changing the way higher education is funded. Funding formerly provided directly to institutions in the form of FTE has been replaced by stipends available to eligible students to be used at the college or university of the student's choice. Although it remains to be seen exactly how this change in funding will affect this Action Project, it is clear there will be at least some impact to the college in its funding stream. Some of the implementation issues still to be resolved include decisions on how concurrent high school/college enrollments will be funded. One proposal is to fund such enrollments under a "fee for service" arrangement that may not be based on actual enrollment FTE. Should this proposal be enacted, severe funding shortfalls could likely result. This

potential lack of stable support for dual enrollment programs is an area of great concern to college leadership. The college staff are currently engaged in various committees charged with examining the many issues raised by this change in funding and are committed to continuing CCD's work in developing and continuing partnerships with the Denver Public School District, the Mayor's Office of Workforce Development, and Denver Human Services.

As a result of the growth in the number of PSEO classes that are being offered, and the increase in numbers of students, some logistical challenges have been identified. For example, the application and registration paperwork has been difficult to manage. These challenges will be addressed with the appropriate parties at CCD and in our partnership with the high schools.

Review (10-14-05):

You have had a major shift in the manner in which post-secondary education is funded in your state and you appear to have adjusted to this change in a pro-active fashion. You should be concerned, obviously, about future levels of funding but don't allow negativity or cynicism cloud the need to push ahead with this initiative as best as you can. Laying a platform for success doesn't have to cost a great deal of money; but sustaining and growing the initiative will cost, of course. But the goal must be kept constantly before you and your community partners. You appear to have understood your challenges and are approaching them with minimal anxiety.

F. (Optional) If you would like to discuss the possibility of AQIP providing you help to stimulate progress on this Action Project, explain your needs, and tell us who to contact and when?

**Community College of Denver
AQIP Annual Update Process
September 2005**

WITH REVIEWERS COMMENTS

**Action Project:
Develop Model Planning Process, Incorporating AQIP Criteria as Touchstones**

A. Describe the past year's accomplishments and the current status of this Action Project.

This year was one marked by progress toward our goal of developing a model planning process, as well as by traumatic setbacks in our day-to-day progress on the planning process road we thought that we were traveling. Although we had our 2004-05 Strategic Plan in place, which derived from the all-college process of program, unit, division, and all-college plan integration, when our fiscal crisis began last fall 2004, we learned that planning was much more than setting out goals and objectives, attaching budget dollars, and measuring progress toward set ends. We learned that strategic planning means designing a plan that helps a college prepare for, and be responsive to a changing and unpredictable future.

Through the fall 2004, the college became increasingly aware of a major revenue shortfall resulting from a variety of converging factors (enrollment decline, enrollment pattern changes, sluggish state economy and continuing funding decline, state-wide community college system financial crisis caused by cost overruns for technology system conversion). By January 2005, all nonessential spending was frozen, and leaders throughout the college were involved in developing a response plan to the crisis. It became clear that simple cutbacks and modifications would be insufficient, and that we needed a two-prong solution: (1) short-term response to meet this year's budget shortfall, and (2) long-term plan for how to manage the college in a highly uncertain fiscal environment. It also became clear that we had to plan, modify our plans, and implement new and old plans simultaneously.

From January through June, the college was consumed with an ongoing cycle of planning, implementation, re-evaluation and development of immediate and long-term responses. Following our planning-related activities CCD undertook to develop the short- and long-term response and plans that currently are in place:

- October/November 2004 – budget/planning meetings with all units, meetings with staffs of branch campuses to plan campus moves to reduce lease costs (\$800,000/year)
- December 2005 -- relocate CCD West campus (\$300,000 annual savings)
- January 2005 – Executive Staff implements hiring and budget freezes, moratorium on all nonessential expenditures
- February/March 2005 – Executive Staff holds weekly budget and planning meetings; all-college communications to apprise the institution of budget situation and actions being taken; each college unit engaged in analysis of minimum dollars needed to complete basic plans for 04-05 and 05-06; scenario planning for overall budget cuts and college reorganization
- April 2005 – open forum all-college budget/planning meetings; negotiation with Board for use of college reserve and Foundation support to close FY05 books without deficit; notification of all employees to be laid off, reassigned, or reduced
- May 2005 – all college meeting to discuss reorganization for 05-06
- June 2005 – finalization of 05-06 budget and strategic plan

Through this difficult year and these challenging activities, we learned much and identified a number of shortfalls in our previous strategic planning model. We learned that our planning

process, while broad and inclusive, was not forward-looking enough. It served us well if the environment was stable. But when our environment suddenly and radically shifted, our plan did not guide us in how best to adapt to those changes. We learned that our plan did not have sensitive enough tracking and warning systems for informing us about how changes in one piece of the college (e.g., branch campuses, individual programs) affect the institution and budget as a whole. We learned that we didn't have processes in place to quickly determine true costs of departments, programs, or campuses as they underwent rapid change. And we learned that employees throughout the college had very different and compartmentalized understandings of fiscal realities, planning processes, and effects of decisions on the college overall. Fundamentally, our experiences with the planning process and how it links with our fiscal realities and changing environmental pressures revealed, that our *Thin to Win* process was not comprehensive enough to meet college needs. In particular, we learned that our model lacked strategic processes for:

- (a) determining true costs of programs, initiatives, campuses, units, etc.
- (b) early alert systems for determining when the plan needs to be changed in mid-cycle
- (c) predicting future needs such that the college can prepare for their delivery
- (d) design college link with the new mandatory Colorado Community College System (CCCS) planning process (launched August 2005)
- (e) sustained training to promote individual growth
- (f) improve useful data available for decision making
- (g) varied and ongoing activities, college-wide to ensure understanding of college plans and progress toward goals
- (h) fully engaging the college community in the cycle of planning, implementing, monitoring, evaluating, re-planning as a part of the institutional culture

Despite these challenges, we made considerable progress last year in engaging the college with the AQIP Touchstones and developing our institutional Systems Portfolio. In fact, our understanding of the strengths and weaknesses in our planning processes were illuminated via our AQIP activities last year. We continued the application of Appreciative Inquiry (AI) techniques throughout the year to gather institutional information about the nine AQIP criteria, which we call "Touchstones." In fall of 2004, we took the information from fall 2004 Convocation activities (see previous report) and scheduled nine individual all-college Touchstone Forums. In these forums we used interactive AI processes to engage employees in each Touchstone, to build shared definitions, vision statements, and "actionable suggestions" for improving the college's work related to each Touchstone. Approximately 20 to 25 people participated in each Forum. In December 2004, the AQIP Steering Committee analyzed the outcomes from the Forums and identified common themes and recommendations. At Spring Convocation (February 2005), a brief synopsis of results was shared with the entire college, and a call was put out for participation in Touchstone Writing Teams (for the Systems Portfolio).

In light of our budget/planning experiences outlined above, we determined that to achieve ownership in AQIP activities and develop a holistic, continuous quality improvement planning process we needed to engage the college community in a way that matched the existing culture. CCD's is an organic academic culture that values autonomy, creativity, and honoring the colleges past successes. So, we redefined the Touchstone Writing Teams as "AQIP Explorers," a group charged with becoming cultural anthropologists and archeologists (a la Indiana Jones) to lead the exploration into CCD's context, processes, results, and improvements for each college Touchstone. To prepare these teams of AQIP Explorers, we developed an Explorer Handbook (see appendix...) and conducted mandatory orientation sessions for all Explorers. AQIP Explorers worked in teams throughout the spring 2005 conducting focus groups, interviews, and surveys of full-time and part-time employees,

students, and community members, as well as document and data analysis to answer their Touchstone questions.

We now see such a focus on cultural engagement as essential to the development and success of our model planning process. We have a new notion of what a sustainable strategic plan truly involves. For the 2005-06 college strategic plan, we followed the mandatory strategic planning template provided by CCCS, which provides the framework for each individual college's plans to meet negotiated outcomes (Colorado Commission on Higher Education's Performance Contract) related to (a) Student Access, (b) Student Success, and (c) Operational Excellence.

This template gives us a strong outcomes-based focus for annual goal-setting. In addition, we are putting into place the ongoing processes, procedures, and systems to build a culturally sensitive, strategically effective planning model.

Review (09-20-05):

This has been a wonderful journey for your institution that will benefit CCD in the long run. Planning for Continuous Improvement (AQIP 8) is the examination of institutional processes and how strategies help achieve your mission. In doing this in an integrated manner, you are building collaborative relationships (AQIP 9) and improving your leadership and communication process (AQIP 5). I applaud your honesty and can empathize with your challenges. One approach you may think about is to make planning a continuous process of improvement, a departure from "annual" planning thinking. The challenge with planning is, the critical input elements are not linear, yet the entire process feels like it should be (it would be great if all assessment data arrived in January. All performance plans in February. Develop Departmental Plans in March. Division Plans in April. Institutional strategic planning could then incorporate this in May for the next fiscal year planning. Further we would not allow the system, government, or economy to operate outside our institutionally defined parameters. No staff turnover. No budget cuts. No new initiatives from government agencies that usurp our plans. No community crises. No new ideas until December, etc). An author wrote "Managing Chaos" is a key to the success of an institution. Trying to create a planning mechanism that is flexible enough to manage chaos is tricky. We generally conceptualize the framework of planning as an organized, fluid, linear process (much like you described). For planning to be flexible, it must not be too steeped in process. The more we try to define and capture the essence of "planning interrelationships", we create structures that on one hand are good planning control procedures, but on the other hand, are not very flexible and can be thrown into chaos easily. In your effort to create a model planning environment, some processes require "annualization," some strategies however might benefit from a structure similar to what you described, where a database can make this approach fluid and re-occurring, unconstrained by the boundaries of fiscal year strategies or linear thinking. One overall challenge is how to create a planning "process" that is not so "processed" that it is counterproductive to flexibility.

B. Describe how the institution involved people in work on this Action Project.

As noted above, the college used multiple venues and opportunities to involve people in AQIP activities to define our present status and plans regarding Touchstones. With development of the *Thin to Win* planning process, the college believed it had moved on to implementation and integration. When the budget crisis hit, we realized we needed the best thinking of the entire college community to meet this challenge. The college was broadly involved in developing responses to the budget crisis and associated college reorganization.

The college was also deeply involved in activities surrounding the AQIP Touchstones as described previously. Approximately 180 individuals participated in Touchstone Forums. Another 26 individuals served as Touchstone Explorers. In addition, a large majority of full-time college employees participated in AQIP Touchstone activities, either as focus group members or questionnaire respondents.

Each individual and college unit engaged in annual goal-setting, mid-year reviews, and annual evaluations regarding progress toward individual and departmental goals. Review of college goals (the output from planning processes) was integrated in each college unit via monthly reviews of progress toward enrollment, retention, and graduation targets (planning goals). The vice presidents met regularly with deans to review progress toward college and budget goals. The president also held periodic open, all-college forums throughout the year during which she answered questions and solicited recommendations for dealing with the budget and planning issues the college faced.

Review (09-20-05):

Most importantly you have extensive internal involvement in this action project. AQIP embodies principles that will ultimately “Help Students Learn”. By-products of participative decision making are an improved communication environment (AQIP 5) and improved relationships between staff (AQIP 9). Most AQIP action plan success is maximized by using an integrated, system-wide strategy like the one you are implementing here. Your Vice President and President’s leadership role is significant. Their open, inclusive guidance sets a nice tone for the institution and collaborative input.

C. Describe your planned next steps for this Action Project.

To address the shortfalls we have identified in our planning process we have developed the following solutions:

1. *Determining true costs of programs, initiatives, campuses, units.* Require business plans and ROI (return on investment) analysis for all new initiatives. Require QRE (Quality Review and Enhancement) review of all programs and units. Results due to Executive Staff April 1, 2006.
2. *Early alert systems for determining when the plan needs to be changed in mid-cycle.* CCD Dashboard of Indicators to be published on CCD Intranet by October 1, 2006, and updated quarterly with data to describe progress toward performance goals. CCD’s Institutional Research Department to supply retention, success, and graduation data for all academic programs (disaggregated by gender, ethnicity, and full-time/part-time status) by February 1, 2006. Institutional progress toward college goals to be addressed in all college forums associated with biannual college Convocation (see *Student Access and Success Summit, #8, below*).
3. *Predicting future needs, far enough in advance that the college can prepare for their delivery.* Fall 2005 launch of new research and development group in the college. The CCD Career College’s goal is to provide leadership around new credit and non-credit program development opportunities for CCD with an emphasis on high growth and target industries identified by the Metro Denver Economic Development Corporation and the City of Denver. Another goal is to establish and strengthen career pathways for students, from basic skills remediation through certificate and degree attainment and transfer to four-year institutions.

4. *Design college link with the new mandatory Colorado Community College System (CCCS) planning process.* Rather than require an entirely new strategic planning process at each college, this process requires college strategies to be linked to the system-wide strategic plan. It was first implemented August 2005 and will be updated annually.
5. *Improve useful data available for decision making.* New department linking institutional research, assessment, and planning was created on July 1st of this year. Search currently underway for Coordinator of Quality Systems Planning, a key position targeted at providing leadership to link CCD strategic planning to college AQIP activities and CCCS Performance Contract Goals (i.e., institutional effectiveness, planning, and evaluation activities) for the college.
6. *Varied and ongoing training to promote shared understanding of budget and strategic planning processes.* CCD's Teaching/Learning Center has launched a series of workshops on budget processes "Budget Bootcamp." T/LC will launch "Planning Bootcamp" spring 2006 as a follow-up to the first *Student Access and Success Summit* (see # 8, below).
7. *Varied and ongoing communication activities to ensure college-wide understanding of college plans and progress toward goals.* CCD's Executive Staff has identified improving communication as a key college initiative for 2005-06, based on feedback from the Communications Analysis Team and AQIP Explorer Team results. A primary element of this initiative is recognition that leadership needs to listen to feedback, as well as disseminate information more broadly. The college is launching an internal electronic communication medium – the CCD Intranet – this fall 2005, a vehicle for prompt information sharing and feedback. In addition, *Inside CCD*, the all-college, weekly electronic newsletter, has begun featuring informational articles from a different Executive Staff member and college unit on a rotating basis.
8. *Fully engaging the college community in the cycle of planning, implementing, monitoring, evaluating, and re-planning as a part of the institutional culture.* Beginning with Spring Convocation (February 2006), the college will launch the first *Student Access and Success Summit (SAS Summit)*, an all-college meeting held at the beginning of each fall and spring semester to share institutional outcomes relative to the CCD Strategic Plan for increasing college performance measures related to
 - Student Access
 - Student Success
 - Operational Excellence

The first SAS Summit will provide updates on college-wide progress toward annual goals, but will also feature interactive workshops designed to elicit the best college ideas on how to refine the CCD Model Planning Process. Breakout presentations will highlight best continuous quality improvement planning processes and working groups will use Appreciative Inquiry processes to analyze and make recommendation for finalizing the CCD Planning Model. In addition, the college will repurpose the CCD Online Leadership journal to become the CCD Online SAS Journal, an electronic tool to complement the SAS Summit and keep the summit conversations active throughout the year. Abstracts and recommendations from the Summit will be posted on the SAS journal to elicit online discussion about summit outcomes.

Review (09-20-05):

These are terrific, ambitious next steps and feel like the right things to do based on your narration. Give yourself plenty of time to accomplish them. Your approach to planning embodies the principles of AQIP “High Performance Organizations.” You are focused, people are involved, your leadership is very involved, it’s a learning process (very refreshing to hear about the challenges), you are building collaborative relationships, and much information is being shared. Persevere – keep learning from your challenges.

D. Describe an “effective practice(s)” that resulted from your work on this Action Project.

CCD’s integration of Appreciative Inquiry (AI) approaches to our AQIP Touchstone Exploration and Systems Portfolio development, and by extension, to our strategic planning process is perhaps the most positive outcome from this very challenging year. AI is an approach to organizational transformation based on a collaborative inquiry process that focuses on a company’s strengths rather than on its weaknesses. It is based on sociological research demonstrating that when people study problems and conflicts, the number and severity of the problems they identify actually increase. But when they focus on human ideals and achievements, peak experiences, and best practices, these things – not the conflicts – tend to flourish. See section A for an example of how we used Appreciative Inquiry in our AQIP process at CCD.

Review (09-20-05):

Good philosophy – focus on the solution, not the problem. Utilizing this approach in systems thinking will improve your processes and improve participation. This project, once successfully completed, may be an effective practice for other community colleges.

E. What challenges, if any, are you still facing in regards to this Action Project?

Radical cutbacks in personnel have left us with limited human and temporal resources to focus on quality planning processes. Despite these challenges, we are committing whatever resources we can to develop a robust and meaningful institutional research, planning, and evaluation unit and to integrate these activities throughout the college. Attrition and cutbacks are exacerbated by recent individuals who have left the college to pursue other opportunities. In addition, CCCS requires other key college leaders to serve $\frac{3}{4}$ to full-time roles at the System office to support the statewide technology system implementation. Additional uncertainties loom in the form of implementation of the new higher education funding system (College Opportunity Fund – the Colorado higher education stipend -- COF) and in the outcomes of upcoming State referendum to decide the fate of the proposal to temporarily suspend the Taxpayer’s Bill of Rights, directly affecting higher education funding.

Review (09-20-05):

Community Colleges have to rebuild a planning model that is both cyclical and constantly fluid to accept these unpredictable variables. In the past there was more predictability. CC’s used to create a strategic plan. Then Division and Departments set goals based on these plans. Then performance plans reflected the goals outlined in the Division or Department plans. This was all done in April/May and reviewed annually. Then assessment data was infused sporadically into the process, making it “trickier” because data did not arrive within institutional timeline

parameters, yet was vitally important to the planning process. New technology like Banner was added causing turmoil. Turnover at CCCS brings new planning philosophies to adopt. Enrollment unpredictability creeps in. Economic uncertainty continues. Staff leave. Plus, the bulk of the institutional planning is at a time (April/May) when staff are tired and faculty are going home for the summer. Point is, we DO need a new model that is flexible and incorporates uncertainty. I applaud your commitment to finding one.

F. (Optional) If you would like to discuss the possibility of AQIP providing you help to stimulate progress on this Action Project, explain your needs, and tell us who to contact and when?