

Criterion 1. Mission

The institution's mission is clear and articulated publicly; it guides the institution's operations.

1.A. Mission Alignment

The institution's educational programs, enrollment profile and scope of operations align with its publicly articulated mission.

Community College of Denver (CCD) is an open-access community college situated in the heart of downtown Denver, and our [mission](#) has always been to open doors of opportunity for our racially, economically, and academically diverse student population. Because we share a campus with two 4-year institutions, we differentiate ourselves through a clearly articulated mission of serving our community.

In 2012, CCD revised our mission, vision, and values to better align with our culture and focus on inclusivity. To begin the work, the Office of the Provost formed a [committee](#) that held several [town hall meetings](#) to solicit feedback from the CCD community. The [feedback](#) from these sessions led to the creation of a [Wordle](#), a visual arrangement of words and phrases collected from the constituents.

Based on feedback from the CCD community, executive staff authored the final versions of the mission, vision, and values statements. The statements were reviewed in 2019 as part of the strategic planning process.

Our reaffirmed [mission](#) statement is: *CCD provides our diverse community an opportunity to gain quality higher education and achieve personal success in a supportive and inclusive environment.*

Our [vision](#) statement is: *Every member of our community will attain the education they desire.* This was revised to use inclusive language, having previously read "the education he or she desires."

Our reaffirmed [values](#) statement is: *Involvement, Student-Focus, Integrity, Lifelong Learning, Excellence, Healthy Work Environment.*

CCD's education programs demonstrate our commitment to this mission. We enroll students pursuing a variety of certificates and degrees, from short-term certifications to full

Associate of Applied Science (AAS), Associate of Arts (AA), Associate of Science (AS), and Bachelor of Applied Science (BAS) degrees. Many CCD students balance coursework with employment, family responsibilities, or other obligations, and the institution's program mix, scheduling, and support structures are designed to provide flexible access points and multiple pathways to completion and post-completion success.

In some programs, such as welding, we offer stackable certificate programs to rapidly provide students with employable credentials through certificates that apply, credit for credit, toward associate degrees. This allows students to enter the workforce while moving toward long-term educational achievement.

We have also sought to diversify key programs. The welding program has also used CCD's Perkins Grant to increase female participation in this traditionally male-dominated field. We have taken similar efforts to transform the makeup of our dental hygiene cohorts; the program, one of our few selective-admissions programs, has spent the past decade dramatically increasing the number of minority and male students enrolled.

Recently, CCD has focused on aligning our programs more specifically to career opportunities corresponding to our students' aspirations. For example, we launched our Behavioral Health BAS degree, which provides a mid-level entry point to the mental health field, previously available only to graduate degree holders. This unique program provides a path for CCD students to enter a much-needed workforce in Colorado to support the mental health of our citizens.

We are beginning to include employment outcomes and transfer success outcomes into our metrics. In response to evolving needs and state and federal mandates, we have shifted from a focus on access alone to an emphasis on [access, completion, and post-completion success](#). This work is exemplified by our participation in the Transfer Student Success Intensive Cohort, an initiative through the Aspen Institute and the American Association of State Colleges and Universities, and the Aspen Institute's [Unlocking Opportunity Cohort](#).

As CCD deepens our focus on access, completion, and success, we will use our current strategic planning process to refine and operationalize our mission, vision, and values to be clear, actionable, and aligned with student and workforce needs.

1.B. Mission and Public Good

The institution's operation of the academic enterprise demonstrates its commitment to serving the public good.

Community College of Denver (CCD) serves the public, and our educational role takes primacy over any other functions. Aligning our educational offerings, funding structures, and student supports with the needs of Denver and the state of Colorado is the cornerstone of our operations, as described by the [Colorado Community College System](#):

Community College of Denver (CCD) offers programs that enrich our community, nation, and world. We focus on innovation, open exploration of ideas, and training a skilled workforce. CCD supports our democracy and a strong local economy. We prioritize access and success for underserved students, which is the foundation of our operations.

CCD's financial model reflects our public mission. As a publicly funded, open-access institution, CCD reinvests resources into education programs and support services. In the most recent fiscal year, state appropriations accounted for 44.6% of our operating revenue, reinforcing the institution's responsibility to serve Colorado's educational and workforce needs.

CCD's programs and program supports align to local and state priorities so we can best serve Denver residents and the larger Colorado community. An example is CCD's early childhood education (ECE) expansion and scholarship program, which responded to ECE workforce shortages by growing our program and offering a multilingual format to prepare educators who can serve Colorado's diverse early learning needs.

Another example of our community focus is the CCD [High School Diploma Program](#), which enables adult learners to earn a high school diploma designed for direct transition into certificates and degrees aligned with Denver's workforce needs. By providing one year of instruction for \$50, the program removes financial barriers and expands access to postsecondary education to underserved populations.

CCD further demonstrates our commitment to the community through the [Displaced Aurarian Scholarship Program](#), which provides tuition and fee support for individuals who were residents of the Auraria neighborhood between 1955 and 1973 and their direct descendants. By addressing historical displacement, this initiative reflects the college's ethical responsibility to expand education access within the community we serve.

Taken together, CCD's funding structure, academic programs, and student supports demonstrate that the institution's academic enterprise is operated to advance access, equity, workforce preparation, and community well-being in service of the public good.

1.C. Mission and Diversity of Society

The institution provides opportunities for civic engagement in a diverse, multicultural society and globally connected world, as appropriate within its mission and for the constituencies it serves.

Community College of Denver (CCD) recognizes that student learning extends beyond the classroom. Aligned with our mission, CCD creates opportunities that encourage civic engagement and prepare students to contribute within a diverse, multicultural, and globally connected society. CCD's institutional student learning outcomes (ISLOs) of Quantitative Literacy, Effective Communication, Intercultural Literacy, and Critical Thinking guide how students engage with complex information, communicate across differences, and apply critical thinking to civic participation.

Ideas to meet the civic engagement needs of the student body are developed by a committee of full-time staff, faculty, and student representatives from each institution on the Auraria Campus. Committee members identify gaps in how we inform Auraria students regarding civics and plan events to engage students in difficult conversations that strengthen critical thinking and civic understanding.

CCD also fosters active citizenship through the well-established initiative Auraria Votes, a tri-institutional effort that provides students with opportunities to navigate the national, state, and local civic landscape. Activities organized by Auraria Votes support students as they interpret ballot language, evaluate fiscal impacts, and debate complex social issues. Events such as [Maria Isa](#) and [Native Votes Count](#) celebrated diverse cultural voices during the 2024 election cycle. Another initiative created a [post-election peace space](#) featuring speakers from a wide range of backgrounds, fostering intercultural literacy.

CCD's commitment to civic participation was nationally affirmed when Auraria Votes was recognized for our [Highly Established Action Plan](#) and awarded the [2024 Most Engaged Campus for College Student Voting](#) by ALL IN. To receive this recognition, CCD joined the ALL IN Campus Democracy Challenge, a national nonpartisan initiative that supports colleges and universities in increasing student voter participation. To support data-informed decision-making, CCD also participated in the National Study of Learning, Voting, and Engagement, providing valuable insight into student voting trends.

CCD's [Student Government Association \(SGA\)](#) also embodies the institution's dedication to fostering civic engagement in diverse spaces. Each spring semester, [eligible](#) students

[can run](#) to represent the student body, providing a platform for individuals from different backgrounds to participate in shared governance and [shape campus life](#). For example, in spring 2025, SGA partnered with the other Auraria student governments to host [Culture Clash](#), an event featuring Latinx and Asian culture through food and entertainment. The event reflected CCD's commitment to intercultural literacy: creating shared spaces that honor identity, promote dialogue, and strengthen community.

By embedding our ISLOs into opportunities for civic engagement on and beyond campus, CCD prepares students for lifelong civic involvement by equipping them to engage thoughtfully, communicate across differences, and contribute to their communities and the world.

Criterion 2. Integrity: Ethical and Responsible Conduct

In fulfilling its mission, the institution acts with integrity; its conduct is ethical and responsible.

2.A. Integrity

Actions taken by the institution's governing board, administration, faculty and staff demonstrate adherence to established policies and procedures.

Community College of Denver (CCD) complies with the spirit and letter of our [code of ethics](#) through policy, procedures, and regular training.

Policies and Procedures Governing Ethical Conduct

Community College of Denver (CCD) enforces ethical and responsible conduct based on a framework of policies that guide behavior, accountability, and transparency for all members of our community.

Handbooks outline expectations for professional conduct, employment standards, instructional policies, and grievance procedures:

- The [Faculty Handbook](#) addresses commitments to ethics on pages 10–15.
- The [Staff Handbook](#) details workplace expectations on pages 15–17.

The Colorado Community College System, governed by the State Board for Community Colleges and Occupational Education, provides a framework of ethical policies that guide institutional conduct:

- [Board Policy \(BP\) 3-70](#) affirms that public officials, including governing board members and senior administrators, must demonstrate the highest ethical standards.
- [System Procedure \(SP\) 3-70a](#) requires that all board members and senior officials sign an acknowledgement of disclosure and conflicts of interest.
- [SP 3-70b](#) covers conflicts of interest.
- [BP 3-120](#) outlines Equal Employment Opportunity and Affirmative Action principles.
- [SP 4-20a–e](#) details procedures for ethical administration of financial aid.
- [BP 4-80](#) governs student education records and directory information.
- [BP 6-20](#) establishes a Personally Identifiable Information Security Program.
- [SP 6-10k](#) provides standards for data classification, handling, and protection.

Student responsibilities and rights are delineated at the college and system levels:

- The [Student Code of Conduct](#) guides behavioral expectations.
- [BP 4-31](#) lays out a complaint resolution process.
- [SP 4-80a](#) defines student privacy rights, and [Guideline SA-6](#) demonstrates CCD's commitment to ethical responses to privacy breaches.

Regular Training and Standardized Procedures

CCD operationalizes policies through mandatory training and institutionalized procedures across employee groups.

For example, to ensure transparent and inclusive hiring practices, all hiring managers and search committee members complete [Best Practices for Inclusive Hiring](#). Job postings include equity statements and follow structured screening procedures, supporting [BP 3-120](#) and [SP 3-70c](#), which address conflicts of interest and affirmative action. Once hired, employees complete a [New Employee Orientation](#) that includes an overview of employee basics, resources tailored to different employee types, our DEI philosophy statement, and board policies and procedures by which they agree to abide. Employees retain access to this training as an ongoing reference.

CCD also adheres to Title IX according to [BP 19-60](#) and [SP 19-60a](#), system-wide policies that prohibit discrimination, harassment, and retaliation based on sex or gender. All employees complete [training](#) to ensure they understand the responsibilities and reporting obligations that support a safe, equitable learning and working environment.

Staff complete mandatory [ethics and compliance training](#), which includes modules on data privacy, conflict of interest, and financial aid integrity. Completion is tracked and used to inform policy updates, demonstrating alignment with [BP 6-20](#), [SP 6-10k](#), and [SP 4-20a-e](#):

- Example completion certificate for [microaggressions training](#)
- Example completion certificate for [security training](#)
- Example completion certificate for finance [statutory violation training](#)

Finance and business operations administer [rotational trainings](#) addressing topics such as fiscal's role in payroll, timesheets, and financial aid. [Regular meetings](#) ensure staff are consistently trained in financial policies, procedures, and ethical standards.

- [Attendance for year 2023](#)
- [Attendance for year 2024](#)
- [Attendance for year 2025](#)

Ethical Conduct in the Classroom

Faculty support and enforce ethical classroom conduct. Our [academic integrity policy](#) is stated in every course Desire2Learn site, guiding students to ethical uses of research and explaining plagiarism. A syllabus review during student orientation sessions also exposes students to this information and includes an overview of our Student Code of Conduct.

- [Sample syllabus with calendar showing first day syllabus review](#)
- [Sample syllabus discussing academic integrity in clear language](#)
- [Sample syllabus with a section on plagiarism](#)

When academic misconduct is suspected, faculty, staff, and students file with the [Office of Student Conduct](#). The resulting reports are submitted to an online conduct database, Maxient. Alleged academic misconduct are addressed in [two ways](#). Faculty members, in consultation with department chairs, determine appropriate grade consequences for academic misconduct. The Office of Student Conduct simultaneously determines any institutional sanction consistent with a student's prior conduct history or the egregiousness of the offense.

- [Sample Office of Student Conduct response](#)
- [Sample academic response from a professor](#)

This process aligns with [BP- 3-70](#) regarding student discipline and college procedure.

Institutional Integrity in Handling Complaints

CCD aligns with both the [board policy](#) and [system procedure](#) for handling student complaints through our guidelines [SA-1](#) and [SA-8](#). These guidelines define a formal process for students to submit complaints, ensuring consistent, fair, and timely resolution.

Additionally, the [ombudsperson](#) provides a safe space for students to confidentially raise concerns, discuss hardships, and receive guidance. The ombudsperson also engages with staff and faculty in settings such as [Welcome Back Day 2025](#) so they can learn about support services, reporting options, and institutional resources for students. The [Student Ombuds Intake Form](#) is used to collect and document complaints or concerns submitted by students.

- [Sample report](#)

The collection and analysis of complaints and feedback provide CCD with evidence of policy effectiveness and adherence, informing adjustments that strengthen ethical practice and continuous improvement.

Taken together, these practices demonstrate that CCD's ethical policies and procedures are embedded in daily operations and consistently guide our actions.

2.C. Board Governance

In discharging its fiduciary duties, the institution's governing board is free from undue external influence and empowered to act in the best interests of the institution, including the students it serves.

Community College of Denver (CCD), as part of the Colorado Community College System, is governed by the State Board for Community Colleges and Occupational Education (SBCCOE). In fulfilling its fiduciary responsibilities, the SBCCOE supports CCD's mission by providing ethical guidelines and financial oversight while giving the college autonomy to make decisions that are in the best interests of our students.

The [composition of the SBCCOE](#) promotes independent, representative, and ethically grounded governance. The board comprises 12 public members. Ten, one from each congressional district and two at-large, are appointed by the governor and confirmed by the state senate. The board also includes a non-voting [student representative](#), demonstrating a commitment to the inclusion of student voices, and a non-voting faculty representative. Board members receive [ongoing training](#), beginning with [orientation](#) and followed by annual mandatory sessions, legal consultations, and professional development focused on ethical and effective governance.

The State of Colorado [provides funding](#) through the Colorado Commission on Higher Education, which the SBCCOE [allocates](#) according to its established policies that support institutional sustainability and preserve board authority. In addition to overseeing the CCD budget, the SBCCOE considers spending requests to meet CCD's needs; one recent example is the board's [approval](#) of additional spending for the construction of CCD's new [health sciences facility](#).

While the SBCCOE works to secure our long-term financial sustainability through [funding mechanisms](#), it respects the autonomy of CCD's internal operations, including [personnel administration](#), [financial decisions](#), and [shared governance structures](#) that preserve faculty authority in academic matters. (Discussion of CCD's shared governance structure can be found in 4.A.)

Collectively, these governance arrangements affirm that CCD's governing board exercises independent oversight and sound fiduciary judgment to advance the institution's mission and serve student interests.

2.B. Transparency

The institution presents itself accurately and completely to students and the public with respect to its educational programs and any claims it makes related to the educational experience.

Community College of Denver (CCD) is committed to providing accurate and complete information to students, prospective students, and the public regarding our programs, policies, and processes. Because our [mission and vision](#) focus on expanding access to underserved populations, we prioritize clear, plain-language communication.

Transparency in Program and Curriculum Information

Programs are organized on the CCD website by [pathway](#), with [individual program pages](#) detailing curriculum and, where applicable, [requirements for selective admission](#). The curriculum page links users to the official [catalog](#), which outlines course requirements.

CCD ensures the accuracy of program information through standard operating procedures (SOPs), including the [Integrity and Publication of the Catalog](#) and [Catalog True Up Process](#). These annual, collaborative practices are guided by a [planning document](#) and a [spreadsheet](#) tracking decision-making and completion.

Transparency in Admissions, Enrollment, and Credit Transfer Policies

Information concerning application and admissions, including residency requirements, is clearly outlined on our [website](#), in alignment with Board Policy (BP) and System Procedure (SP).

- [BP 4-10 – Admission, Continued Enrollment and Re-enrollment of Students](#)
- [SP 4-10A – Application and Enrollment](#)

The Admission, Recruitment, and Outreach division supports students through the application process with an enhanced [communication plan](#).

Selective-admissions programs maintain detailed records of scoring and decisions to ensure alignment with established criteria, and students receive clear, comprehensive guidance for applying to these programs.

- Student-facing guidance for admission to the [radiologic technology program](#)
- Student-facing guidance for admission to the [nursing program](#)

[Transfer credit policies](#) are communicated transparently, consistent with [BP 9-71](#). Our policies aim to eliminate credit duplication while upholding transcript integrity. Students can view how transfer credits are applied through the [degree check program](#).

CCD accepts prior learning assessment (PLA), referred to as [Momentum Credit](#), based on [SP 9-42](#) and [publicly lists](#) the ways students can earn Momentum Credit. Faculty use a [streamlined process](#) to submit results to the registrar, and CCD tracks [decisions](#) to ensure adherence to published guidelines.

Transparency in Student Costs and Financial Aid

In support of our mission to provide equitable access to higher education, CCD prioritizes transparent communication about costs and financial aid so students can make informed educational decisions. [Tuition](#) and [fee](#) information is easily accessible on the CCD website. Additional financial resources are provided through the [online orientation](#).

All tuition, fees, and scholarships are approved by our State Board of Community Colleges and Occupational Education, per [Board Policy \(BP\) 4-20](#), which also mandates transparency in fees.

All [financial aid policies](#), including our [policy on refunds](#), are located on our website in accordance with [System Procedure \(SP\) 4-20A](#). Finally, [academic standing](#) requirements and terms are also easily accessible to students from our website in compliance with [SP 4-20D](#).

Each student receives an [individual college financing plan](#), an [email](#) every semester about their financial aid, and the opportunity to attend [professional development](#) regarding their financial management.

Public Disclosure of Accreditation and Student Outcomes

CCD publicly discloses our [Higher Learning Commission accreditation](#), programmatic accreditation, [online authorization](#), and [professional licensure information](#) on our website.

Student success data that uses [standardized methodology](#) is published on our website, in compliance with the Colorado Student Unit Record Data System, the Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System, full-time equivalent and headcount data requirements from our system office, and the CCD dashboards.

- [Current student data](#)
- [Common data set](#)
- [Graduation and transfer-in rates](#)

Continuous Improvement Through Review

Our [Marketing and Communications Department](#) ensures the accuracy of our publications. Because accessible communication is essential to our mission, CCD dedicates resources to continuous improvement, rather than aiming only to comply with

minimum disclosures. CCD uses review processes and feedback mechanisms to assess the effectiveness of public-facing information and make evidence-based improvements. For example, in response to instances of misinformation, the dean of health sciences implemented the [Selective Admission Program Pre-Requisites](#) standard operating procedure to promote accurate and consistent communication across departments.

In another instance, students recently responded to a [survey](#) about the catalog and website:

- 56% of respondents found it easy to find their major and course requirements.
- 67% of respondents found it confusing to find other information for their degree (job and salary information, transfer options, contact information, courses available online).

This data was used to adjust the presentation of our catalog and website. These ongoing processes demonstrate our commitment to maximizing transparency in our communications.

Together, our practices ensure that CCD presents the college accurately and consistently, supporting informed decision-making and public trust.

2.D. Academic Freedom and Freedom of Expression

The institution supports academic freedom and freedom of expression in the pursuit of knowledge as integral to high-quality teaching, learning and research.

Community College of Denver (CCD) values academic freedom in teaching and learning as essential to our mission of offering inclusive, high-quality education.

Academic Freedom

[Board Policy 3-20](#) defines academic freedom for faculty as “The absence of constraint or coercion of choosing what one will teach (within the constraints of official course descriptions and official course syllabi), investigate, study, or present in all fields of learning.”

In alignment with a systemwide effort to more clearly articulate the role of academic freedom in teaching and learning, the Colorado Community College System (CCCS) established an academic freedom task force in Spring 2024. The task force, composed of representatives from academic and student affairs leadership, deans, department chairs, and faculty from the 13 CCCS colleges, met over multiple sessions to review existing policy language and refine guidance related to academic freedom in instructional settings.

- [2024 State Faculty Meeting Agenda](#)
- [Sample Academic Freedom Agenda](#)
- [Academic Freedom Faculty Forum Feedback](#)

The final academic freedom statement, published in 2025 as [SP 9-50a](#), safeguards the ability of faculty to use their professional judgment to determine classroom topics and methods, affirms the right to research even controversial topics, and protects faculty from retaliation. Consistent with CCD’s role as a teaching-focused institution, these protections support faculty scholarship and inquiry as they inform instruction. The policy also specifies that students “are free to take reasoned exception” to course materials and protects them from biased evaluation.

Freedom of Expression

SP 9-50a also addresses freedom of expression for faculty, instructors, and students in settings both internal and external to the college.

CCD students have the right to peaceful assembly through the Auraria Campus, on which CCD is situated alongside two other institutions. As a separate state entity, the role of the Auraria Campus (formerly Auraria Higher Education Center) is to manage shared services, facilities, and property. The Auraria Campus promotes the freedom of expression as noted in its [free speech and peaceful assembly policy](#).

Recognizing that we did not have a student-facing statement of our own, CCD recently wrote and adopted a statement guaranteeing students academic freedom, freedom of expression, and the right to peaceful assembly. A team composed of student services leadership wrote an initial [draft](#), which was then shared with stakeholders including the Student Government Association for feedback and revision. The draft was approved by the System legal office and adopted this year. These policies affirm CCD's commitment to free expression and inquiry as foundations of high-quality teaching and learning.

2.E. Knowledge Acquisition, Discovery and Application

The institution adheres to policies and procedures that ensure responsible acquisition, discovery and application of knowledge.

Community College of Denver (CCD) is committed to upholding the highest standards in the acquisition, discovery, and application of knowledge. The college fosters an environment where ethical considerations, academic integrity, and responsible conduct guide our teaching and other conduct.

Responsible Knowledge Discovery and Research Oversight

As a teaching-focused institution, research involving human subjects is rare at CCD. The Institutional Review Board (IRB) for Human Subjects Research at the Colorado Community College System (CCCS) [oversees procedures](#) for carrying out the college's commitment to protecting human and animal subjects in research. This body reviews all requests for research concerning CCD students, staff, and faculty and must approve projects before they begin, ensuring that any research conducted under CCD's auspices adheres to established ethical standards.

- [Example application for faculty research](#)
- [Example Exempt Protocol Form](#)
- [Expedited Review of Research Form](#)
- [Full IRB Review Form](#)

Guidance for Responsible Knowledge Acquisition

Information literacy instruction ensures that students responsibly acquire and apply knowledge in accordance with institutional standards. Most students, apart from those seeking our short certificates, are required to take ENG 1021, Composition I, which introduces students to finding and effectively integrating research into their writing.

- [Syllabus for face-to-face 1021 course](#) emphasizing information literacy
- [Syllabus for online 1021 course](#) emphasizing information literacy
- Student [rhetorical analysis](#) from ENG 1021
- Student [comparative source analysis](#) from ENG 1021

Students in transfer programs also take ENG 1022, Composition II, which teaches students to gather research, evaluate data, and analyze information from multiple viewpoints.

- [Syllabus for 1022](#) emphasizing appropriate academic use of information
- [Syllabus for 1022](#) emphasizing student research
- Student [annotated bibliography](#) of scholarly research from ENG 1022

Disciplines across the college reinforce research skills. Examples include [DEH 2013](#), General and Oral Pathology, in which students [research a topic](#), create a presentation supported by credible evidence, and [document sources](#); and [LIT 2046](#), Literature of Women, in which students choose an [author of interest](#) and [perform biographical research](#).

Beyond the classroom, our EXCEL! Zone tutoring center provides students with additional [training and tools](#) to engage in ethical research. The EXCEL! Zone offers services both [in-person and online](#), reaching [numerous students](#).

Education in Ethical Knowledge Application

CCD integrates ethics education and enforces ethical standards to promote critical thinking, integrity, and social responsibility in our students, ensuring they can ethically apply the knowledge they gain at CCD.

Many programs require ethics courses. Examples include [PHI 2018](#), Environmental Ethics, in the sustainable design certificate; [PHI 1012](#), Ethics, in the engineering, philosophy, and nursing associate degrees; [PHI 2005](#), Business Ethics, in the business administration, cannabis business, and cybersecurity associate degrees; and [HPR 1008](#), Law and Ethics for Health Professionals, in the behavioral health associate degree. Additionally, several degrees and certificates offer ethics courses as electives.

CCD models and enforces ethical academic practice. Refer to 2.A. for discussion of faculty and staff integrity and 3.D. for discussion of how the college ensures academic integrity.

Assessment and Improvement of Student Learning

As discussed in 3.E., CCD conducts regular assessment to review and improve the effectiveness of teaching and learning. Of our four institutional student learning outcomes (ISLOs), Critical Thinking most closely aligns to 2.E. by requiring that students be able to “analyze information and ideas from multiple perspectives and articulate an argument, opinion or conclusion based on that analysis.”

To assess this ISLO, [the Student Learning Committee, department chairs, and faculty representatives](#) assessed artifacts from multiple programs using a standardized [rubric](#). Results showed a decline in student performance, leading to discussion and planned improvement regarding where in students’ academic journeys we cultivate this skill and how we can most accurately measure student growth.

- [Institutional Student Learning Outcomes Assessment Report 2022-2023](#)

- [Report](#) and [planned changes to pedagogy](#) in response to assessment of critical thinking

This review demonstrates CCD's commitment to regularly assessing learning outcomes and implementing corrective actions that support the responsible acquisition, discovery, and application of knowledge.

Criterion 3. Teaching and Learning for Student Success

The institution demonstrates responsibility for the quality of its educational programs, learning environments and support services, and it evaluates their effectiveness in fulfilling its mission. The rigor and quality of each educational program is consistent regardless of modality, location or other differentiating factors.

3.A. Educational Programs

The institution maintains learning goals and outcomes that reflect a level of rigor commensurate with college-level work, including by program level and the content of each of its educational programs.

Community College of Denver (CCD) maintains and enhances program quality to support excellence in teaching and learning, in alignment with Colorado Community College System policy.

- [Board Policy 9-47 – Review of Existing Programs](#)
- [System Procedure 9-47 – Program Review and Evaluation](#)

Expectations for academic rigor are implemented through standardized learning outcomes, program-specific standards, and mechanisms that ensure consistency across instructional contexts.

Course-Level Learning Outcomes

Every course at CCD is built upon learning outcomes developed and approved by faculty across the community college system. In accordance with [System Procedure 9-71](#), these outcomes are standardized through the statewide Common Course Numbering System (CCNS) to ensure consistency, transferability, and a collective evaluation of rigor and relevance by discipline faculty.

CCD requires that learning outcomes be included in every syllabus and discussed with students on the first day of class so students understand course objectives and performance expectations. Faculty uphold academic standards and award grades based on students' ability to demonstrate learning outcomes. [Appendix F](#) contains evidence demonstrating the rigor of our course learning outcomes.

At the program level, faculty define and review program learning outcomes to ensure that course sequences build progressively toward credential-level expectations (see 3.F. for discussion of program review).

Alignment by Program Type and Level

CCD confers certificates, associate degrees, and bachelor's degrees. Degrees meet the credit-hour requirement for completion and align with professional accreditation requirements.

General education courses are evaluated for rigor and relevance through statewide review. This process begins with faculty from each academic discipline across the system meeting to address course-specific issues within their disciplines. Decisions to create, revise, or sunset courses are first reviewed at one community college (at CCD, this is the purview of the Academic Standards Committee). Proposals then advance to the State Faculty Curriculum Committee for further discussion and approval. Final decisions are brought to the statewide General Education Council, where courses may be granted Guaranteed Transfer status, ensuring they are accepted by all public colleges in Colorado. This alignment with our four-year partners affirms the rigor and quality of our classes. [Appendix D](#) contains more detail regarding alignment of courses through the Colorado state process.

The content and rigor of Career and Technical Education (CTE) courses are aligned with industry needs by CTE advisory boards, ensuring programs remain responsive to the evolving workplace landscape. Faculty across the system regularly convene to address changes in industry requirements by revising, retiring, or developing new courses and programs to meet demand. Please refer to [Appendix E](#) for CTE advisory board meeting minutes.

Consistency of Rigor Across Contexts

CCD assures that course rigor remains consistent regardless of the location or modality of course delivery by adhering to the learning outcomes listed in the Common Course Numbering System.

CCD partners with Colorado high schools to offer concurrent enrollment (CE) courses. CCD ensures that CE courses maintain the rigor and quality expected of college-level coursework. CE instructors meet the qualifications set by the college and are onboarded by CCD department chairs or their designees. If a high school does not have qualified instructors, CE courses are taught by CCD instructors. A copy of instructor and [faculty qualification guide](#) is included in the evidence. CCD department chairs review courses to ensure they meet the college's academic standards and conduct classroom observations to evaluate the effectiveness of course delivery. Both the college and high schools monitor the success of concurrent enrollment classes and gather feedback from students, instructors, and administrators to make improvements.

- Example concurrent enrollment syllabi for [English](#), [medical terminology](#), and [business](#)

Colorado Online courses are delivered by credentialed faculty and instructors. These courses are categorized into home sections, which are populated by students from a single college and taught by an instructor from that college, and pooled sections, which include students from multiple CCCS colleges and taught by an instructor from any college within the system.

Instructors for online classes receive support to ensure high quality and appropriate rigor:

- [Learning object repository](#) for assuring the quality of online and hybrid courses
- [Chapter on regular and substantive interaction](#) from the CCCS QM+ Guidebook

Pooled sections undergo a quality assurance process including review by subject matter experts, evaluation by instructional designers to ensure adherence to the Healthy Course Checklist in alignment with the [Quality Matters Plus rubric](#), and feedback from students regarding overall course effectiveness. While ready-to-teach course shells aligned with established standards are being built, the Colorado Online consortialization project makes reviewed course shells accessible to faculty across CCCS.

Collectively, these practices demonstrate that CCD maintains clearly articulated learning goals and consistent academic rigor across programs, credentials, and instructional modalities.

3.C. Sufficiency of Faculty and Staff

The institution has the faculty and staff needed for effective, high-quality programs and student services.

Community College of Denver (CCD) maintains sufficient and appropriately qualified faculty and staff to meet the instructional and support needs of our students. Hiring, evaluation, professional development, and staffing decisions are guided by established policies, data-informed review processes, and fiscal oversight to ensure institutional effectiveness.

Position Control

The Position Control (PC) Committee, composed of executive leaders across the college, oversees staffing decisions to maintain personnel aligned with our mission, strategic priorities, and fiscal capacity. The committee reviews all staffing actions, including filling vacant positions, establishing new positions, and eliminating positions, using a consistent and transparent evaluation process. Department heads and executives are required to provide clear justification for staffing requests, including demonstrated need, anticipated outcomes, and financial implications. By regularly reviewing staffing patterns in relation to enrollment trends, program demands, and regulatory requirements, PC identifies and addresses potential staffing gaps or surpluses. Through this structured oversight, the committee ensures that staffing decisions support academic programs and student services, as reflected in our personnel headcount.

Table 1: Personnel Headcount for Fiscal Year 2025

Personnel Classification	Instruction/ Academic Support	Student Services	Institutional	Operations/Plant	Total Headcount
Faculty	102	N/A	N/A	N/A	102
Part-Time Instructor	627	N/A	N/A	N/A	627
Administrator	11	9	13	1	34
Professional/ Technical	49	62	31	2	144
Classified	2	1	7	1	11
Hourly	182	131	37	1	351

The college's [need for full-time faculty](#) is reviewed annually using a consistent, data-informed process. This review considers program accreditation requirements for faculty-to-student ratios, student full-time equivalency, the proportion of sections taught by full-time and part-time faculty, findings from program review, and the need for at least one dedicated full-time faculty member within each program.

- [Faculty line request for psychology](#)
- [Faculty line request for criminal justice](#)
- [Faculty line request for welding](#)

Part-time instructors are employed to address fluctuating enrollment and instructional demand.

In addition to teaching classes, faculty are available for student support at least [five hours weekly](#), and part-time faculty are expected to engage with students outside of class at least [one hour weekly](#). Courses at CCD are [capped at 30 students](#), with an expectation that no faculty member will have more than 125 students within a semester. CCD's [average class size](#) is around 13, providing opportunity for teachers to engage with students outside class time.

Furthermore, CCD's recruitment and hiring practices support high-quality programs and services by building a faculty and staff workforce whose [backgrounds and perspectives](#) align with the needs of our diverse student community.

Faculty Qualifications

All full- and part-time instructors are evaluated against the requirements of the [Faculty and Instructor Qualifications Guidebook](#), which outlines credentialing requirements and specifies requirements for each course offered at CCD. Concurrent enrollment instructors are held to the same standard. The provost signs the [professional qualification form](#) for each new hire as attestation that these requirements have been met.

- [Example qualification form for general education](#)
- [Example qualification form for Career and Technical Education](#)

CCD has recently improved our professional qualification process. We previously used a [discipline-centered approach in our guide](#), but found that it, in practice, limited faculty assignments based on narrow skillsets and led to misalignment between faculty credentials and teaching assignments. In 2023, the college adopted a skills-based approach, reviewing transcripts and hiring materials for all [full- and part-time faculty](#) to align qualifications with specific skill clusters. Faculty work with their deans to define [appropriate qualification language](#), which is approved by the provost and incorporated into the Faculty and Instructor Qualifications Guidebook. To support consistency, faculty hired prior to the revision complete a [PQ transition document](#).

Faculty Evaluation

Faculty are evaluated for teaching effectiveness, as guided by the [Faculty Handbook](#) and [SP 3-31](#). Recognizing that our previous process, though effective, was highly time-consuming and did not include part-time instructors, CCD has created a [Performance Evaluation Portfolio](#) process that provides feedback and support to both faculty and instructors based on their years of service and quality of teaching. A cohort began testing this model in fall 2025.

All full- and part-time instructors participate in regular observations to support high-quality teaching. A sub-committee of faculty council recently updated our [in-person](#) and [online](#) class observation processes and forms.

Faculty Roles

Faculty roles at CCD fulfill 3.C. by ensuring that qualified instructors are available not only to teach courses, but also to develop curriculum, assess learning, advise students, and sustain high-quality academic programs.

Faculty, through the Academic Standards Committee (ASC), are charged with maintaining the currency of the curriculum and developing all credentials. As part of the [State Faculty Curriculum Committee](#) (SFCC), faculty approve the addition, revision, and deletion of all courses within the Colorado Common Course Numbering System, a compendium of all courses offered within the community colleges of the state.

- [Example ASC meeting minutes](#)
- [Example new program form](#)
- [Example program revision form](#)
- [Example course revision form](#)

Faculty also lead student learning assessment and program review, discussed in 3.E. and 3.F., respectively.

Fiscal Responsibility and Workforce Stability

The Position Control Committee provides ongoing, data-informed oversight of staffing decisions to support stability and sustainability in CCD's workforce over time. By evaluating personnel requests in relation to enrollment trends, program demands, workforce data, and fiscal capacity, the committee ensures that staffing adjustments are deliberate and aligned with long-term institutional needs rather than short-term fluctuations. This approach has strengthened workforce planning and contributed to improved employee retention, reflected in a [sustained reduction in turnover](#) in recent years, supporting continuity, instructional quality, and effective delivery of student services.

3.B. Exercise of Intellectual Inquiry

The institution's educational programs engage students in collecting, analyzing and communicating information; in practicing modes of intellectual inquiry or creative work; and in developing skills adaptable to changing environments.

Community College of Denver (CCD) engages students in intellectual inquiry by emphasizing analysis, communication, creative practice, and the development of adaptable skills across both general education and career-focused programs.

Collecting, Analyzing, and Communicating Information

CCD students develop information literacy skills through the [statewide general education core](#). As discussed in 2.E., courses in written and oral communication require students to evaluate sources, construct arguments, and tailor messages to specific audiences and contexts. These expectations are reinforced across disciplines through assignments that require critical analysis, synthesis of information, and presentation of findings.

Multiple departments further address communication in their program student learning outcomes (PSLOs). For example, the English department [assesses](#) students' ability to "Communicate a central guiding idea to a defined audience, for a concrete purpose, employing effective conventions in the service of meaning." Similarly, a [communication department PSLO](#) requires that students "Locate and use information relevant to the goals, audience, purposes, and contexts."

Exercising Intellectual Inquiry and Creativity

Across their coursework, CCD students practice intellectual inquiry by applying analytical, scientific, quantitative, creative, and problem-based methods aligned with their fields of study. We [map](#) our institutional student learning outcomes to program student learning outcomes and individual courses to ensure all students develop these skills throughout their pathway. For example, in lab classes students generate and evaluate experimental data. Arts and humanities classes engage students in [visual](#), [performance](#), and [literary](#) creative work.

Students also refine their skills beyond traditional classroom experiences. In Career and Technical Education programs, students engage in [work-based learning](#) to practice discipline-specific habits of inquiry, applying theory and analysis in real or simulated professional settings, such as accounting students performing tax preparation for the public, graphic design students running a design studio, and health sciences students completing clinicals. Further examples include:

- Student production of the [Talon news magazine](#)

- [Undergraduate research](#) for the Phi Theta Kappa honor society
- Business students winning an international [business case competition](#)
- The CCD robotics team's participation in [state competition](#)

As these examples reflect, intellectual inquiry and creative work are embedded throughout CCD.

Building Adaptable Skillsets

CCD ensures that students develop skills that are adaptable to changing academic, professional, and societal contexts. Our [statewide articulation agreements](#) were crafted in partnership with four-year schools, meaning our outcomes have been aligned with the needs of upper-level institutions. These skills are embedded in the general education core and [assessed](#) as our four ISLOs: [Effective Communication](#), [Critical Thinking](#), [Quantitative Reasoning](#), and [Intercultural Literacy](#).

Students in Career and Technical Education (CTE) programs develop these foundational skills through required general education coursework and further strengthen them through applied learning. Work-based learning requires students to adapt to real-world expectations, reinforcing skills needed for success beyond graduation. WBL examples include:

- [Community oral health planning](#)
- [Integrative business](#)
- [Computer network solutions](#)

In addition, CCD is engaged in collegewide durable and digital skills mapping to explicitly prepare students for post-graduation success. Using labor market data, the college identified careers closely aligned with each program and pathway and mapped the durable and digital skills required in those fields to the curriculum. Faculty are reviewing programs to identify where these skills are introduced, developed, and mastered, which will be followed by gap analyses to guide curricular adjustments in both general education and program-specific courses. Updates to syllabi and the learning management system will make these connections explicit for students, ensuring that academic learning is clearly linked to workforce and career applications. See [Appendix C](#) for further evidence of this durable skills work. This ongoing project reflects CCD's commitment to preparing students with adaptable skills that support long-term success in education and employment.

3.D. Support for Student Learning and Resources for Teaching

The institution provides student support services that address the needs of its student populations, as well as the teaching resources and infrastructure necessary for student success.

Community College of Denver (CCD) provides comprehensive student and teaching resources in support of student success. These resources are visible in the three pillars of our Moon Shot for Equity framework: Onboarding and Belonging, Curriculum, and Co-Career.

Onboarding and Belonging Pillar Resources

The Onboarding and Belonging pillar orients students, fosters connection, and removes barriers so students can succeed.

SOAR

The Success Onboarding and Resource (SOAR) orientation program for all new students includes information regarding securing financial aid, registering for classes, finding college resources, and getting involved at CCD. Using [student success data satisfaction surveys](#), SOAR recently underwent revisions to make the program more relevant and interactive.

- [Proposal for Revamping the CCD SOAR In-Person Orientation](#)
- [Project Timeline with Milestones](#)
- [In-Person SOAR Revitalization Brainstorm](#)

Financial Aid

The financial aid office ensures all students, including first-generation, low-income, underserved, and undocumented students, can access and maintain the resources needed to achieve their academic goals.

Staff support students throughout the enrollment lifecycle, starting with early awareness efforts in partnership with local high schools, admissions, and advising. Through collaboration with the Educational Opportunity Center, they guide students through FAFSA, DREAMer/ASSET aid, scholarships, and required documentation. Through workshops and one-on-one advising—both in person and virtually—the team helps students navigate complex processes such as FSA ID creation, FAFSA submission, verification, satisfactory academic progress (SAP) appeals, and loan counseling, reducing barriers for those new to college or financial aid systems. After students enroll, the office ensures timely aid [packaging](#) and disbursement, supporting persistence and uninterrupted enrollment.

- Example student outreach: [FAFSA Fever](#), [CCD scholarships](#), and [DREAMer scholarships](#)
- Example procedures: [Pell response imports](#) and [SAP](#)

Academic Advising

Through the Academic Advising and Student Success Center (AASSC), CCD students have access to consistent, proactive advising that supports their learning and success. Incoming students are assigned an advisor, aligned with their academic pathway, for both educational planning and career services. This model fosters close connections that are vital for serving our diverse population. Progress reports for targeted groups (e.g., first-time, full-time, degree-seeking students within 150% completion time) are shared with faculty to monitor academic standing. Faculty can also initiate early alerts, routed to support departments, such as tutoring, financial aid, counseling, and advising, for targeted interventions.

AASSC uses data to track student engagement and improve services. [Post-appointment surveys](#) show student confidence in major selection and satisfaction with academic planning and advisor support.

Accessibility Center

The Community College of Denver's Accessibility Center (AC) provides evaluations and accommodations for students with documented disabilities. Its mission is to ensure equal access to institutional opportunities, making CCD an environment where all students can thrive. Services include supported testing environments, assistive technology, [ASL interpreters](#), extended time, and other classroom or academic supports.

- [AC statistics summary](#)

Welcoming and Belonging Activities

Through the Student Programming, Activities, and Resource Center (SPARC), CCD offers a wide range of community activities. The annual [Block Party](#) provides students with the opportunity to discover [clubs and organizations](#). Students can further engage with the community through events like the [Hispanic Heritage](#) and [Native American Heritage](#) month celebrations.

Curriculum Pillar Resources

CCD continuously reviews program maps to provide students with structures that align with career outcomes, transfer priorities, and essential skills. Through the college's Guided Pathways work, each pathway developed a [common first semester](#) that allows students to explore areas of interest before committing to specialized coursework.

[Durable and digital skills](#) are embedded within these common first semester courses as a foundation for broader curricular mapping and future badging aligned with National Association of Colleges and Employers competencies.

Several pathways have also [engaged in focused curricular improvement](#) within core courses. For example, the Arts, Communication, and Design pathway created a common first semester Faculty Learning Community (FLC) to embed metacognitive strategies into core coursework. The Social and Behavioral Sciences pathway launched FLCs to map durable skills in political science, economics, and history and to analyze student success data in psychology, sociology, and anthropology. Public and Legal Services similarly used an FLC to examine disaggregated student success data within the pathway. These curricular structures help students build a strong academic foundation early, reduce excess credits, and progress more efficiently toward transfer or career goals.

Applied Learning and Clinical Partnerships

Health sciences programs benefit from strong clinical partnerships across acute care, long-term care, and community health settings. CCD expanded clinical placement capacity by streamlining agreements and implementing standardized workflows, resulting in improved efficiency and student readiness. Partner feedback highlights students' positive impact on patient care and workflow, with recent data indicating improved competencies and [preceptor satisfaction](#).

Resources for Teaching

The Teaching Learning Center (TLC) supports faculty development through professional learning opportunities focused on equitable course design, assessment practices, and inclusive teaching strategies. Mandatory programs such as New Faculty Orientation and optional workshops provide structured support as faculty progress from provisional status to teacher-scholar and mentor roles. Please refer to [Appendix G](#) for evidence of rigor in our course learning design.

New full-time faculty receive a [three-year map of professional development](#) to ground them in the college's approach to andragogy and methodology for teaching in different modalities. New part-time instructors, who are [paid for professional development](#), receive a similar [training structure](#).

- Better Assessments, Better Outcomes [syllabus](#) and [typical session attendance](#)
- Online Basics [syllabus](#) and [typical session attendance](#)
- Metacognition and Growth Mindset [syllabus](#) and [typical session attendance](#)

Our career and technical educators receive additional support for high-quality professional development activities through [Perkins funding](#), and the Colorado Community College System offers dozens of live and recorded webinars available to CCD employees. CCD has

invested significant financial and human resources in cultivating a learner-centered teaching culture, including partnerships with the Association of College and University Educators (ACUE), faculty learning communities, and pathway-based instructional support.

Instructional Technology

The Teaching Learning Center (TLC) trains faculty and staff in the use of our learning management system, D2L Brightspace, in support of effective instruction. TLC also provides access to tools to support academic integrity, such as Turnitin and Respondus, and training to ensure appropriate and consistent use.

- [Copy of D2L training attendance list from TLC](#)
- [Copy of D2L/Turnitin training materials](#)
- [Samples of student work using Turnitin](#)
- [Copy of Respondus training materials](#)

Student-Facing Academic Support

CCD's EXCEL! Zone provides tutoring for writing, math, digital literacy, and the sciences, both on-ground and online during daytime and evening hours. It also offers both quiet and collaborative study spaces for students. The Excel Zone regularly [evaluates usage and outcomes](#), adjusting services in response to data. For example, increased student need in CHE 1111 prompted the addition of differentiated tutoring sessions.

- [Promotional flyers](#)
- [Website showing in-person and online offerings](#)
- [Early Alert intervention summary](#)

Co-Career Pillar Resources

CCD's Co-Career pillar focuses on career exploration and preparation, ensuring that students receive the knowledge, skills, and experiences to succeed not only during their time at CCD, but also after graduation.

Work-Based Learning

CCD has adopted a college-wide strategy to strengthen student employability through the expansion of work-based learning (WBL). WBL provides students with opportunities to apply theory and analysis in real or simulated professional settings. While WBL has long been a core component of Career and Technical Education programs, CCD is expanding these opportunities into additional academic pathways, including virtual and hybrid project-based experiences through platforms such as [Riipen](#).

To support quality and consistency, CCD has developed shared [criteria](#) for evaluating work-based learning experiences and regularly reviews program partnerships. [Graduate placement data](#) and program outcomes are used to assess how effectively our strategies are supporting students' transitions from classroom to employment.

Career Skills and Employer Alignment

The Center for Workforce Initiatives serves as the college's hub for employer engagement, supporting partnerships that expand applied learning opportunities and connect students to industry-informed experiences.

In support of career readiness, CCD has [mapped durable and digital skills across programs and pathways](#), aligning academic learning with competencies valued by employers. The Teaching Learning Center and the Center for Workforce Initiatives are collaborating with faculty to identify where these skills are introduced, reinforced, and mastered throughout the curriculum. This ongoing work ensures that students develop transferable skills while maintaining strong alignment with academic and program-level learning outcomes.

Career Exploration and Employment Resources

CCD students have access to centralized career exploration and employment resources. We use [Handshake](#) to connect students with employers for internships, jobs, and [career events](#) aligned with CCD pathways and degree programs. The system is curated by CCD staff to ensure opportunities are accessible, aligned with program outcomes, and relevant to current students.

- [Handshake quarterly report](#)

Integrated Support for Teaching and Learning

CCD designs our resources around how students experience college, from early onboarding and advising to classroom learning, academic support, and career preparation. These connected supports provide learning environments that help students stay on track, build confidence, and move toward completion and post-college goals.

3.E. Assessment of Student Learning

The institution improves the quality of educational programs based on its assessment of student learning.

After our re-affirmation of accreditation in 2017, Community College of Denver (CCD) committed ourselves to a deep reflection and improvement of our assessment practices, resulting in the Interim Report we submitted in July of 2018. These documents form the foundation of our assessment practices and are evidence of our commitment to improvement.

Institutional Assessment

CCD's institutional student learning outcomes (ISLOs) serve as a framework of competencies for our general education core, as practices we believe prepare students to enter our multicultural community as thinkers, actors, consumers, and producers. These practices were originally captured in six outcomes, and we engaged in two assessment cycles in that incarnation.

After the second round of assessment, faculty charged the Institutional Effectiveness Committee with making the ISLOs more measurable. This work began in 2019 and resulted in the creation of our current [four ISLOs](#). After the pandemic, the Institutional Effectiveness Committee was disbanded, and ISLO assessment was taken up by the Student Learning Committee (SLC).

Our institutional assessment process follows a regular cadence:

- The rotation of ISLOs to be assessed is laid out in a multi-year map, with two ISLOs identified for assessment per year.
- [Rubrics](#) for ISLO assessment are designed with a 4-point scale: undeveloped, emerging, developed, and exemplary, with developed being the goal.
- [Student artifacts](#) that align to the ISLO being assessed are pulled from CCD's learning management system from all modalities of teaching (on-ground, online, hybrid, evening, concurrent), coded, and redacted.
- Faculty and instructors participate in rubric score norming to ensure consistency of assessment.
- [ISLOs are mapped to Community College Survey of Student Engagement data](#) (see below for further discussion of benchmarking).
- The [results of each year's ISLO assessment are reviewed](#) at our annual CCD Assessment Day.

SLC continues to refine the ISLO assessment process with faculty feedback.

Faculty Leadership

The faculty-led Student Learning Committee (SLC) provides support and embeds sound assessment practices in our academic programs.

Each year, SLC hosts Assessment Day, a professional development program that supports chairs and deans in program and institutional level assessment and engages faculty, instructors, and staff in the assessment process.

- [Assessment Day 2023 agenda and attendance](#)
- [Assessment Day 2024 agenda and attendance](#)
- [Assessment Day 2025 agenda and attendance](#)

Although assessment practices were disrupted during the pandemic, SLC sustained assessment work through virtual professional development and later reinstated Assessment Day.

Academic Program Assessment

Assessment Plans

Each discipline identifies and codifies essential elements such as program student learning outcomes (PSLOs); connections to institutional student learning outcomes (ISLOs); curriculum mapping indicating when each outcome is identified, explored, and mastered; achievement benchmarks and targets; methods; and timeline.

- [Assessment Plan examples](#)

Departments determine when updates are needed, and new program proposals must include Assessment Plans. SLC works with the provost to identify Assessment Plans that need further development and assists with their improvement.

Assessment Reports

Every year on October 15, each discipline is required to submit an Assessment Report that details assessment completed in the past year. This report includes:

- If any ISLOs were assessed
- What data was used
- How that data was analyzed (methodology)
- What conclusions were reached
- What improvements are being made as a direct result of the assessment work
- When the improvements themselves will be assessed to close the loop

The [report](#) also outlines assessment being planned for the coming year and how it relates to assessment done the previous year.

Assessment Reports are [peer reviewed](#) by SLC members and the director of institutional effectiveness, who give feedback to the chair and dean for each program.

Processes and Methodologies

The [Assessment Guidebook](#) serves as CCD's primary reference for student learning assessment, establishing shared expectations for creating assessable outcomes, mapping curriculum, and using results. The guidebook supports consistent assessment practices while allowing faculty flexibility in methodology and reinforces the expectation that assessment results inform curricular and pedagogical improvement.

CCD's faculty-led process is grounded in direct assessment of student artifacts. Faculty and staff develop and review student learning outcomes, map those outcomes across the curriculum, and analyze assessment results to guide instructional and curricular changes. Both [quantitative](#) and [qualitative](#) analyses are encouraged. Indirect measures are used as appropriate to supplement and contextualize direct evidence.

To support the quality and consistency of assessment, CCD uses best practices such as rubric-based evaluation, random sampling of student work, and norming to support inter-rater reliability. Faculty engagement in assessment is sustained through regular professional development:

- [Annual Assessment Day](#)
- [Regional assessment council participation](#)
- [Better Assessments, Better Outcomes](#)
- [Virtual professional development](#) during the pandemic

Benchmarking

Making sense of CCD's student success data requires benchmarking against institutions and measures that reflect the college's student population and mission. CCD initially explored national datasets, including National Center for Education Statistics comparisons, but found that identifying and tracking key performance indicators in those sources did not provide sufficiently actionable or comparable context. The college also examined [direct comparisons](#) across institutions in the Colorado Community College System (CCCS); however, differences in student demographics and retention limited the usefulness of broad statewide comparisons for understanding equity-focused outcomes.

As a result, CCD re-engaged with the Community College Survey of Student Engagement (CCSSE) and uses [system-defined key performance metrics](#) to benchmark against demographically similar metropolitan community colleges within the Colorado Community College System, particularly Community College of Aurora. In particular, we focus on fall-to-fall retention, transfers, and student success in gateway English and math courses.

- [2019 CCSSE reporting](#)

- [2024 CCSSE reporting](#)

Significant Findings

Below are significant findings. They are presented as the mean on a Likert scale from 1 (very little) to 4 (very much). CCD does not intend simply to meet our peer institutions in these areas, but to exceed them, as established in our [2025 strategic plan](#).

CCSSE includes questions that we can link to our institutional student learning outcomes (ISLOs) from the 2019 and 2024 reports. Blanks indicate that the questions were not present in that year's survey.

Quantitative Literacy	CCD 2019	CCSSE 2019	CCD 2024	CCSSE 2024
How much has this college contributed to your ability to solve numerical problems?	2.68	2.63	-	-

Effective Communication	CCD 2019	CCSSE 2019	CCD 2024	CCSSE 2024
How much has this college contributed to your ability to speak clearly and effectively?	2.86	2.73	-	-
How much has this college contributed to your ability to speak clearly and effectively?	2.83	2.67	-	-
Prepared two or more drafts of a paper or assignment before turning it in	-	-	2.51	2.50

Effective Communication	CCD 2019	CCSSE 2019	CCD 2024	CCSSE 2024
How often have you had serious conversations with students who differ from you?	1.98	2.03	-	-
How much does this college emphasize encouraging contact among students from different economic, social, racial, or ethnic backgrounds?	2.77	2.67	-	-
How much has this college contributed to your ability to work effectively with others?	3.02	2.96		
Encouraging contact among students from different economic, social, and racial or ethnic backgrounds.	-	-	2.79	2.78

Critical Thinking	CCD 2019	CCSSE 2019	CCD 2024	CCSSE 2024
How much of your coursework emphasizes analyzing the basic elements of an idea?	3.04	2.93	3.02	3.01
How much of your coursework emphasizes forming new understandings from information?	2.99	2.98	3.0	2.99
How much of your coursework emphasizes making judgments about the soundness of an argument?	2.80	2.66	2.72	2.72
How much of your coursework emphasizes applying theories to new situations and problems?	2.85	2.76	2.87	2.87
How much of your coursework emphasizes using learned information to perform a new skill?	2.87	2.88	2.99	3.01

The CCSSE results allow the college to gauge the impact of improved practices on student-reported engagement and learning.

CCD's Assessment Culture

CCD is proud of how broadly our faculty engage in the work of assessment. Assessment is frequently cited in annual performance goals, assessment-related tasks are recognized in

department workload designations, many faculty engage in assessment-related [professional development](#), and [both full-time and adjunct faculty](#) participate.

CCD engages in assessment not as a matter of compliance, but because our college culture values meaningful assessment as a tool for better serving our students.

3.F. Program Review

The institution improves its curriculum based on periodic program review.

The program review process at Community College of Denver (CCD) is designed to promote continuous improvement, uphold academic standards, foster a culture of accountability, and ensure industry alignment so that programs benefit both students and the broader community.

Policy Alignment and Review Cycle

CCD's program review process aligns with [Board Policy 9-47](#) and [System Procedure 9-47](#), which establish expectations for the regular, data-informed review of instructional programs. In accordance with these policies, CCD reviews degree and certificate programs on a defined cycle and reports outcomes through established system and governance channels. This alignment ensures that program review supports academic quality, relevance, and continuous improvement while also meeting system and accreditation expectations.

Evolution of Program Review at CCD

CCD regularly examines the effectiveness of our program review and adjusts the process to produce clearer and more actionable results.

Early program review at CCD relied on a data-heavy template that emphasized enrollment, staffing, student success metrics, and resource needs, but did not consistently lead to clear, actionable decisions. While program chairs reported extensively on performance indicators, the format often failed to connect findings to program goals or priorities.

Recognizing this gap, the college examined the effectiveness of its approach and revised the program review process to strengthen the connection between analysis and improvement. Subsequent changes emphasized long-term goals, enrollment and completion trends, labor-market alignment, and resource planning, while improving data access through real-time dashboards. These refinements strengthened communication between program leaders and college administration and reinforced program review as a planning tool.

Example program reviews prior to redesign:

- [Biology, 2021](#)
- [Radiologic technology, 2022](#)

Current Program Review Process

In 2024, a program review committee brought together stakeholders from departments across the college and charged them with developing a comprehensive program review process, facilitating training for high-quality program review, and providing support and feedback to program chairs and deans.

CCD's program review now follows a [3-year cycle](#). Each year, programs scheduled for review follow a structured workflow that supports analysis and follow-through. First, program chairs receive access to shared templates, data dashboards, and targeted professional development to guide completion of the review. Reviews are examined by the program review committee, which provides feedback and recommendations, followed by dean review. Based on this feedback, program chairs develop action plans that identify program priorities, resource needs, and implementation responsibilities.

Example program reviews after process redesign:

- [Theatre, 2024](#)
- [Veterinary technology, 2025](#)

Use of Data in Program Review

The [program review template](#) provides a comprehensive structure for data-informed analysis and planning.

Enrollment and Student Demand

Program review analyzes full-time equivalency (FTE) and headcount trends by student population to inform recruitment, enrollment, and program viability decisions.

Workforce Alignment and Market Demand

Programs are evaluated against occupational market data, including job demand, projected growth, entry-level requirements, median wages, and employment gaps. This analysis informs curriculum updates, identifies high-demand programs, and highlights programs requiring additional attention.

Program Scheduling and Delivery

Program schedules (e.g., daytime, evening, weekend, online, in-person, full-time, part-time, accelerated) are reviewed to determine whether delivery formats meet student demand and labor-market needs, and to identify opportunities to expand access or address unmet demand.

Student Success, Retention, Completion, and Transfer

Student success, retention, completion, and transfer rates are analyzed by student population to identify equity gaps and areas for improvement. Findings inform strategies to

strengthen instructional support, improve persistence, and support successful transfer to four-year institutions.

Graduate Outcomes

CTE programs review student graduate survey data (VE-135) to assess employment outcomes and readiness for the workforce.

Workforce Skills Alignment

Curricula are reviewed for alignment to in-demand durable and technological skills.

Program Partnerships and Work-Based Learning

Internal and external partnerships, including work-based learning opportunities, are reviewed to ensure programs provide applied experiences that support transitions from classroom learning to employment.

Career and Technical Education Advisory Boards

For CTE programs, which maintain advisory boards, meeting feedback is reviewed to improve alignment with industry expectations.

Program Accreditation and Licensure Outcomes

Accredited programs analyze licensure pass rates, retention, completion, and placement outcomes to ensure continued compliance and educational quality.

Financial Sustainability and Resources

Programs undergo financial analysis to assess net fiscal impact, use of operating budgets, student fee revenue, and projected resource needs. This analysis supports decisions about program sustainability and future investment.

Program Strengths, Opportunities, Aspirations, and Results (SOAR)

Programs analyze strengths, opportunities, aspirations, and results based on collected data and develop action plans to improve program effectiveness.

Program Improvement and Oversight

Any need for programmatic change identified through program review is approved through CCD's [Academic Standards Committee](#). Through these program review feedback loops, CCD ensures that our curriculum remains current, rigorous, and aligned with academic and industry expectations, supporting student success in both academic and professional pathways.

3.G. Student Success Outcomes

The institution's student success outcomes demonstrate continuous improvement, taking into account the student populations it serves and benchmarks that reference peer institutions.

Community College of Denver (CCD) measures student success outcomes in three core ways:

- Fall-to-fall retention
- Completion
- Transfer

We use these outcomes to understand how well students are progressing through their programs and to identify areas for improvement. Data is benchmarked against peer institutions in the metro area: Community College of Aurora, Arapahoe Community College, Red Rocks Community College, and Front Range Community College. Data is also disaggregated by student gender, race, ethnicity, age, first-generation status, and full- or part-time enrollment status so that disparities can be addressed at the program or departmental level. We discuss this data at the college level during twice-monthly Goal Call meetings, and it is available within our Power BI dashboards at all times to guide decisions about curriculum, instruction, and student support.

Fall-to-Fall Retention

According to Colorado Community College System (CCCS) data, CCD has shown a 1% improvement in fall-to-fall retention over the last five years, which places us fourth out of five among our sister colleges: [3G_CCCS Fall to Fall Retention](#) .

These figures are disappointing, given our targeted work in this area. Examples of recent improvements include:

- Engaging each pathway in welcoming and belonging activities to increase students' sense of community
- Creating a common first semester by pathway so that students experience strong cohorts
- Re-designing the new student orientation and onboarding program

We have recently focused program review on retention metrics. Delving into this data, we have found that CCCS's inclusion of concurrent enrollment students in the data

significantly lowers the overall rate. Below are retention rates by age that do not include concurrent enrollment.

Age	Fall 2022–Fall 2023	Fall 2023–Fall 2024	Fall 2024–Fall 2025
20-24	50.67%	52.89%	53.10%
25-29	52.26%	52.7%	52.29%
30-34	52.22%	50.62%	52.18%
35-39	49.37%	44.25%	54.93%
40 and older	43.68%	43.34%	42.94%

These far higher rates demonstrate that retention of concurrent enrollment students (which, for academic year 2024–2025 was 29.43%) is a separate issue. For most of our population, it appears that our retention efforts have supported consistent improvements in retention.

Completion

Our overall credential award rates are generally on an upward trajectory, in keeping with our sister institutions: [3G CCCS Total Credentials Awarded](#)

This aligns with several completion-focused efforts:

- Replacing standard placement exams, which disparately impacted minority students, with guided self-placements for math and English
- Working to ensure that every program clearly aligns to career and transfer goals
- Creating a coordinated care network that routes students to the appropriate student services department when barriers arise

Even more importantly, our completion data represents an upward trend in the percentage of our students who receive a credential, not simply increased enrollment:

	Headcount	Credentials	Percentage
FY21	10,292	1,131	11%
FY22	10,391	1,227	12%
FY23	10,768	1,406	13%
FY24	11,351	1,422	13%
FY25	11,809	1,308	11%

Transfer

CCD has experienced falling and then plateauing transfer rates over the last five years:

[3G_CCCS Transfer Counts.](#)

In response to this trend, we joined the Aspen Transfer Initiative with Metropolitan State University of Denver, with which we share a campus. As part of this initiative, we work together to streamline transfer between our institutions. The conclusion of this work is a strategic transfer excellence plan to be launched in fall 2026. We hope that more targeted work will reduce barriers and support our students who transfer to earn baccalaureate degrees.

Planning for the Future

Overall, monitoring of our success outcomes suggests that recent efforts have positively affected retention and completion, but continued work is needed to sustain those gains and improve transfer outcomes. Strategies we will employ in our next strategic plan will include:

- Focusing our Teaching Learning Center on evidence-based course improvements
- Integrating student support systems to provide a more streamlined student experience
- Modernizing our institutional systems to make transfer processes clearer and more efficient for both students and staff
- Implementing more competency-based programs to engage adult learners

As we prepare for our next strategic plan, leadership across the college is looking at these efforts to determine which should be expanded, refined, or discontinued, and what additional strategies should be pursued.

Criterion 4. Sustainability: Institutional Effectiveness, Resources and Planning

The institution's resources, structures, policies, procedures and planning enable it to fulfill its mission, improve the quality of its educational programs, and respond to future challenges and opportunities.

4.A. Effective Administrative Structures

The institution's administrative structures are effective and facilitate collaborative processes such as shared governance; data-informed decision making; and engagement with internal and external constituencies as appropriate.

CCD's administrative structures are designed to be effective, collaborative, and responsive, supporting shared governance, evidence-based decision-making, and engagement across constituencies through clearly defined roles, data systems, and communication channels.

Shared Governance

Shared governance at CCD has evolved since our 2020 review. In addition to our long-standing Executive Council and Faculty Council (which includes Chair Council and Adjunct Council as sub-groups), CCD created a Deans Council and Staff Council. Each council is assigned a member of Executive Council to whom they report matters of concern. Our most recent president also created Braintrust, a body with representatives from each area of the college who communicate directly with the president.

- [Faculty Council Constitution and Bylaws](#)
- [Chair Council Charter](#)
- [Chair Council Membership for 2025-2026](#)
- [Braintrust Charter, Mission, and Bylaws](#)

CCD's [Shared Governance Charter](#) defines the decision-making roles of each body.

CCD monitors the effectiveness of our governance structures and refines them as needed to support collaboration and timely decision-making. At the time of our previous review, shared governance was led by the Strategic Planning and

Collaborative Decision-Making committee, with the Strategic Budget Committee and Prioritization and Operations Group determining whether specific requests were in alignment with our strategic plan. While highly inclusive, this process became burdensome and prevented timely decision-making and innovation. CCD is now building a more formalized assessment method to prevent similar issues from arising with our new model.

Data-Informed Decision-Making

CCD's administrative and communication structures ensure data is widely accessible and regularly shared, facilitating consistent data-informed decision-making. Twice a month, the college reviews data at collegewide Goal Call meetings. Data dashboards available to all staff and faculty provide regular updates for key data:

- FTE and headcount by academic year, student population, student demographics, term, pathway (meta-major), and program of study
- Average class size by semester, course, instructional methodology, class meeting time, and faculty type (full or part time)
- Student course-level success rates by program of study, pathway, course section, academic year, faculty type, faculty member, class modality, student demographics, and student type
- Student application-to-enrollment conversions by semester, student demographics, and program of study.
- Fall-to-fall and fall-to-spring retention rates by student type, student demographics, and program of study.
- Workforce and transfer outcomes by program, living wage index, and student demographics
- Completion data by program of study, pathway, 150% success rate, student type, student demographics, and year of completion
- Transfer data for students coming to CCD and leaving CCD, including student type, student demographics, program of study, pathway, and high school matriculation

These dashboards enable faculty and staff to evaluate, in real time, how their work is impacting the priorities of the college. For two years, we reviewed these dashboards at Goal Call to ensure consistent understanding. Program review also requires faculty and dean training in dashboard use.

Our department of Institutional Research tests their methodology against that of the Colorado Community College System, federal regulations, and partner 4-year colleges to validate our measures and processes. They also regularly introduce new features in our dashboards, or new dashboards altogether, further enhancing our ability to use data effectively throughout the college.

Examples of data use include improvements made to [advising](#) and [concurrent enrollment](#). We also made substantive curricular changes in our [Focus 20 courses](#), 20 high-enrollment, high-failure classes to which we dedicated particular attention in order to improve student success.

Engagement with Internal Stakeholders

Community College of Denver maintains multiple communication channels to keep internal constituents informed.

Type	Cadence	Reason /Topics	How Conveyed	Responsible Body
CCD Bi-Monthly	Bi-weekly on Mondays	Matters of importance to the college as a whole	Email and SharePoint	Marketing and Communication
Goal Call	2nd and 4th Thursdays	Operationalizing the strategic plan	Remote (live & recorded)	Executive Team
Townhalls	Scheduled as needed	Executive review of strategic direction and key decisions	Hybrid (in-person & remote, recorded)	Executive Team
Shared governance councils	Scheduled by each council	Discussion of matters raised by or to executive council	Council choice	ATP, deans, faculty (FC, CC, AC), BT
All-college email	As needed	Urgent or time-sensitive matters	Email	Office of the President
Conversation Day	Annually, the penultimate Friday before spring break	Collegewide conversation on matters of strategic importance	In person	Office of the Provost
Welcome Back Day	Annually, the week faculty return in August	Collegewide alignment and professional development tied to strategic goals	In person	Office of the Provost
SharePoint/Teams	Daily	Documents, processes, forms, templates, and other materials necessary for day-to-day work	Electronic	Many departments house sites, and the strategic office is working on a collegewide one

Information is also provided through regularly scheduled workshops. For example, Fiscal Services runs budget planning workshops each spring when the new budget is being determined, and Human Resources plans monthly Hot Topics services for supervisors. Each pathway holds regularly scheduled meetings to ensure alignment throughout the college.

Engagement with External Stakeholders

CCD engages external stakeholders through structured partnerships that inform decision-making and support student success.

For example, to improve transfer among the three institutions housed on the Auraria Campus (Community College of Denver, Metropolitan State University of Denver, and University of Colorado, Denver), the colleges' chief executives formed a committee that reviews transfer credit equivalency and transfer policy listings to ensure congruency.

CCD also participates in transfer summits to align our programs with the expectations of four-year institutions and improve transfer pathways for students. In 2025 and 2026, CCD hosted [transfer summits](#) in collaboration with Metropolitan State University of Denver (MSU Denver) to enhance post-graduate outcomes and align institutional goals with Colorado's workforce needs. CCD also participated with MSU Denver in the [Aspen-AASCU Transfer Student Success Intensive](#), a partnership between [Aspen Institute College Excellence Program \(Aspen CEP\)](#) and the [America Association of State Colleges and Universities \(AASCU\)](#).

CCD engages in the [annual Fac2Fac event](#) facilitated by the Colorado Department of Higher Education. The event fosters collaboration between 2-year and 4-year institutions, creating a space for faculty and staff to share insights and explore partnership opportunities. This gathering encourages open dialogue about the challenges and opportunities in higher education, with a focus on enhancing academic programs, improving student success, and strengthening transfer pathways.

Additional examples of engagement with external constituencies include our concurrent enrollment program, which manages partnerships with high schools while ensuring alignment with institutional priorities (outlined in 3.A.); programmatic advisory boards (further discussed in 3.G.); and the Center for Workforce Initiatives, a centralized unit that coordinates external partnerships.

Institutional Communication and Engagement

CCD's administrative structures promote transparent and inclusive governance. Data informs strategic and academic decisions, while faculty-led processes maintain the integrity and currency of the curriculum. We engage regularly with both our external and

internal constituents to encourage collaborative decision-making in support of our mission.

4.B. Resource Base and Sustainability

The institution's financial and personnel resources effectively support its current operations. The institution's financial management balances short-term needs with long-term commitments and ensures its ongoing sustainability.

Community College of Denver (CCD) prioritizes financial stability, in alignment with [policy](#) and [procedure](#). We operate within our means while strategically growing reserves for future investments. Despite the fluctuations experienced over the past five years due to the pandemic, declining enrollment, and uncertain federal and state support, the college has upheld a strong financial foundation without compromising essential services. As resources become increasingly constrained, we view financial management as crucial to our mission of offering low-cost, open-access education.

Meeting Current Obligations

Evidence of Financial Stability

Prudent financial management, well-developed revenue streams, and strategic investments have placed CCD in a stable position to fulfill commitments to our students and our community. We budget within our means and employ in-year monitoring to adjust to unexpected fluctuations by redeploying resources. Financial statements for the past 5 years demonstrate that, despite fluctuations in enrollment and state support, CCD has maintained our ability to meet financial obligations and is equipped to navigate future economic challenges.

Table 1 - Summary of Revenue, Expenses, and Net Position

Category	FY20	FY21	FY 22	FY23	FY 24
Revenue	\$57,215,963	\$58,661,510	\$74,073,886	\$65,092,812	\$75,490,023
Expenses	\$56,926,937	\$59,966,535	\$64,263,383	\$61,615,752	\$61,800,455
Revenue - Expense	\$289,026	(\$1,305,024)	\$9,810,503	\$3,477,060	\$13,689,567
Net Position	\$41,213,553	\$39,908,528	\$49,719,032	\$53,196,092	\$66,885,660

More detail is available in our income statements and balance sheets:

- [4B_Income Statements.pdf](#)
- [4B_BalanceSheets.pdf](#)

Payment Processing

Purchasing practices at CCD adhere to established [approval and compliance requirements](#), supporting responsible expenditure and effective financial operations.

CCD makes timely payments to [vendors](#), partners, and stakeholders. We maintain clear documentation of payment cycles, adhere strictly to contractual deadlines, and utilize automated systems to facilitate prompt disbursements. This reliability strengthens our professional relationships and reflects our dedication to transparency, accountability, and sound fiscal management.

Table 2 - Accounts Payable Summary Statistics

	FY25
Annual Invoice Transactions	3,336
Unique Vendors	525
Transaction Value	\$25,021,432
Payables Disbursed	\$24,417,790
Average Payable	\$7,254.25
Minimum Processing (Days)	4
Maximum Processing (Days)	36
Average Processing (Days)	8

Payroll Structure and Error Remediation

Employee compensation practices align with [board policy](#) and [system procedure](#). CCD maintains [monthly](#) and [bi-weekly](#) pay schedules to ensure consistent and timely compensation. In the event of a pay error, such as underpayment or overpayment, the Payroll Office uses an expedited procedure to review and address errors. Upon verification, off-cycle payments are processed within 24–48 hours to minimize financial hardship. Overpayments are addressed through clear communication and an agreed-upon repayment schedule or subsequent paycheck adjustment, adhering to all legal guidelines.

Budget Allocation and Management

Budget Allocations

CCD's budget allocation reflects our core mission of student success. Most of our financial resources are directly channeled into instruction and academic support, encompassing faculty salaries, professional development, classroom technology, academic resources, and tutoring. While prioritizing these foundational areas, we also allocate funds to ensure comprehensive student services such as admissions guidance, financial aid, and counseling. Our operations budget ensures our campus facilities are safe, modern, and

conducive to learning, and we dedicate sufficient resources to institutional support, which covers the administrative, IT, and governance functions that enable institutional effectiveness and efficiency. This balanced approach supports the quality of our current educational offerings while maintaining the college's ongoing operational health and long-term sustainability.

- [Preliminary Budget Report for Fiscal Year \(FY\) 2026](#)
- [Budget Presentation Materials for FY 2026](#)

Budget Development

CCD utilizes a modified zero-based budgeting system. Personnel expenses, which constitute approximately 70% of our total expenditures, are established as a base within the annual budget, reflecting their consistent and critical nature. (Refer to 3.C. for an in-depth discussion of our Position Control process for staffing.) For all non-personnel expenses, department leaders and executive staff must justify each dollar requested from a zero base annually. This hybrid approach ensures stable funding for our workforce while promoting rigorous evaluation of other operational spending.

Budgeting Cycle

Our annual budget process begins each January with revenue modeling to establish our core budget. Throughout spring, the budget and finance teams refine revenue projections based on enrollment and demographic data. Concurrently, stakeholders build budget requests for staffing and other needs. We also closely monitor legislative actions impacting college funding. This ongoing forecasting helps us anticipate funding changes and proactively adjust our financial strategy. By late spring or early summer, when appropriations are finalized, our budget is presented to the State Board for Community Colleges and Occupational Education, which oversees the community college system. This review ensures the budget aligns with statewide educational priorities, fiscal policies, and overall strategic vision. By the start of the new fiscal year in July, CCD has a budget reflecting resource allocation that supports both immediate operations and long-term stability.

- <<CCCS Revenue Projections for FY26>>
- [Budget Request Kickoff Message](#)
- [Example Budget Request: Information Technology](#)
- [Example Budget Request: Academic Affairs](#)
- [Preliminary Budget for FY 2026](#)

Long-Term Stability and Investment

As a state entity, CCD benefits from and contributes to the broader fiscal strength of the state. The financial health of the Colorado Community College System (CCCS), of which CCD is a part, is affirmed by an [Aa3 bond rating](#) from Moody's (as of 2025). This rating signifies that Moody's judges CCCS to be highly capable of meeting its financial commitments and repaying debts.

For CCD, this rating provides access to capital markets at favorable interest rates, which translates to cost savings that can be reinvested into our academic programs, student services, and campus infrastructure.

Capital Investments

CCD's rigorous budgeting practices prevent our resources from being consumed by day-to-day operations and enable us to reserve funds for capital investment.

Key projects include the recently completed renovation of the Clear Creek administrative and meeting building to modernize spaces and improve operational efficiency. This project demonstrated both [responsible initial planning](#) and [adaptation](#) in response to evolving project requirements.

A significant portion of reserve funds are dedicated to the ongoing construction of the [Boulder Creek Health Center of Excellence](#), which will consolidate and upgrade CCD's health sciences programs, addressing workforce needs in Colorado's healthcare sector. Looking ahead, CCD is also planning the development of a [Technical Education & Career Hub](#), which will provide training for high-demand technical careers. These strategic investments, made possible by CCD's reserve management, provide a modern learning environment and support regional workforce development.

External Auditing

As a state agency and part of the Colorado Community College System (CCCS), CCD is subject to a comprehensive external audit process that underscores our commitment to fiscal integrity. This process is mandated by state law, with the Colorado Office of the State Auditor engaging independent certified public accounting firms to conduct annual financial and compliance audits of CCCS.

The external audit adheres strictly to Governmental Accounting Standards Board requirements, generally accepted national auditing standards, and Government Auditing Standards applicable to financial audits. This layered adherence ensures thorough review of our financial statements, internal controls, and compliance with applicable laws, regulations, contracts, and grant requirements, including those related to federal funds.

When rare deficiencies are identified, CCD and CCCS implement corrective actions to address root causes and prevent recurrence. Our adherence to stringent standards has been affirmed by a consistent track record of no material findings or misstatements, demonstrating that our financial statements present a fair and accurate view of our financial position.

- [Final Audit for Fiscal Year \(FY\) 2022](#)
- [Final Audit for FY 2023](#)
- [Final Audit for FY 2024](#)

Support of the CCD Mission

CCD demonstrates effective resource management in support of quality and affordability for our students. Despite challenges such as the pandemic and enrollment declines, CCD's budget management and strategic investments have maintained a strong financial foundation, enabling our mission of providing accessible, high-quality education to the community.

4.C. Planning for Quality Improvement

The institution engages in systematic strategic planning for quality improvement. It relies on data, integrating its insights from enrollment forecasts, financial capacity, student learning assessment, institutional operations and the external environment.

Community College of Denver (CCD) uses data to guide the college's strategic planning framework, inform decision-making, and sustain continuous improvement.

2020–2025 Strategic Plan

The college closed out a 5-year plan in 2025 and is currently refining its successor. Our [Strategic Plan 2020–2025](#) originally outlined three primary goals, [later modified to four goals](#):

1. Expanding community access to CCD through diversified service delivery
2. Embedding diversity, equity, and inclusion through initiatives for students and employees
3. Increasing student retention and completion by innovating teaching and learning
4. Improving transfer and career placement

Throughout this implementation of this strategic plan, CCD collected data to assess our progress and inform the next planning cycle. Insights are captured in the [Final Strategic Plan Report](#).

2026–2031 Strategic Planning

In 2025, the Colorado Community College System (CCCS) released the [system-level strategic plan](#) for 2025–2030. To ensure alignment with the system, CCD elected to delay the drafting of an official college-level strategic plan for one year, using that time to begin planning and implementing elements that will be reflected in that final CCD plan.

Executives reviewed the CCCS Plan and identified [core elements and initiatives](#) that align the college's unique approach to the overarching goals. Each division of the college then reviewed the executives' work and engaged in division-level planning that will directly feed into the new strategic plan:

- [5-Year Planning for Academic Affairs](#)
- [Goal Call Presentation of Facilities Goals](#)
- [5-Year Planning for Information Technology \(IT\)](#)
- [Goal Call Presentation of IT Goals](#)

To refine our strategic plan, the [Keystone Policy Center](#) is supporting CCD in:

1. Conducting stakeholder engagement sessions
2. Crafting a communication plan
3. Aiding in change management, project execution, and process implementation
4. Monitoring progress
5. Addressing obstacles in the planning process

The final strategic plan will be presented during Welcome Back Day in August 2026.

Data Informing Planning Decisions

Throughout the strategic plan closeout report, the reader will notice screenshots of CCD's data dashboards. Updated every other week, these dashboards provide timely snapshots of student headcount, FTE, course success, completion, and retention (fall-to-fall and fall-to-spring). Dashboards also track transfers into and out of CCD. These data dashboards, discussed during our twice-monthly Goal Call meetings and used throughout the college, help CCD measure progress toward our immediate and long-term goals.

Enrollment Forecasting

As discussed in 4.B., CCD uses enrollment forecasting as part of our annual budget process, and those predictions are communicated throughout the college to support planning. We use the [predictive enrollment dashboard](#) to align course offerings with student needs. This data also allows us to ensure the continuation of classes essential to our strategic plan even if they would be cancelled under our [normal procedures](#).

Financial Capacity

As discussed in 4.B., CCD engages in careful financial tracking and planning, which has maintained our composite financial indicator above 1.0 every year, even coming out of the pandemic. (annual institutional update financial FY25) This work allows us to allocate budget dollars to strategic goals. For example, it has enabled us to build out the Boulder Creek Health Sciences Center (part of strategic goal 1), fund the [Displaced Aurarian Scholarship program](#) (goal 1), and contribute to the Auraria [Classroom 2 Career Hub](#) (goal 3).

Student Learning Assessment

See 3.E. for a thorough explanation of how CCD uses assessment of student learning to plan improvements.

Institutional Operations

Institutional operations are integrated into CCD's strategic planning to support quality improvement. For example, hiring decisions are informed by differentiated data and aligned with strategic goals, including improving campus climate by ensuring faculty and staff reflect the student body. [Faculty line requests](#) must also be connected to strategic goals such as [increased student success rates](#). As shown in this [English department worksheet](#), requests are also connected to program goals. See 3.F. for further discussion of program review, which analyzes program health to inform strategic decision-making.

External Environment

CCD maintains deep connections with external stakeholders through industry advisory boards, high school and transfer institution partnerships, and community organizations. These relationships allow us to align our student experience with transfer and workforce needs. For example, external data from high school and community partners demonstrated the need for our High School Diploma Program. This low-cost program designed for adult learners supports our first strategic goal, expanding workforce development and community engagement.

Planning for Continuous Improvement

Integrating information from enrollment, finance, student learning, operations, and external partners allows the college to align resources with priorities and make informed adjustments as conditions change. Collectively, these data sources facilitate CCD's engagement in evidence-driven planning in pursuit of our strategic goals.