

August 31, 2017

Chancellor James B. Milliken
The City University of New York
205 E. 42nd Street
New York, NY 10017

Dear Chancellor Milliken:

I am delighted to provide this report to you reflecting the progress we have made in my second year as President of Bronx Community College. The 2016-17 Academic Year was a very productive one. I am pleased to report that with the hiring of key senior staff positions, my leadership team is now solidly in place. We have embraced our designation as CUNY's **First ASAP College** and we are striving to use the ASAP expansion as a catalyst to increase and accelerate college-wide graduation rates and progress on the BCC Strategic Plan 2015-20 (*Building a Community of Excellence*). This comprehensive college-wide redesign is intended to improve all academic/support experiences for students and college operations, with a focus on: (1) increasing the College's three-year graduation rate, and (2) better preparing students for advanced degrees and employment opportunities upon graduation. I am pleased to report that we succeeded in meeting the ambitious ASAP enrollment goals for our first year of implementation. This spring we celebrated the kickoff of the 60th Diamond Anniversary of the College. The campus mobilized for our upcoming Middle States Commission on Higher Education (MSCHE) Self-Study process, with the faculty and staff working on the Self-Study Design, which was submitted to and accepted by MSCHE. This was subsequently followed with the engagement of more than 120 faculty, staff and students who will be involved in Self-Study Working Groups.

The attached **BCC 2016-17 Progress Report** highlights BCC accomplishments relative to the goals and objectives we set forth for the 2016-17 year as well as challenges we continue to face moving forward. The summary below highlights those efforts and accomplishments we made with respect the central goal established for the 2016-17 academic year – *Developing and Maintaining an Effective College*.

Focus on Student Success

We identified the 2016 -2017 academic year as the “Year of the Student”, with all activities and efforts focused on increasing and accelerating student success and assuring excellent educational outcomes. Our **Progress Report** highlights specific accomplishments to these ends with the following goals: (1) Increase student retention, success, learning and completion; (2) Assure high quality academic preparation with a comprehensive assessment program; (3) Maximize utilization, allocation and evaluation of technological and facilities resources to support institutional effectiveness and student success; and (4) Develop and expand community and business partnerships.

Leadership

The College's Executive Team is now complete with the hiring of key leadership positions, including the Vice President of Student Success (Irene R. Delgado); the Dean of Workforce Development (Kenneth Adams), Associate Dean for Success Programs (Simone Rodriguez-Dorestant); Associate Dean for Student Development (Manny Lopez); and Labor Designee (Susan Fiore). We initiated annual Cabinet

and Chairperson Retreats held in the summers of 2016 and 2017 in order to establish clear collective priorities for the year.

Communication

The President's Monthly/Periodic Reports have regularly been sent to campus email addresses and posted on the campus website to communicate regularly with the campus community. Campus leaders routinely report at campus-wide meetings, such as the College Senate. Posters highlighting the BCC Mission, Vision and Values are visible across the campus. A *Survey of Faculty and Staff Satisfaction* is conducted annually by the Senate Committee on Instruction and Professional Development and the results are shared and discussed across campus and used to drive improvements.

Intellectual Climate

We have devoted considerable attention to advancing the intellectual climate on campus. One new program is the *President's Conversation Series on Democracy and Freedom*, which is sponsored by the Office of the President and organized by the BCC Faculty. Topics this year included:

- "Take Part in Democracy! Making Your Voice Heard in Your Community";
- "Art and Democracy: Spoken Word Poetry and Dance";
- "Media and Democracy: Truth, Lies and Fake News".

For the first time at BCC, we have developed and are initiating this year, a campus-wide reading program. *One Book, One College, One Community* The goal is to engage the college community (students, faculty, staff and community) in a shared intellectual experience; expose participants to new ideas; foster appreciation of diverse points of view; and illuminate connections between learning, working and teaching at BCC, with larger societal/international issues—through readership. Throughout the academic year, the College will host workshops, discussions, lectures, and other related activities which will be organized around the selected book. In Fall 2017, incoming students will receive a free copy of the book (*The Immortal Life of Henrietta Lacks* by Rebecca Skloot) and several faculty will incorporate this reading into their curricula.

This past academic year the College hosted two daylong professional development conferences: the 4th *Annual Winter Conference (Bridging the Gap Through Evidence Based Practices)*, which was held in January, 2017 and included presentations from both BCC and other college faculty and staff; and the *BCC Faculty Day (Diversity Inside and Outside the Classroom)*.

In addition, to support faculty scholarship and pedagogical development the College sponsored grant programs, including the **Presidential Grant Program** (sponsored by my office) and **The Next BIIG Thing, BCC Innovation and Inquiry Grants** which were funded through the ASAP Initiative and the Office of the Provost.

Faculty and Staff Satisfaction

I am pleased to report (according to the *Annual Faculty and Staff Satisfaction Survey* (commissioned by the Senate Committee on Instruction and Professional Development), increases in satisfaction with a number of campus culture items over the past two years, since I assumed the Presidency at BCC. As the table below demonstrates: there were high levels of satisfaction with:

- Safety and Security (95%)

- Multicultural Respect (88%)
- Overall Job Satisfaction (86%)

And, there were substantial percentage increases in satisfaction with:

- Intellectual climate (+13%)
- Internal Campus Communication (+30%)
- Cross-Campus Collaboration (+35%)

Results from the Spring 2017 Survey of Faculty and Staff Satisfaction


	% Rating Satisfactory or Better			% Change
	Sp 17 (n=351)	Sp 16 (n=364)	Sp 15 (n=330)	Sp 15-17
Safety and Security	95	93	88	8%
Multicultural Respect	88	85	81	9%
Overall Job Satisfaction	86	82	75	15%
Departmental Leadership	84	79	69	22%
Tutoring Services	84	79	74	14%
College-wide Leadership	81	80	65	25%
Internal Campus Communication	78	73	60	30%
Cross-Campus Collaboration	77	68	57	35%
Intellectual Climate	76	70	67	13%
Registration Process	69	62	46	50%
Advisement Process	61	57	45	36%

We will continue to work diligently (and to monitor our progress) as we seek to improve the campus climate and culture at Bronx Community College. Improvements in campus culture and climate are certainly prerequisites to achievement of our fundamental goals of increasing/accelerating graduation and assuring excellent educational and graduation outcomes.

I believe that we have made much progress over the past two years and this past year in particular in developing the leadership, communication, organization and campus climate to significantly further the progress on our strategic goals and objectives in support of advancing student completion and academic excellence. The attached **BCC 2016-17 Progress Report** highlights those accomplishments.

Thank you very much for the continued support that you and your staff provide to Bronx Community College. Wishing you all the best in the 2017-18 Academic Year.

Sincerely,


Thomas A. Isekenegebe, Ph.D.
President

Bronx Community College 2016-17 Progress Report

The 2016-17 year has been a very productive one at Bronx Community College. College activities and efforts were guided by the *BCC Strategic Plan: 2015-20 (Building a Community of Excellence)* and supported substantially by the inspiration and resources that accompanied BCC's designation as the 1st ASAP College. These are designed to: (1) Increase and accelerate college-wide completion rates; and (2) Assure (and continuously improve) excellent educational outcomes. This report will highlight progress made during 2016-17 on the following major goals for Bronx Community College:

1. Increase/Accelerate Degree Completion
2. Assure High Quality Academic Preparation with a Comprehensive Assessment Program
3. Maximize Utilization, Allocation and Evaluation of Fiscal, Technological and Facilities Resources to Support Institutional Effectiveness and Student Success
4. Develop and Expand Community and Business Partnerships

College Progress on BCC Goals for 2016-17

Goal 1: Increase Student Retention, Success, Learning, and Completion

Like many community colleges, BCC was focused for many years on its "access" mission, with less emphasis on completion. Considerable attention has recently been focused on addressing student success with promising results. The *BCC Strategic Plan: 2015-20 (Building a Community of Excellence)* was developed to significantly increase/accelerate completion rates as well as assure/improve the quality and value of the education received at BCC. We are pleased that the 3-year graduation rate has progressively doubled to 16% over the past several years, but we aspire to continue increasing that rate, while assuring that we maintain a high quality education. The recent increase in graduation rates can be attributed to a college-wide focus on completion with initiatives that derive from our Strategic Plan and are designed to support students' success throughout their academic career. The following efforts have been implemented to that end:

Accelerating Degree Completion - ASAP (Accelerated Study in Associate Programs)

BCC successfully mobilized to meet the ambitious ASAP enrollment projections for this past academic year. BCC intends for the ASAP expansion to power institutional transformation leading to improvements in increased academic success (completion) for all students through the strategic use of newly acquired resources and a change in the campus mindset regarding student performance and progress. One example includes the use of a software platform (STARFISH), acquired for the ASAP expansion, but available for use by all academic advisors. The STARFISH platform integrates a variety of interventions (early warnings and referrals) to support student success. This tool has the capacity to facilitate caseload management/academic support provided by all academic advisors, modeling the best practices used as part of the ASAP Program. As improvements in student learning and increases in student completion are demonstrated across the campus, attitudes and expectations for student success are expected to correspondingly change.

Another major effort involves efforts to support the pipeline of students entering BCC to be eligible to enroll in BCC ASAP. We have been working to establish stronger collaborative ties with Community Board Organizations (CBOs), New York City Department of Education (NYCDOE) schools through the Bronx Opportunity Network (BON) and Bronx Corridor's Project (a collaboration with the Center for Institutional and Social Change, Columbia University). BCC staff meet regularly with the BON and

partner NYCDOE schools to support student readiness to enter and succeed in BCC and the ASAP program.

Pre-College Preparation/Orientation for Success

A series of ASAP-driven, pre-college initiatives have been developed and well-coordinated to prepare students for academic success. These include: (1) information/orientation sessions; (2) test preparation workshops for placement exams; and (3) immersion programs to develop basic skills before students matriculate. The number of students who participated in Test Preparation Workshops has increased significantly (from 50 to 1200 students last year) and those students, who participate in Test Preparation, perform at higher levels. Other highly successful pre-college programs, CUNY Start and Math Start, provides an intensive pre-college programs for students who require remediation in either all three skills areas or in Math only.

Achieving Success in the First Year (Progress through Remediation and the First Year Program and Seminar)

The academic departments housing remediation instruction focused significant attention on improving student progress through remedial courses. The Mathematics and Computer Science Department focused particular attention on supporting students in MTH 05 (Elementary Algebra) which has the highest enrollment of all Math classes and has posed a significant barrier for students. These efforts, which included: free organized study halls, expanded use of the Mathematics Tutorial Lab, training sessions for tutors, rolling workshops for course repeaters and an accelerated workshop for strong MTH 01 students. These efforts resulted in a 10% increase in course pass rates from Fall 2015 (41.2%) to Fall 2016 (45.5%). In addition, the department has developed and will introduce two sections of an experimental alternative to algebra math course, MTH 19 (Pathways in Mathematics) for students who have not demonstrated algebra proficiency, but are proficient in arithmetic. The English Department has supported student progress through remediation through its Tutorial Intervention Program, which embeds tutors into ENG 2 and ENG 10 classes. They also utilize the Early Academic Progress Report (EAPR) to maintain close communication with students about what they need to do to be successful in the remedial courses.

BCC's First Year Seminar (FYS) is a holistic introduction to college, which: (1) integrates academic content and skill-building with traditional orientation activities; (2) creates opportunities for students to practice new skills via student-centered pedagogies; (3) embeds advising and peer mentor support; and (4) provides opportunities for instructor learning. The sections have grown significantly from 5 in Spring 2012 to 51 planned for Fall 2017 (serving 1200 students). Performance metrics for FYS students are impressive. Most recently the 3-year graduation rate for FYS students (20%) was double the rate for students who were not in FYS (10%). FYS is under continuous evaluation and improvement.

Engaging Faculty in Effective Pedagogy to Support Student Success - New Faculty Seminar (NFS)

BCC has created a first year seminar for new faculty to study effective pedagogy and assessment strategies to facilitate student success. In its third year, the NFS provides all new full-time faculty with reassigned time to participate in monthly meetings and an intensive winter session. The seminar emphasizes active learning and high impact practices that are successful with the BCC student population. The faculty mentors model good pedagogy and all participants create a teaching portfolio and assessment project. See <https://www.aacu.org/campus-model/faculty-development-student-success-bronx-community-college>.

Ongoing support for faculty development (including pedagogy, scholarship and professional advancement) is provided through College grants and programs (Presidential Grants, BIIG Grants, Center

for Teaching, Learning and Technology programs and more clearly articulated guidelines developed by the College Personnel and Budget Committee).

Scholarship Support for Students

This year, we were successful in establishing two endowed scholarship funds:

- Kalief Browder (\$100,000)
- Con Edison (\$100,000)

Professional Development

This year we embarked on an aggressive campaign to provide professional development for faculty and staff to ensure that they continue to maintain the skills necessary to support student success. In addition to the Winter Intercession Conference and Faculty, training opportunities for staff included an advisor summit, a 2-day symposium on academic support and workshops on effective customer relations and service for office staff.

Goal 2: Assure High Quality Academic Preparation with a Comprehensive Assessment Program

This past year, BCC has formalized its Assessment Framework to include assessment of:

- BCC's progress regarding goals and objectives of the Strategic Plan
- Department and Unit Assessment (Academic, Support and Administrative)
- BCC Student Learning Outcomes Assessment (for courses, programs, support departments and general education)

This framework is articulated in the College's Written Assessment Plan, which is also presented in an e-portfolio format. For each assessment category, the plan includes:

- An assessment organization (assessment tools, timelines, participants)
- Assessment roles and responsibilities
- Assessment focus (MSCHE Standards, BCC Goals, CUNY Strategic Framework, Pathways learning outcomes, program/course learning outcomes, unit/department goals/objectives)
- Performance indicators/metrics
- Regular and periodic reports
- Review and feedback mechanisms
- Adjustments and improvements

We are confident that this framework will position the College to respond successfully to our upcoming Middle States Self-Study, which will culminate with an evaluation team visit in Spring 2019.

Goal 3: Maximize Utilization, Allocation and Evaluation of Fiscal, Technological and Facilities Resources to Support Institutional Effectiveness and Student Success

Facilities Enhancements

There have been a great number of facilities improvements and renovations on our campus this past year. One of the most notable was the completion and opening of the BCC Quad in the beginning of the Fall 2016 semester. We are in the process of conducting GML Existing Conditions to renovate Gould

Memorial Library and the Hall of Fame and we have secured \$20 million in capital funding through advocacy efforts.

Renovations supported by ASAP expansion funding, included:

- Renovations of first floor space (3,443 square feet) in Nichols First floor for 19 advisors and staff (which has been offline since University Heights High School left the campus several years ago).
- Renovations of 2 classrooms in Bliss Hall (1890 square feet), which have been off line since before 2010.
- Renovations (currently being done) for Nichols Hall – 4th floor (also offline space since at least 1973).

The pool in the Alumni Gym is currently being completed and will be open for use at the start of the Fall 2017 semester. Planning for our *Bronx Express* (one-stop shop student services) is underway. BCC is currently moving to a “One Stop Shop” student service model including Admissions, Bursar, Financial Aid and Registrar services. With funding already secured, we: completed a thorough study of other one stop models (both within CUNY and outside of CUNY); held various discussions on enrollment trends; and presented our findings to the architect firm. We are slated to see the first “fit test” drafts from the architects next month.

Technology and Communication Enhancements

There have been numerous technology enhancements across the campus this year. Some of the most notable include the following:

- Increased the percentage of instructional (student) FTEs offered partially or totally online from 2.6 to 4.1
- Purchase of Starfish which will enhance efforts to better monitor and support students
- Developed and launched BC’s first student mobile application

The new BCC Student Mobile Application was successfully launched during the 60th Anniversary celebration on May 11, 2017. This free app is a convenient way for BCC Students to stay connected 24/7 and be aware of what is happening. Users have access to their courses, campus updates, college maps, social media, and much more.

- College rebranding and new College website redesign
- Developed and executed new ad campaign

Grant Funds

The College received substantial grant funds to support students, college improvements and operations as follows:

- Managed by Research Foundation (Super College + Sub Awards: \$6,045,163)
- Managed by BCC Business Office (Tax levy grants: \$659,856; SUNY EOC: \$5,902,177)
- Managed by BCC Foundation (Private sources: \$988,555)

Goal 4: Develop and Expand Community and Business Partnerships

Workforce Development Redesign

Consistent with the CUNY Strategic Framework and the BCC Strategic Plan, BCC initiated the reorganization and improvement of workforce development at the College. A new Dean has been hired, who reports directly to President. A workforce Development Plan has been developed, which will provide a blueprint for next year's efforts.

The Division of Workforce Development and Continuing Education at Bronx Community College offers educational programs for students of all ages and backgrounds seeking to improve their career prospects, including adult basic education (primarily ESL and GED/TASC prep), training for jobs in early childhood education, construction, health care, technology, etc., along with customized training for employers, community-based organizations and unions.

An important goal for the Division to develop new credit-bearing certificate programs in partnership with NYC employers and BCC academic departments. These "stackable credentials" provide students with practical, hands-on training for jobs in growing sectors of the city's economy. During 2016-17 the Division began developing several new training programs in fields including Community Health, Film Production and Youth Development.

Key achievements in 2016-17 in Workforce Development include:

- Developed 5-year Strategic Plan featuring a new model for training program development – *Career Connection*
- Increased collaboration with BCC Academic Departments
- Began outreach to potential funders to support program expansion
- Created new relationships with CBO partners, citywide organizations and government agencies
- Established new systems for program accountability/performance metrics/reporting
- Launched new Continuing Education database for student enrollment and tracking – Campus CE
- Launched DSP (Direct Service Professional) program
- Re-launched DASA (Dignity for All Students Act) program
- Secured IBEW Local 3 Contract for Project Management training
- Renewed NYSDOL funding for training in IT Network Support & Health Info Security
- Renewed CUNY WDI Grant for Network Security
- Secured CUNY Planning Grant – new training for Careers in Behavioral Health
- Launched new TASC (GED) training program with Equality Charter School
- Created new ESL training program with Bronx Early Learning Center (Volunteers of America-GNY)

Community and Business Events hosted on Campus

BCC hosted the following community and business events on campus:

- Bronx Children's Museum 2016 Summer Arts Enrichment Program
- NYC – first Town Hall Meeting
- CUNY BMI Conference
- Morris Heights Health Center Youth Conference
- Handel's Messiah
- 10K Run
- BCC 60th Anniversary Celebrations

- Bernie Sanders campaign event
- U.S. Supreme Court Associate Justice Sonya Sotomayor event
- My Brother's Keeper event featuring Borough President, Assembly Speaker Carl Heastie, NYC Schools Chancellor Carmen Farina, and NYS Regents Chancellor Betty Rosa
- Quad ribbon-cutting event with Lt. Governor and elected officials
- Retirement reception for Luis Gonzales (1st Latino President Justice of the NYS Appellate Court)
- Architecture and Arts Festival
- *Time: The Kalief Browder Story* screening
- Alumni Trailblazer Speaker Series

Major Opportunities and Challenges Impacting the College

ASAP expansion/College Redesign

The ASAP expansion and College Redesign is an incredible opportunity to provide significantly more students with a proven success program that will result in greater completion rates and accelerated rates of completion at the same time the College is advancing its Strategic Plan and assuring the high quality of the education we provide.

Student Success

The major challenge continuing to face BCC is low student attainment. In particular, the graduation rates remain low compared to other CUNY community colleges, and this is in large part a result of poor student progress through remedial and gateway course requirements. Student performance in mathematics is of particular concern.

Middle States Commission on Higher Education (MSCHE) Self-Study

BCC is poised to engage the campus community in a Self-Study as part of our accreditation requirements, which will culminate with a submission of a report and an Evaluation Team visit in Spring 2019. This is a great opportunity for the college community to identify strengths and weaknesses, which should result in strengthening the college operations and outcomes.

Specific objectives of the BCC Self Study are to:

1. Demonstrate how BCC meets/exceeds MSCHE standards and requirements for accreditation.
2. Engage BCC community in an open, inclusive and transparent evaluation process that allows for input from all groups and builds assessment/analytical capacity across the campus.
3. Use Self-Study to deliberately focus on lessons learned from ASAP expansion and College Redesign.
4. Use Self-study analysis to inform new BCC Strategic Plan, in support of institution-wide improvement and renewal.

To conclude, we have made significant progress towards accomplishing our two primary goals of: increasing and accelerating college-wide completion rates; and assuring (and continuously improving) excellent educational outcomes. Going forward we are challenging our campus to more than double our graduation rate over the next 5 years (from 16% to 35%).