



Baccalaureate Degree Program Expansion Workplan

Prepared by:

James Todd, Erin Larson

Contributions from:

Kim Anderson, Chèri Fortin, Leslie Leblanc, Jill Leufgen, Ginni May, Priscilla Pereschica-Follert, Amy Smith, Jennifer Yang

INTRODUCTION: REIMAGINING ACCESS, EQUITY, AND ECONOMIC MOBILITY

The California Community Colleges Baccalaureate Degree Program (BDP) represents a transformative strategy to expand equitable access to high-quality, affordable four-year degrees for California’s diverse and place-bound learners. While this Vision 2030 cornerstone expands degree options, it is central to catalyzing systemic equity, economic mobility, and regional responsiveness across the state¹. With fifty-one BDPs approved across forty-two colleges, California leads nationally in this space, but the demand for these programs continues to grow.

This workplan advances Vision 2030 goals—Equity in Access, Equity in Success, and Equity in Support—and supports all three of its strategic directions: Equitable Baccalaureate Attainment, Equitable Workforce and Economic Development, and Generative AI and the Future of Learning. This plan reinforces Vision 2030’s commitment to regional responsiveness, guided pathways, and cross-sector partnerships that eliminate structural barriers for working learners and geographically bound students, addressing Activity 3: California Community College Baccalaureate Degree Program in the [Vision 2030: Transfer Workplan](#). In doing so, this workplan operationalizes the broader system vision by focusing on scalable, equity-minded baccalaureate expansion strategies that are data-informed and regionally targeted.

Specifically, this Vision 2030: Baccalaureate Degree Expansion Workplan will drive the following outcomes and actions of *Vision 2030 – The July 2025 Edition*.

Outcome 3: Increase with equity the number of California community college students attaining a baccalaureate degree.

Outcome 3b: Increase with equity the number of California community college students who earn a California community college baccalaureate degree.

Benchmark: Increase with equity the number of California community college students who earn a California community college baccalaureate degree by 30%.

¹ Recent findings from the RP Group’s 2024 report [Distance Matters: Exploring Geographic Barriers to Transfer](#) (see pages 4-6) highlight geography as a decisive factor in limiting transfer opportunities for students in rural or underserved areas. The report demonstrates that transfer rates are significantly lower for students attending community colleges located more than 25 miles from the nearest public university, with rates dropping even further beyond 80 miles. These “university deserts” disproportionately impact low-income, first-generation, and Latine students, underscoring the urgency of expanding BDP access in these areas.

Figure 1: Outcome 3b

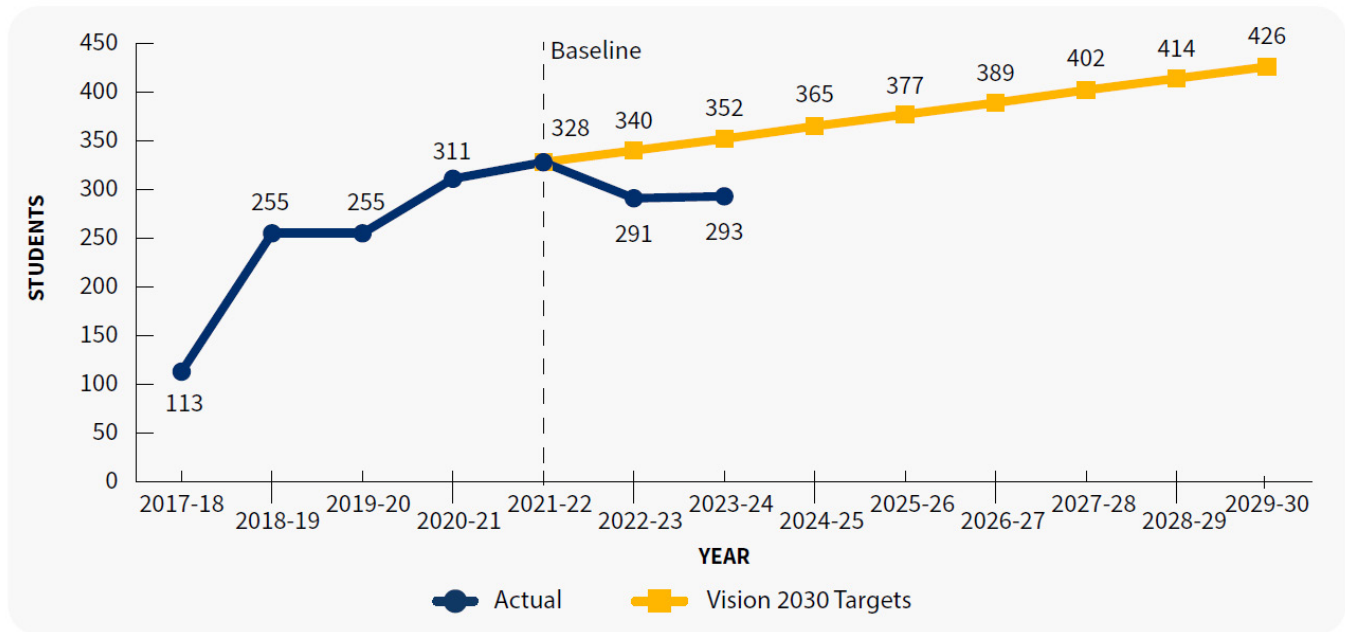


Figure data available in Appendix

Action 6b: Increase baccalaureate degree attainment by increasing access to a California community college baccalaureate degree, including transfer within the California Community College system as outlined in the Vision 2030 Transfer Workplan.

Action 6c: Increase baccalaureate degree attainment by increasing the number of California community college baccalaureate degrees offered.

The workplan is anchored in six interdependent strategic activities designed to expand access, support institutional transformation, and strengthen student outcomes. These include: (1) expanding the number of successful baccalaureate degree program applications statewide; (2) using labor market data and regional needs assessments to guide program development; (3) providing targeted technical assistance and capacity-building support for rural and small colleges; (4) increasing enrollment and completion in existing baccalaureate programs; and (5) embedding robust student and workforce supports—including Credit for Prior Learning and work-based learning to ensure student success and economic mobility. Together, these strategies advance a comprehensive, equity-centered approach to community college baccalaureate degree expansion.

ACTIVITY 1: SUCCESSFUL BACCALAUREATE PROGRAM APPLICATIONS

To reach Vision 2030’s enrollment and completion goals, the California Community Colleges system must fully utilize the statutory cap of 30 new baccalaureate degree programs (BDPs) per year. The Chancellor’s Office will develop and implement a statewide **strategic outreach and capacity-building initiative aimed at engaging colleges** that have not yet applied or were previously unsuccessful in their submissions to offer a BDP. This includes hosting technical assistance webinars and offering pre-application consultations to ensure equity-minded program design and alignment with regional workforce needs.

The Chancellor’s Office will develop a comprehensive BDP application toolkit that includes annotated templates, FAQs, video tutorials and past webinars, and a directory of peer exemplars. A new iterative review application model will be introduced, allowing for mid-cycle feedback and technical assistance, as well as a

more simplified approval process. Workshops and office hours will be regularly held to walk applicant colleges through the latest policy updates, labor market requirements, and equity-focused design principles.

ACTIVITY 2: REGIONAL WORKFORCE NEEDS AND PROGRAM DESIGN

To ensure that California community college baccalaureate degrees remain responsive to California’s evolving economy, the Chancellor’s Office will collaborate with the Centers of Excellence to generate regional labor market data analysis sets. This strategic data analysis will **identify unmet degree-level workforce needs in sectors such as healthcare, climate and sustainability, technology, and education.**

The system will produce regional BDP opportunity briefs that will be shared with Regional Consortia, highlighting priority occupations and encourage colleges to design aligned programs. In collaboration with the Regional Consortia, the Chancellor’s Office will provide focused regional workshops for faculty and administrators interested in developing new degrees, with emphasis on inclusive curriculum design, industry co-development, and culturally relevant pedagogy.

ACTIVITY 3: RURAL-SERVING AND SMALL COLLEGES PARTICIPATION WITH TARGETED TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

Rural-serving colleges, small colleges, and those near educational deserts face structural challenges in developing baccalaureate programs, including limited faculty capacity, facility constraints, and enrollment scale. These same colleges are often situated in university deserts—regions more than 80 miles from the nearest public university—where transfer rates are the lowest in the state².

To address these barriers, the Chancellor’s Office BDP expansion efforts will include a **capacity-building framework, supporting dedicated coaching for rural-serving and small colleges**, targeted engagements for curriculum development teams, and the development of peer mentorship networks.

Through collaboration with the Foundation for California Community Colleges, a **BDP Community of Practice** will be established to connect institutions across the state and support knowledge-sharing around **curriculum development, student advising and support processes, accreditation, and strategic enrollment management.** Special emphasis will be placed on rural partnerships, such as shared course models and regional cohort pathways, to ensure scalability and sustainability.

ACTIVITY 4: CAPACITY AND ENROLLMENT EXPANSION IN EXISTING BACCALAUREATE PROGRAMS

Expanding capacity within existing programs is critical to meeting workforce demand and increasing student degree attainment. The Chancellor’s Office will work with colleges with existing baccalaureate degree programs to understand capacity constraints, including limitations in clinical placements, faculty hiring pipelines, facility space, and scheduling practices. Colleges with **high-demand programs will be supported with targeted resources and peer-learning opportunities to expand course sections, implement flexible scheduling, and develop hybrid delivery models.**

Intra-college transfer pathways will be promoted and expanded to support student transfers into California community college BDPs. Additional guidance will be developed for colleges on building articulation pathways between associate degrees and California Community College BDPs, especially in fields where external university partnerships are limited.

² [Distance Matters: Exploring Geographic Barriers to Transfer](#) (see pages 4-6).

ACTIVITY 5: STUDENT AND WORKFORCE SUPPORTS IN BDP IMPLEMENTATION

The successful expansion of California Community Colleges BDPs requires a parallel expansion and integration of student supports. The Chancellor's Office will facilitate the sharing of best practices from BDP colleges that **integrate comprehensive, data-informed advising models and technology that support persistence, completion, and job-attainment**—especially frameworks that meet the unique needs of adult learners, student parents, veterans, foster youth, and justice-involved learners. Such practices include the development of Credit for Prior Learning (CPL) opportunities, work-based and experiential learning (including internships and applied capstones), the maximization of financial aid and public benefits utilization, cohort-advising, flexible scheduling including online and hybrid modalities, affordability models including burden-free materials and Open Education Resources/Zero Textbook Cost pathways, and more.

CONCLUSION: MOBILIZING FOR TRANSFORMATIONAL BACCALAUREATE EXPANSION

California Community Colleges BDPs represent a bold and necessary response to regional workforce needs, geographic disparities, and persistent barriers to economic mobility. The activities in this workplan do more than expand degree pathways—they reimagine what access to opportunity looks like for California's most underserved students. As the RP Group's [Distance Matters: Exploring Geographic Barriers to Transfer](#) 2024 report underscores, geography too often determines educational fate. The California Community Colleges system will act so that place does not determine outcome for Californians in university deserts. Vision 2030 brings college to students—with high-quality academic programs **and** holistic supports with regional strategies that honor each student's needs.

While the urgency for developing BDP programs is recognized, for colleges, navigating the application, development, and implementation of a California community college baccalaureate degree program can be an arduous and complex process. This *Vision 2030: Baccalaureate Degree Program Expansion Workplan* identifies and prioritizes the comprehensive support colleges need in creating BDPs that are affordable, industry-aligned, and equity-driven. By fostering intersegmental collaboration, investing in rural-serving and small college capacity, creating intentional communities of practice, expanding access to CPL and work-based learning, and grounding all efforts in regional labor market needs, this plan transforms Vision 2030 equitable baccalaureate attainment goals from aspiration into actualization. The path forward will require innovation and unwavering commitment to those learners who have historically been left furthest from opportunity.

RESOURCES

Distance Matters: Exploring Geographic Barriers to Transfer, RP Group, 2024: https://rpgroup.org/Portals/0/Documents/Projects/Exploring_Geographic_Isolation_Barrier_Equitable_Transfer_Outcomes/DistanceMatters_ExploringGeographicBarriers_November2024.pdf

Vision 2030: Transfer Workplan: <https://www.cccco.edu/-/media/CCCCO-Website/docs/vision2030/vision-2030-transfer-workplan>

APPENDIX

Outcome 3b:

YEAR	STUDENTS	
	Actual	Vision 2030 Targets
2017-18	113	-
2018-19	255	-
2019-20	255	-
2020-21	311	-
2021-22	328	328
2022-23	291	340
2023-24	293	352
2024-25	-	365
2025-26	-	377
2026-27	-	389
2027-28	-	402
2028-29	-	414
2029-30	-	426

Bold = Baseline