



# EQUITY PLAN

2024-2025



**WAUBONSEE**  
COMMUNITY COLLEGE



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## II. INTRODUCTION

Waubonsee Community College draws its students from a vast community of learners that includes more than 450,000 residents across a 624-square-mile geographic area. Those residents live in or near 22 municipalities and may attend one of 12 public and eight private school districts that draw the outline of the community college district. Since its founding in 1966, the college has provided programs and services to more than 320,000 people.

Waubonsee Community College has four campuses, each designed to support student success. At the Sugar Grove Campus, students find a range of classrooms, labs, and services tailored to meet diverse academic goals. Located in Illinois' second-largest city, our Aurora Downtown Campus provides comprehensive student services and specialized programs in Applied Science degrees and certificates. The Aurora Fox Valley Campus specializes in health care education, offering advanced labs with professional medical equipment for hands-on learning. The Plano Campus, located in the southwest portion of Waubonsee's district, was revamped in late 2018 and reopened in August 2020 as Waubonsee's Center for Design and Innovation with a specialized focus on programs including Welding, Computer Aided Design and Drafting (CADD) as well as the development of a Cybersecurity program that launched in fall 2020.

The Sugar Grove Campus is set to further expand our commitment to technical education with the new Technical Education Center (TEC), scheduled to open in Fall 2025. This 100,000 square foot facility will be located at the south end of the campus and will include programs like Automotive Technology, Auto Body Repair, and Welding Technology. With the addition of the TEC, the college aims to double the enrollment capacity for these programs and enhance curricular possibilities, benefiting both students and the regional workforce.

The college offers associate degrees and certificates in today's most desirable career fields, and general studies associate degrees and certificates designed primarily for students who have chosen to pursue a broad general program. District residents are able to complete their degrees or certificates conveniently with a multitude of flexible learning options. The college supports flexible education through several modalities: traditional in-person courses, online programs for remote learning, and hybrid courses that blend both methods. For maximum flexibility, the college also offers Flex courses, providing students the choice to participate in-person, via live online sessions, or through asynchronous online engagement, making learning adaptable to the student's personal needs and schedules. The college offers dual credit programs where enrolled students earn both high school and college credit. In addition, the college offers summer school programs for high school students, honors courses, and the QuickPath Degree Program, an accelerated program designed for those who wish to advance quickly in their educational journey by earning their associate degree within a year.

The college also offers noncredit programs that provide individual development and learning, and workforce training services to local organizations and to individuals. Adult Basic Education and English Language Acquisition curriculum opens doors to personal achievement for those who need to strengthen their educational foundation. The college's Adult Education Department collaborates with numerous agencies, organizations, and schools to provide adult education and family literacy services to our district. Waubonsee also provides career development programs for job seekers and career changers and skill enhancement for employees seeking professional development. Through customized training programs, Waubonsee partners with corporate clients (i.e. businesses, industries and government agencies) to develop and deliver training solutions that improve the skills of the corporation's most important resource, its employees.

The percentage of minority students enrolled in credit courses has steadily increased in the last four years. In the past 10 years, the minority percentage enrolled at Waubonsee has increased from 32% to 47% - a change reflective of the changing demographics of the college district.

From 2010 to 2020 the population in the five counties in Waubonsee Community College's district increased by 42,051. Since 2010, Kendall County experienced an 11.7% population growth and Kane County experienced a 3.8% increase in population, compared to a 7.3% estimated growth rate across the U.S. and a decline of 1.8% in the State of Illinois. Many of the district's communities have major business parks. The district continues to see development in business parks and downtown redevelopment as a result of City of Aurora initiatives.

Because of its large population of Latinx students, Waubonsee was designated as a Hispanic Serving Institution in 2009. Our goal is to make all our policies and processes, particularly those on the front end, equitable for all our students. Waubonsee has received three consecutive Developing Hispanic Serving Institutions (Title V) grants from the U.S. Department of Education. These grants provide us with resources and opportunities to serve our large percentage of Hispanic/Latinx, low-income, and disadvantaged students of all backgrounds. The college also participates in other federal Student Support Services programs through multiple TRIO Grants from the Department of Education. The TRIO Student Support Services Program (SSS) provides students with the support they need to successfully complete degree and certificate programs. Student participants include first-generation, low-income, and students with disabilities. Program staff help students design career and academic plans, keep students up to date on scholarships and other resources, and match students with tutors who provide private, individualized help with courses. Workshops are provided, covering both academic and personal topics. Additional opportunities include trips to colleges and universities (as allowed), leadership development, and cultural events on and off campus. Up to two hundred students are currently served by this program. Pursuing this grant funding has been intentional and is a large part of our strategy to better serve our students.

Waubonsee is committed to diversity, equity, and inclusion. The college is currently in the process of creating a Strategic Plan that will have equity at the foundation of the multi-year plan. Additionally, the college has added the position of Vice President of Talent and Culture/Chief Diversity Officer (CDO) to our executive leadership team to enhance inclusivity, foster a welcoming campus culture, and drive strategic initiatives that promote diversity at all levels in the institution.

## LAND ACKNOWLEDGMENT

The four campuses of Waubonsee Community College occupy the traditional homelands of the Peoria, Bodwéwadmí (Potawatomi), Mascoutin, Myaamia (Miami), Očhéthi Šakówinj (People of Seven Council Fires, also known as the Sioux Nation), Hoocąk (HoChunk), Kaskaskia, and Kiikaapoi (Kickapoo). We respectfully acknowledge these individuals and communities, along with their cultures, stories, and struggles – past and present.

We honor Chief Waubonsee (Wah-bahn-se) of the Potawatomi, for whom our college is named, and the indigenous owners of the area we now occupy and whose dispossession allowed for the growth of this institution. As we acknowledge past injustices, we honor the historical stewardship of the land and recognize our responsibility for continued care and respect of the ancestral lands and traditions of the communities to whom we are indebted and to stand against injustice in our world today.



## Institution Vision for Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Accessibility

At Waubonsee, our dedication to Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) is not just a statement but a lived commitment. By actively engaging in programs and events centered around DEI, we uphold our core mission of providing comprehensive education and training services to members of our community. We are intentional about creating a college culture where our differences are celebrated, honored, and where people belong. DEI is not a theory; it is an everyday community of practice at Waubonsee where we intentionally:

- Hold space for each other to find a sense of belonging
- Prioritize listening to each other's stories, experiences, and histories
- Create room to learn and grow from one another

**Diversity** is an intentional appreciation of differences expressed in countless forms, including race and ethnicity, gender and gender identity, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status, language, culture, national origin, religious commitments, age, (dis)ability status and political perspective.

**Equity** is the practice of intentionally working to ensure that individual or social circumstances are not obstacles to achieving one's potential. This is reflected through our policies and processes at the college, which acknowledge the need to actively remove barriers and create opportunities for success for everyone within the Waubonsee community.

**Inclusion** is the intentional commitment to being a college where individual differences are welcomed, honored, and respectfully heard, and where all individuals feel a sense of belonging.

**Accessibility** is the intentional effort of designing our spaces, programs, and services so that all individuals, regardless of (dis)ability status or differing abilities, can fully participate, navigate, and benefit from them. This involves recognizing and removing barriers to ensure equitable access and opportunities for learning, working, and engaging in campus life for everyone in the Waubonsee community.

### Mission Statement

Waubonsee Community College provides exceptional learning through accessible, equitable, and innovative education. We are committed to enriching the lives of our students, employees, and community by working together to create opportunities to discover new passions, share knowledge, and embrace diversity.

### Vision Statement

Waubonsee Community College opens the door of knowledge, sparks imaginations, and enlightens lives through learning. We welcome the diverse abilities, goals, and experiences of individuals standing on the threshold of discovery. Our success is defined by the dreams we help shape, the opportunities we help design, and the futures we help create.

## Values Statements

- **Quality:** We constantly redefine what it means to be “the best,” seeking to improve in every area and exceed the expectations of those we serve.
- **Value:** We focus every resource directly on the search for learning, creating tangible benefits in everything we do.
- **Innovation:** We are actively engaged on the frontiers of education, continuously improving the learning environment for our students and communities.
- **Service:** We view the world from the perspective of those we serve, anticipating needs and striving to exceed expectations while demonstrating a caring, knowledgeable, consistent connection with each individual every time they meet us.
- **Accessibility:** We remove barriers to learning formed by time, geography, education, culture, experience or beliefs to provide a full range of quality educational opportunities for all who can benefit.

## Neurodiversity Statement

Waubonsee Community College recognizes the value of neurodiversity\* and is committed to fostering an authentically inclusive environment in which all neurodivergent students, employees, and community members feel respected and empowered.

*\*Neurodiversity is defined as a strength-based model of viewing conditions such as autism, ADD, and dyslexia as differences in individual brain function and behavioral traits and as part of normal variation in the human population.*

## Institutional Vision for Equity

At Waubonsee Community College, our vision for equity is to cultivate an environment where diversity is celebrated, inclusion is the norm, and every individual is equipped with the support they need to achieve their fullest potential. We envision a campus community where diversity is not only recognized but valued as an essential component of our collective success. Through intentional actions, inclusive policies, and continuous engagement, we aim to close equity gaps and create pathways to success for all students, with emphasis on those from historically marginalized and underrepresented backgrounds.



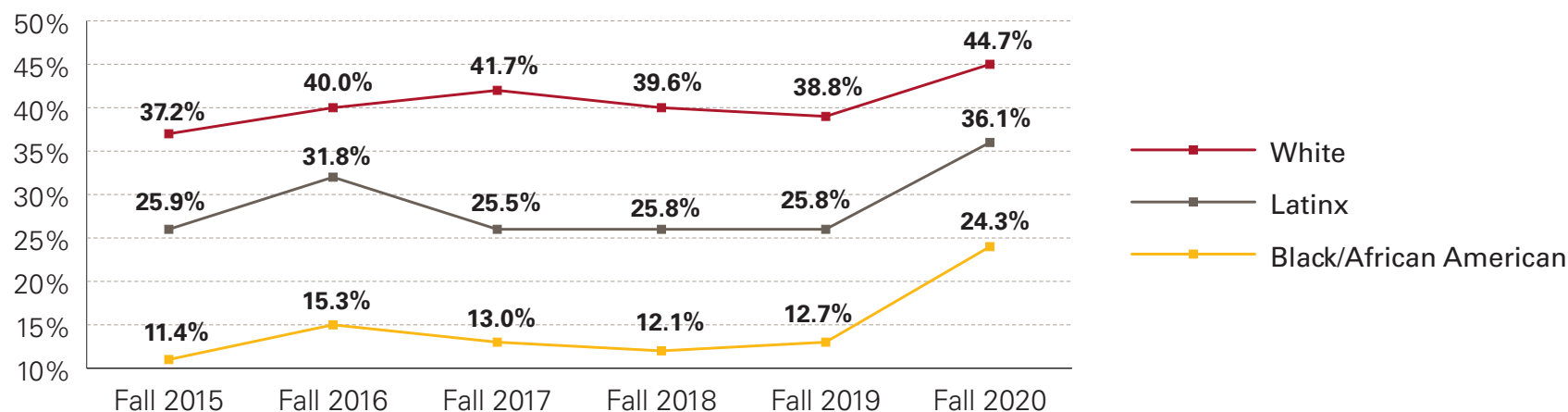
# III. ANALYZE DATA

Waubonsee Community College compiles data annually to reflect on our program excellence and service delivery. As part of the Illinois Equity in Attainment (ILEA) consortium, we present the second iteration of the college's equity plan to demonstrate our continuous dedication to addressing and closing equity gaps. This document delves into strategies for Black, Latinx, and low-income students, including Pell Grant recipients, and evaluates disparities faced by adult learners, rural students, and those with disabilities.

## African American Students and Latinx Students

While the graduation rate gap between Black/African American students and White students has been as high as 28.7% in fall 2017, the gap was 20.4% in fall 2020. The graduation rates among Latinx students and White students have also seen significant gaps. However, these gaps have not been as wide as those between African American and White students in recent years. We recognize that effective student success strategies must reflect the different needs of our African American and Latinx students. The college has implemented strategies to address student needs with targeted efforts to further strengthen existing academic and non-academic student success programs in order to sustain and build upon the ongoing success of our African American and Latinx students.

### 150% Graduation Rate by Race/Ethnicity



## Major Barriers

- ◆ Need for professional development in cultural competence
- ◆ Lack of targeted support programs

## Strategies to Address the Equity Gaps and Their Outcomes

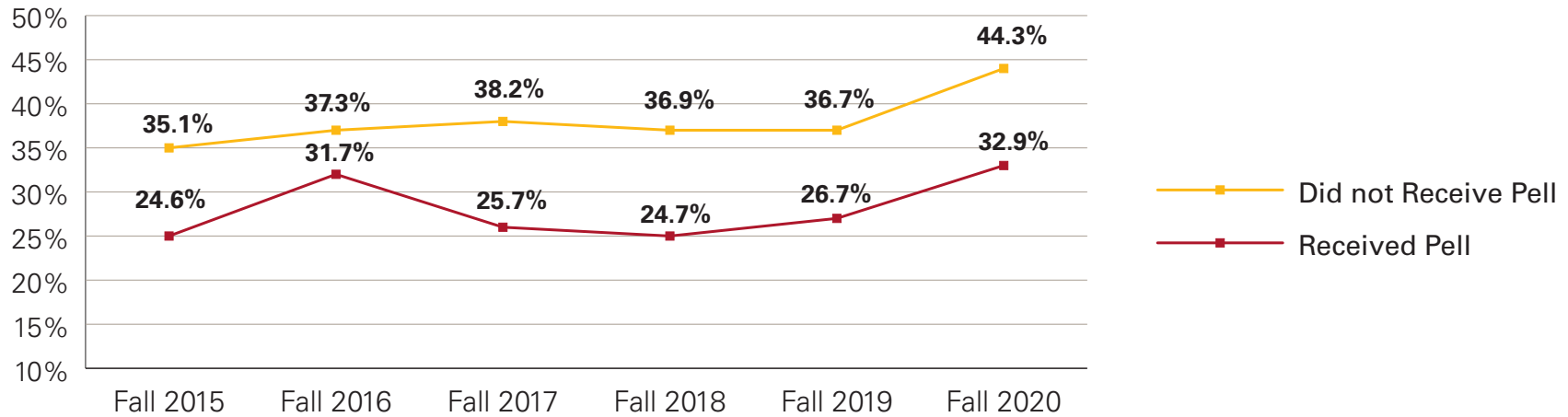
- ◆ Latinx Resource Center – Ongoing
  - ◆ Waubonsee's Latinx Resource Center (LRC) offers resources and support services to enhance students' academic and social success, providing a welcoming space to learn and connect with Latinx culture, heritage, and traditions.
- ◆ TRIUMPH – Inactive
  - ◆ The TRIUMPH Program, originally grant-funded to support male students of color, is no longer active at the college. Consequently, participants, known as TRIUMPH scholars, have been transitioned into other relevant campus support programs where applicable, such as the TRIO/SSS program and the Latinx Resource Center.



## Students Receiving Pell Grants

The federal Pell Grant provides financial help to enable lower-income students access to educational opportunities that can increase their likelihood of social mobility and economic success. However, we have found that Pell Grant recipients are less likely to graduate when compared to non-Pell Grant recipients.

### 150% Graduation Rate by Pell Status



## Major Barriers

- ◆ Financial Instability
- ◆ Mental Health and Stress

## Strategies Implemented

- ◆ Peer Finance Educators – Ongoing
  - ❖ The Money Matters program educates Waubensee students on personal finances through individual peer-to-peer appointments, campus wide events and online resources.
- ◆ Peer-Led Mental Health Support – Ongoing
  - ❖ The Waubensee Peer Support Program is designed to empower students by fostering a sense of belonging and destigmatizing mental health issues. Peer Support Leaders, who are trained in basic mental health support and mentorship, offer guidance through scheduled appointments or drop-in hours. The program emphasizes stress management, including that associated with finances, and directs students to additional resources as needed. This service aims to enhance student success and well-being through peer-driven support.



## Adult Students

Adult students aged 25 and older at Waubensee Community College have achieved varied graduation rates over the years. Since Fall 2015, these students have seen a decrease in their graduation rates, with a rate of 38.24% in Fall 2016 dropping to 11.11% by Fall 2020. This trend highlights the unique challenges faced by adult learners, who often juggle their educational pursuits with work, family, and other responsibilities.

### Major Barriers

- ◆ Competing Priorities
- ◆ Financial Constraints

### Strategies Implemented

- ◆ Flexible Learning Options – Ongoing
  - ❖ To support adult students, the college has implemented flexible scheduling options. These include a variety of class modalities—face-to-face, online, hybrid, sync online, and flex. Offering various class formats supports adult students in managing their competing commitments more successfully.
- ◆ Emergency Needs Fund Scholarship – Ongoing
  - ❖ The Emergency Needs Fund at Waubensee is a strategic resource that provides short-term assistance to students who may be impacted by an immediate, unexpected, or unusual financial constraint (such as injury, death, catastrophe, food insecurity, housing insecurity, unexpected losses) in order to help them stay in school. This fund does not assist with long-term challenges.

## Rural Students

Rural students at Waubensee have demonstrated a steady improvement in graduation rates over recent years. The graduation rate for these students has risen from 29.17% in Fall 2016 to 34.62% by Fall 2020.

### Major Barriers

- ◆ Limited Access to High-Speed Internet
- ◆ Transportation Issues

### Strategies Implemented

- ◆ Technology Loan Programs – Ongoing
  - ❖ The college provides technology loans to students in need. Available devices include laptops, wireless hotspots and webcams.
- ◆ Flexible Learning Options – Ongoing
  - ❖ The college offers various class modalities such as face-to-face, online, hybrid, sync online, and flex classes. This flexibility in delivery methods ensures that rural students can access their coursework and manage their academic responsibilities without the need to commute frequently, thus making education more accessible.

## Students with Disabilities

At Waubensee, we recognize disability as an aspect of diversity within society and our college community. We also recognize that students with disabilities encounter unique barriers that can affect their academic journey and overall college experience. Understanding and addressing these challenges is crucial for fostering an inclusive college environment. The college is committed to continual improvement of support services that enhance accessibility and promote the success of our students with disabilities.

### Major Barriers

- ◆ Accessibility Issues
- ◆ Stigma and Social Isolation

### Strategies Implemented

- ◆ Access Center for Disability Resources – Ongoing
  - ❖ The Access Center is a key resource to support students with disabilities by offering specialized services and accommodations. These services include recommendations for academic accommodations, assistive technology training, advocacy services, and college success strategy workshops. This comprehensive support helps students with disabilities fully participate in academic programs, facilitating accessibility and inclusivity within the college environment.
- ◆ Ally for Accessible Content – Ongoing
  - ❖ Ally is an essential tool at Waubensee that enhances accessibility for students by automatically converting digital course content into multiple accessible formats. By integrating Ally into our digital platforms, the college is working proactively to ensure that all students have equitable access to course materials in formats that best suit their individual needs, fostering a more accessible learning environment.
- ◆ Disability Inclusive Awareness – Ongoing
  - ❖ To combat stigma and social isolation among students with disabilities, Waubensee has adopted a strategy of increased awareness and inclusivity. As part of this approach, the college has developed a neurodiversity statement and established a celebratory month. These initiatives aim to raise awareness, celebrate the diverse abilities of students and staff, and foster a stronger sense of belonging within the college community.

Sub-Population Group	FALL 2016		FALL 2017		FALL 2018		FALL 2019		FALL 2020	
	# in cohort	150% Grad Rate	# in cohort	150% Grad Rate	# in cohort	150% Grad Rate	# in cohort	150% Grad Rate	# in cohort	150% Grad Rate
Adult students (25 and older)	34	38.24%	23	34.78%	16	37.50%	19	26.32%	18	11.11%
Rural Students	24	29.17%	27	37.04%	31	38.71%	26	46.15%	26	34.62%
Students with Disabilities	26	42.31%	42	28.57%	48	27.08%	58	32.76%	50	38.00%



## IV. ASSESS CLIMATE

### Assess Campus Climate and Culture

Waubonsee Community College is dedicated to creating an inclusive and equitable environment, supporting the diverse needs of our community. We are currently developing a strategic plan aimed at promoting inclusive excellence and equity. This plan involves a deep commitment to improving our campus climate by focusing on diversity, equity, inclusion, and the experiences of our community members, especially those from minority, marginalized, and underrepresented groups.

In 2025, we plan to conduct a comprehensive campus climate survey. The data from this survey will be analyzed to identify trends and areas for improvement, particularly focusing on the experiences of minority, marginalized, and underrepresented groups. The data will drive the development of policies and practices to strengthen inclusivity on campus.

### Potential Categories of Key Findings

At the conclusion of the comprehensive campus climate assessment, we anticipate key findings in a variety of areas that we hope will significantly inform our Equity Plan and practices moving forward. These areas include:

- Diversity and Representation
- Inclusion and Belonging
- Accessibility and Inclusive Design
- Cultural Competency and Anti-Racism
- Community Engagement

# V. POLICIES, STRATEGIES, SERVICES AND PRACTICES



*As part of Waubonsee's ongoing collaboration with the Illinois Equity in Attainment Initiative (ILEA), we are pleased to present updates on the strategies implemented from the first version of our Equity Plan.*

## Institutional Strategies Update

### • ***Disaggregated Data***

- ◆ Purpose: To increase institutional understanding of disaggregated data to close equity gaps across our student populations.
- ◆ Timeline: Ongoing
- ◆ Stakeholders: Faculty, staff, students and Achieving the Dream
- ◆ Description: Waubonsee continues to prioritize the strategic use of disaggregated data. To strengthen our use of data, we have been accepted as a part of the 2024 Achieving the Dream (ATD) cohort to enhance equity and inclusion across our campus. This collaboration focuses on deepening our understanding of student performance and engagement by race, ethnicity, and socioeconomic status, enabling us to identify and address educational disparities and equity gaps effectively.
- ◆ Key Developments
  - › Enhanced Data Analysis: The college has advanced our data collection methods, in collaboration with ATD, to provide more nuanced insights that guide targeted interventions.
  - › Faculty and Staff Involvement: We have expanded training programs that equip faculty and staff to interpret and effectively utilize data insights in their roles – such as the college-wide Data Team and our first college-wide Data Summit, held in October 2023 with more than 100 attendees.

### • ***Developmental Education Reform***

- ◆ Purpose: To increase developmental education and gateway English and math completion rates for minoritized student groups, particularly African American and Latinx students.
- ◆ Timeline: Ongoing
- ◆ Stakeholders: Academic Support Division, Faculty, African American and Latinx students
- ◆ Description: Recognizing the disproportionate representation of African American and Latinx students in developmental courses, we have enhanced our strategies to reduce time in remediation and accelerate progression to and success in gateway courses. Reforms include expanding our co-requisite models and bridge programs, which are now tailored more precisely to meet the diverse academic needs of our students.
- ◆ Key Developments
  - › Both English and Math faculty have implemented successful co-requisite models which allow students to enroll directly in college-level courses with additional support.
  - › Specialized bridge programs in English and Math are in place to provide intensive preparatory support right before entering college-level courses.



- **Diverse Hiring Plan**

- ◆ Purpose: One of the top priorities for Waubonsee is to increase diverse hiring.
- ◆ Timeline: Ongoing
- ◆ Stakeholders: Human Resources staff, hiring managers, and prospective hires
- ◆ Description: Waubonsee is committed to creating and maintaining an equitable environment that welcomes, values, respects, and supports individuals from all communities. The college provides opportunities for engagement, learning, growth, and transformation to foster a diverse, equitable, and inclusive institution. To ensure this, we use disaggregated data to drive our efforts in achieving diverse representation throughout our staffing, from entry-level to tenured faculty and administrative positions. Our students will benefit from learning in a racially and ethnically diverse environment.
- ◆ Key Developments
  - › Through our Building an Inclusive Workforce initiative, a key component of our Diverse Hiring Plan, we have made strides toward diversifying our workforce. In 2023, underrepresented groups represented 46.2% of our new hires and 56.8% of all applicants, reflecting our strong commitment to diversity and inclusion in hiring practices.
  - › Despite advances, diversifying tenured faculty remains challenging. Efforts to address this include Targeted Recruitment, Bias Mitigation Training for Interview Committees and Hiring Managers, and Faculty Development.

- **Latinx Student Engagement**

- ◆ Purpose: To increase Latinx student engagement to increase retention, persistence, and completion/graduation rates of Latinx students.
- ◆ Timeline: Ongoing
- ◆ Stakeholders: Latinx students, Latinx Resource Center, faculty, and staff
- ◆ Description: Waubensee continues to prioritize Latinx student engagement. This strategy includes bolstering retention, persistence, and completion through culturally relevant programs. Key elements include the Latinx Resource Center, which provides tailored resources and support, community outreach to align programs with the needs of Latinx communities, and enhanced mentorship with comprehensive support services to improve educational experiences and outcomes for Latinx students.
- ◆ Key Developments
  - › Retention Improvements: Targeted retention programs have led to noticeable improvements in keeping Latinx students engaged from enrollment through to graduation.
  - › Professional Development: Ongoing training for faculty and staff has deepened cultural competency across the college, ensuring a welcoming environment for all students.
  - › STEM Engagement Events: The Latinx Resource Center has hosted a series of well-attended events led by a collaboration between biology faculty and staff aimed at promoting diversity in STEM fields. These events have successfully encouraged Latinx students to explore STEM majors and careers.
  - › Latinos Unidos Student Club: The revitalization of the Latinos Unidos student club at Waubensee has significantly boosted Latinx student engagement and retention. This club has created a vibrant community space that fosters a sense of belonging and support among its members, contributing to their academic and social success at the college.

- **African American Student Engagement**

- ◆ Purpose: To increase African American student engagement to increase retention, persistence, and completion/graduation rates of African American students.
- ◆ Timeline: Ongoing
- ◆ Stakeholders: African American students, faculty, and staff
- ◆ Description: A collaborative care committee of faculty, staff and students will be formed with a mission of identifying resources and recommending wrap-around care for African American students that will contribute to increasing their retention, persistence, and completion/graduation rates. This committee will intentionally use current college resources and initiatives and recommend specific plans of care for this population.
- ◆ Key Developments
  - › Implementation Challenges: The strategy to enhance African American student engagement has faced delays due to recent staffing changes and a shortage of dedicated resources at the college. We are actively addressing these challenges to ensure that the necessary support structures are in place to move forward to make a positive impact on the African American student experience at Waubensee.





## Holistic Student Support Plan

*As Waubensee Community College continues to evolve in response to the diverse needs of our student population, we are committed to implementing a Holistic Student Support Plan. This plan encompasses a range of services, strategies, and practices designed to support our students' minds (academic success), hearts (emotional and social well-being), pockets (financial wellness), and overall well-being. By implementing this comprehensive approach, we aim to foster an environment where every student can achieve their full potential.*

### 1. Mind (Academic Success)

#### a. Developmental Education Reform

- i. Accelerates the transition from developmental courses to gateway courses, particularly benefiting African American and Latinx students.

#### b. Learning Assessment and Testing Centers

- i. The fees for canceled tests have been removed, allowing students to reschedule at no cost if they feel unprepared.
- ii. Students are provided with accommodations like text-to-speech readers, enlarged text, noise-canceling headphones, and standing desks to ensure equitable testing conditions.
- iii. Free remote placement testing with the option for students to retest once for free.

#### c. Tutoring Centers

- i. Offers free comprehensive tutoring in over 20 subjects and 200 courses, enhancing academic success through flexible support options.
- ii. The Tutoring centers offer traditional tutoring, peer tutoring, supplemental instruction, academic coaching, test preparation at no cost. Hours and services have been adjusted and expanded based on student need and usage.

#### d. QuickPath Accelerated Degree Program

- i. Offers flexibility and efficiency to students, allowing them to achieve their educational goals in a shorter timeframe while maintaining academic rigor.

#### e. Course Navigators

- i. Enhances student persistence and success in their courses by offering on-demand tools and support services, including technical assistance, and facilitating connections to many college-wide resources.

#### f. Open Educational Resources and Inclusive Access

- i. Data supports that the use of affordable materials such as OER enhances academic success particularly for students who typically face achievement gaps. The use of OER is expanding.





## 2. Heart (Emotional and Social Well-being)

### a. Latinx Student Engagement and the Latinx Resource Center

- i. Culturally relevant programs and mentorship enhance the sense of belonging and community engagement.

### b. African American Student Engagement

- i. A collaborative care committee identifies and provides wrap-around care, fostering a supportive environment.

### c. Student Support Peer Programs

- i. Peer mentorship and mental health support promote mental wellness and a sense of community.

### d. Student Life Office

- i. The Student Life Office provides students with social engagement opportunities through a variety of clubs, events, and experiences. These initiatives promote a vibrant campus culture, encourage peer connections, and foster a sense of belonging, contributing significantly to student engagement and success.



## 3. Pockets (Financial Wellness)

### a. Emergency Needs

- i. Provides up to \$1,000 to students facing emergency financial needs, ensuring they can continue their education without financial stress.

### b. Money Matters

- i. Peer to peer program that provides essential financial education to help students manage their finances effectively. It is designed to boost financial literacy and empower students to achieve their financial goals, enhancing their ability to pursue higher education without financial stress.

### c. Waubonsee Success Scholarship

- i. Provides financial assistance to cover tuition, fees, and/or course materials, ensuring all eligible students receive some level of financial support with an increased focus on supporting students who demonstrate high financial need.



## 4. Overall Well-being

### a. Student Support House Outreach

- i. In response to the State of Illinois Public Act 102-0083, that requires all colleges and universities to have a HOUSE Liaison (Housing and Opportunities that are Useful to Students' Excellence), the college has created a Housing Outreach Request form that is used to alert the Financial Aid Office to conduct outreach to students who indicate housing insecurity. A member of the Waubonsee Cares Team will connect students to essential resources like housing, food, and childcare, addressing basic needs to enhance focus on academic goals.

### b. Free Access to the Fitness Center

- i. With an increased focus on overall well-being, the college offers all students free access to the Waubonsee Fitness Center.



## Assessment

*As part of our ongoing commitment to equity and inclusion, Waubonsee Community College has established an assessment plan to monitor the effectiveness of our strategies. This section outlines the approaches we will use to assess both near and long-term outcomes, detailing the specific data and metrics that will be collected and reviewed.*

### 1. Near-Term Outcomes Assessment

- a. Academic Success – Track the percentage of students transitioning from developmental courses to gateway courses.
  - i. Metrics: Disaggregated data showing students’ reduced time in developmental education and success in first year gateway courses; Course Completion Rates and Academic Progress.
- b. Emotional and Social Well-being – Measure engagement levels and satisfaction through surveys and focus groups among Latinx and African American students participating in culturally relevant programs and initiatives.
  - i. Metrics: Qualitative feedback and self-reported sense of belonging
- c. Financial Wellness – Monitor the utilization of emergency funds and participation in financial education programs among students facing financial stress.
  - i. Metrics: Attendance at financial literacy workshops, number of emergency fund disbursements and money saved by students who used Open Education Resources and Inclusive Access course materials.

### 2. Long-Term Outcomes Assessment

- a. Academic Success – Analyze retention and completion rates among historically underserved student populations over several academic years.
  - i. Metrics: Disaggregated Graduation Rates by ethnicity
- b. Financial Wellness – Evaluate alumni financial stability and success through post-graduation surveys and employment data.
  - i. Metrics: Job placement and employment rates

## Budgetary Concerns

- **Campus Climate Survey:** Conducting a comprehensive campus climate survey to assess the inclusivity and safety of the campus environment for all students may require a significant financial investment. This includes expenses related to survey design, administration, data analysis, and implementation of recommendations.
- **Scholarship and Financial Aid Programs:** Expanding the Emergency Needs Fund and the Waubonsee Success Scholarship to provide more scholarships for low-income and minority students has a substantial budgetary impact.
- **Support Services:** Increasing funding for mental health services, academic support services, disability accommodations, and the Access Center for Disability Resources will ensure these critical services are available to all students who need them.
- **Staff Training and Development:** Funding for ongoing professional development, especially in cultural competence and equity-focused practices for faculty and staff, is essential for the long-term success of these initiatives.
- **Program Continuation and Expansion:** Increasing financial support for successful programs and initiatives focused on underrepresented students could significantly boost the effectiveness of the programs and lead to greater academic success rates among underrepresented students.

## Institutional Approach to the Development of the Equity Plan

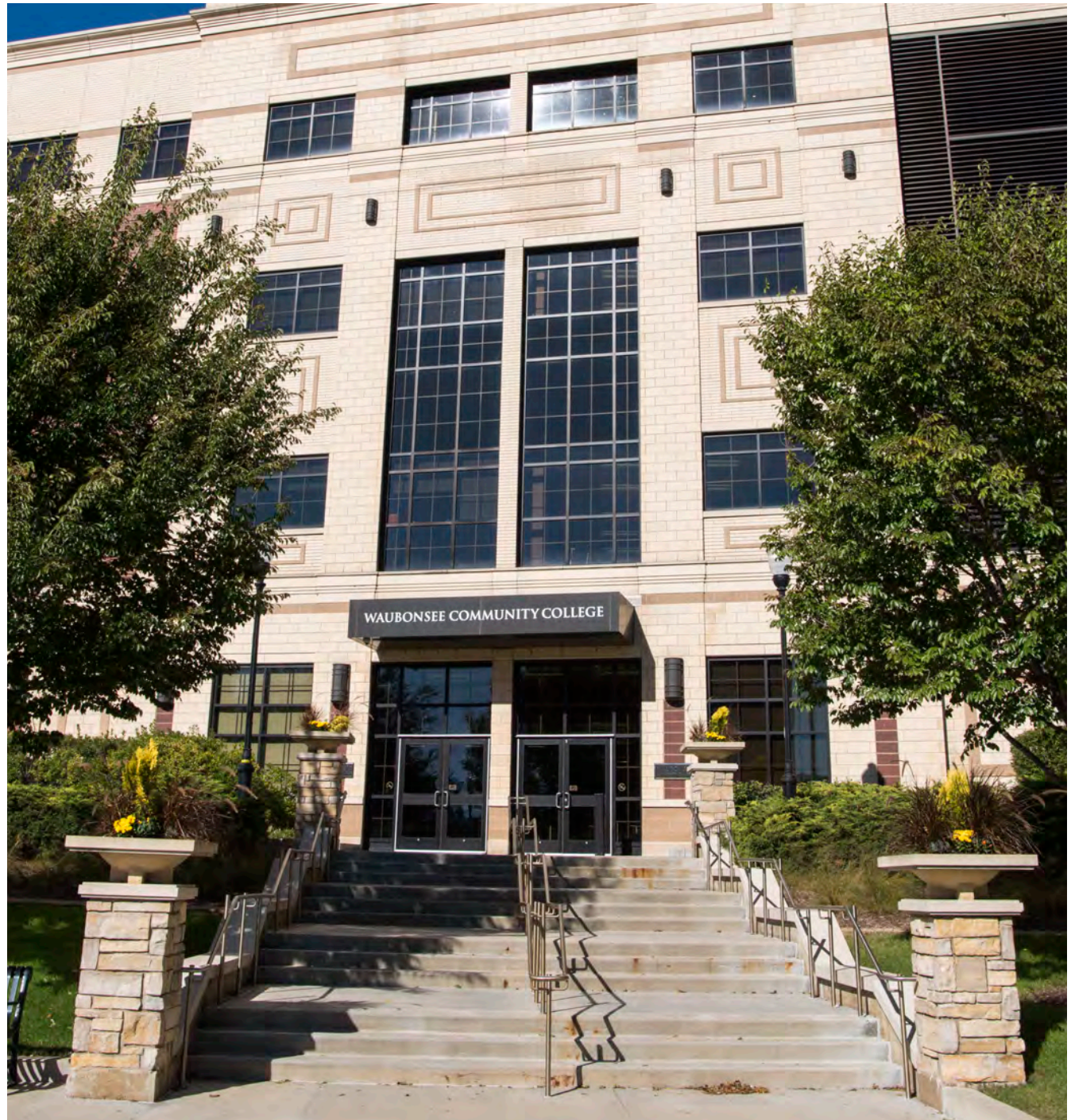
- Waubonsee Community College's approach to developing the equity plan was highly collaborative, involving a wide range of stakeholders from across the institution. The development included a series of meetings and listening sessions to gather feedback and ensure buy-in at all levels.

## Relationship of Equity Plan to Other Institutional Plans

- Waubonsee Community College's Equity Plan is aligned with the institution's broader strategic initiatives, serving as a foundational element that intersects with various other planning efforts, including the Strategic Plan, Strategic Enrollment Management plan, and additional diversity, equity, inclusion initiatives.

## Institutional Plan for Soliciting Ongoing Feedback

- Waubonsee is committed to fostering an environment of continuous improvement and open communication. We will solicit ongoing feedback from staff, students, faculty, and the broader community through regular surveys, listening sessions, and open forums, enabling all voices to be heard and considered in our decision-making processes. This transparent approach ensures that our college community is informed and actively engaged in shaping our institution's future.



# EQUITY PLAN TEAM

## Institutional Equity Planning Team

Jenny Becker	Financial Education Coordinator
Yesenia Cadena	Human Resource Recruitment Manager
Chadd Engel	Senior Outcomes Assessment Coordinator
Michelle Dahlstrom	Student Life Manager
Dr. Marleigha K. Evans	Senior Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Coordinator
Ellen Field	Professor of Mathematics Developmental Education
Teri Fuller	Professor of English Developmental Education
Megan Jones	Adult Education Data and Compliance Manager
Lorena Lopez	Student Retention Manager
Pat Matsuda	Institutional Data and Analytics Manager
Daniela Salazar De Luna	Senior Student Retention Advisor
Dr. Chassie Sherretz	Academic Support Manager

## Waubensee Executive Leadership Team

Dr. Brian Knetl	President
John Bryant	Interim Vice President of Finance and Administration
Dr. Diane Nyhammer	Provost
Dr. Melinda Tejada	Vice President of Community Engagement and Executive Director of the Foundation
Dr. Toya Webb	Chief of Staff/Vice President of Strategy



*Waubonsee Community College does not discriminate based on an individual's actual or perceived race, color, creed, religion, gender, gender identity, sex, sexual orientation, age, national origin, ancestry, veteran's status, military status, unfavorable discharge from military service, marital status, order of protection status, pregnancy, disability, citizenship status, or any other characteristic protected by law in educational programs, activities, services or employment practices. Career and technical education (CTE) courses and program offerings and admission criteria can be found on the college's website at [www.waubonsee.edu](http://www.waubonsee.edu). The college will take steps to ensure the lack of English-language skills will not be a barrier to admission and participation in CTE programs.*