

**READING AREA COMMUNITY COLLEGE
STRATEGIC PLAN PRINCIPLES 2004 – 2008**

INSTITUTIONAL INITIATIVES 2005-2006

Final Report

Principle 1

The college will be a leader in providing quality education and training in support of workforce and economic development for Berks County.

Desired Outcomes:

- A new Training and Technology Center that will offer courses and services to meet the training needs of small to mid-size companies in the Berks County area

1. Open the Schmidt Training and Technology Center (All Areas)

The college assumed occupancy of the Schmidt Training and Technology Center in March 2006. All furniture and equipment has been ordered. Ninety-five percent of the furniture and equipment has been installed. The Director of Manufacturing Technology, Director of Computer Technology, Coordinator of Workforce Development, one part-time Manufacturing Technology Lab Assistant and full-time Secretary positions have been hired. The part-time Secretary, one part-time Manufacturing Laboratory Assistant and two part-time Computer Laboratory Assistant positions have been advertised. Manufacturing technology and computer technology training began in June 2006.

- Creation of new/redesign of existing programs to meet emerging regional labor market needs in cooperation with the Workforce Investment Board and The Manufacturers' Association of Berks County

1. Develop a model and/or procedures to offer training courses concurrently for credit and non-credit (AA)

In partnership with Susquehanna Valley Manufacturing Technology Consortium a consultant was hired to develop curriculum for non-credit training as well as concurrent credit for courses that will be included in associate degree and certificate programs.

Curriculum for non-credit Industrial Maintenance and Mechatronics training as well as concurrent credit for courses, Industrial Maintenance Certificate – 34 credits and Mechatronics Engineering Technology A.A.S. Degree – 74 credits was developed.

In cooperation with the Coordinator of Banking Programs eight credit Banking Diplomas were developed. Seven non-credit Banking courses for concurrent Credit were also developed.

- Meet the training needs of health care providers through appropriate credit and non-credit programs

Non-credit training for health care providers offered during 2005-2006 included

Health Care Literacy, Certified Nursing Assistant, Medical Transcription, Medical Insurance and Billing, Phlebotomy, Dental Assistant, Emergency Medical Technician, CPR, Cardiac Life Support, Nursing Physical Assessment, IV Venipuncture, Spanish for Health Care Providers, and Nursing Seminars for Continuing Education.

In the credit area the College signed educational transfer agreements with Lehigh Carbon Community College (LCCC) that will enable Reading Area Community College students to enroll in the Physical Therapy Assistant and Occupational Therapy Assistant programs at LCCC and LCCC students to enroll in the Medical Laboratory Technician and the Respiratory Care programs at this college. All students participating in these programs will pay in-county student charges.

Principle 2

The college will increase enrollments and improve retention of minority and other underrepresented populations in credit and non-credit programs and courses.

1. Expand diversity initiatives and activities to more effectively address the needs of the student population (SA)
 - a. The student ambassador program was resurrected and six students were hired as Raven Ambassadors. These students represented a significant cultural/ethnic mix of the student population and were hired to assist students and serve as tour guides during orientation, open house, welcome week and other college functions.
 - b. The Student Activities Board (SAB) continued to address the diverse needs of the student population through programming efforts including workshops such as "Straight Answers to Gay Questions."
 - c. The International Student festival was again provided as a means to help students gain an awareness of other parts of the world.
 - d. The Student Leadership Training program included an additional component this year by more clearly discussing who RACC students are with respect to diversity.
 - e. Student Services staff participated in three interactive professional development workshops addressing the needs of Latino/students. These workshops were provided by Alexis Jardine.

Desired Outcomes:

- Minority enrollment should comprise a minimum of one-third of total credit enrollment
 Minority enrollment grew to 34% of the credit student population in 2005-2006.
- Expansion of successful family education, after-school programs, and other enrichment opportunities with area school districts and community agencies
- Retention activities targeting minority students involving students' families and community agencies, such as the NAACP and the Hispanic Center

The Hispanic Center awarded scholarships in the amount of \$500.00 each to five individuals for attendance at Reading Area Community College for the 2005-06 academic year. These

awards were matched 100% (total of \$2,500.00) by the Foundation with monies from the General Scholarship Fund. This resulted in a total scholarship award of \$1,000.00 per recipient.

Additionally the Admissions staff were involved in College/Financial Aid nights at the Hispanic Center and college staff took eleven students to the NAACP banquet in November 2005.

- Clearly articulated learning opportunities and support services easing students' transition from non-credit ESL courses to credit offerings
- Minority professional staff membership should reflect minority student enrollment patterns
- Retention program emphasizing in-class and out-of-class strategies to improve minority students' success
 1. Develop and implement, in the summer of 2006, pre-college summer programs for underrepresented populations (SA)

The Perkins program was held again this summer and a very limited ACT 101 summer component was conducted.

Principle 3

The college will provide the public with quantitative and qualitative data about the effectiveness of programs of study and services.

1. Prepare a FY 2005 Annual Report and 3-4 issues of the Communiqué (PA)

Three issues of the Communiqué were completed: Fall, Spring and Summer. The Communiqué is mailed to approximately 10,000 homes as well as distributed on campus and posted on the web. The 2005 Annual Report will be published in late fall 2006 and issued as the 35th anniversary edition.

2. Develop an Economic Impact Study that demonstrates the college's economic impact on the County of Berks (PA)

An Economic Impact Study was not undertaken this year. The preliminary discussions among the five colleges/universities in Berks County to collaborate on this study, as they had done some five years ago, did not result in a completed study.

Desired Outcomes:

- Development of a college-wide assessment framework that measures the value-added effect of programs and services
 1. Identify and recommend a framework (or frameworks) for the institutional assessment of student learning (AA)

A college-wide Institutional Assessment of Student Learning Outcomes (IASLOC) has been working for approximately one and one-half years on developing a strategy to assess student learning outcomes at this college. While that report has yet to be received by the administration the college has budgeted funds in the current 2006-2007 college budget, based upon an interim report that was received in the Spring of 2006, to hire a staff person who will be dedicated to leading this activity as well as start up funds to operate that office.

- Adoption of college-wide performance indicators utilizing Middle States Standards of Excellence and appropriate national standards as guides
- Periodic reports on post attendance/post graduation transfer and employment endeavors of students

1. Revise the graduate follow-up and employer follow-up surveys (PA)

The graduate follow-up survey was revised under the guidance of a “working group” to include graduates’ perceptions of the General Education benefits of their education as well as the identification of the campus services they used to seek and obtain employment.

The employer follow-up survey was not revised this year.

- Annual reports on institutional effectiveness

1. Report to the college community on the revised framework to assess institutional effectiveness (PA)

A revision of the framework utilized by the New England Board of Higher Education to measure institutional effectiveness was adopted as the framework for this college to follow. Some data elements were collected but the report was not completed. The college will utilize the establishment and reporting on annual Institutional Initiatives as well as participation in national benchmarking projects to provide data on institutional effectiveness.

2. Monitor effective financial and business services effectiveness and productivity through comparison with generally accepted financial ratios and physical plant and bookstore industry-wide benchmarks (FA)

Appropriate financial ratios are calculated for every fiscal year based upon the annual audit presented to the Board of Trustees. Comparison of appropriate physical plant and bookstore operational effectiveness indicators are calculated for each fiscal year upon publication of comparison data by APPA and NACS.

Principle 4

The college will develop its technology and physical plant infrastructure to support the strategic directions established for the college.

Desired Outcomes:

- Development and implementation of a multi-year Technology Plan

1. Extend the Technology Plan through 2008-2009 (PA)

The Technology Plan was extended through 2008-2009. The following initiatives were undertaken in 2005 – 2006:

- a. The Datatel Student System implementation was completed. H.R. went live in July.

- b. Four more classrooms (B415, P226, P315 and Y115) were updated as well as eleven smart rooms in the new Schmidt Training and Technology Center. We now have 24 smart rooms on campus.
 - c. Four LCD data projectors were installed at LAHA, five in Schuylkill Hall as well as eleven as part of the smart room installations for the Schmidt Training and Technology Center.
 - d. Three Dell Servers (one for Datatel, one for WebCT and one for backups) were upgraded which are providing better service to the campus as allowing us to use streaming audio and video as well as pod casts capability.
 - e. D & E was contracted as our Internet Service Provider (ISP) and we will triple our bandwidth to 10 MB.
 - f. Four students were trained in the networking and web programs to help “mentor” and work as work studies to help with student calls for Web Advisor.
 - g. Completed the installation of 145 computers in the Schmidt Training and Technology Center this month. Continue to meet on the Miller Center IT needs and make recommendations.
 - h. Purchased Jaws ADA-compliant software as well as monitors and keyboards in classrooms where needed. We added information on our Intranet about “ergonomics” of computer work stations.
 - i. Third party vendor wrote the interface and which is installed and working well to upload COMPASS test scores to Datatel Colleague on an hourly basis. This has improved accuracy of scores as well as streamlined the process.
 - j. TLC will move to a new location this summer.
 - k. Three centralized printers were added to Schuylkill Hall as well as replaced four copy machines with new networked print/copy units.
 - l. A Barracuda Anti-Spam unit was installed last fall and it has helped cut down spam by over 80%. WorldNet comes in once a quarter to check on the unit and to help with any updates.
 - m. Over 100 old PC’s and 53 laptops were replaced in an attempt to continue to refresh our computers, especially in labs and for faculty.
 - n. Three servers (Datatel, backup server and WebCT) were upgraded as well as hard drive storage was added to five other servers.
 - o. Ten new PC’s were purchased for the library to allow students to use computer-based programs.
- Development and implementation of a multi-year Capital Plan
 - 1. Update multi-year Capital Plan through 2007-2008 (All Areas)
 - The Capital Plan was updated for FY 2006.
 - Construction of the Schmidt Training and Technology Center

The College assumed occupancy of the Schmidt Training & Technology Center in March 2006. The grand opening took place on April 28, 2006.

- Construction of the Miller Center

The construction of the Miller Center is on schedule and due to be completed February 2007.

- Explore the feasibility of purchasing and converting the former Penske office building into a Continuing Education Center containing a testing center
 1. Move and consolidate the Continuing Education operations and programs from the Madison Building and Berks Hall into Schuylkill Hall (formerly known as the Penske Building) (AA,FA)

The renovation of the Schuylkill Hall was completed December 2005. Continuing Education operations and programs from the Madison Building and Berks Hall were moved into Schuylkill Hall in January 2006.

- Updated Facilities Master Plan

1. Provide campus-wide leadership in working with Spillman Farmer/Derck & Edson in developing Campus Site Master Plan (FA)

A draft of the Campus Site Master Plan dated March 9, 2006 was distributed to the Board of Trustees. A presentation was made to the Board and County Commissioners on July 12, 2006.

- Provide a “RACC” presence at specific locations throughout the county
 1. Offer appropriate learning opportunities at the Goggle Works and Langan Allied Health Center (AA)

Both credit and non-credit course offerings were offered at the Goggle Works and Langan Allied Health Center.

2. Open the Langan Allied Health Academy, Schuylkill Hall and the Schmidt Training and Technology Center (All Areas)

The Langan Allied Health Academy offered courses and services as of July 2005. Schuylkill Hall began operations in January 2006. The Schmidt Training and Technology Center began operations in June 2006.

Principle 5

The college will secure sufficient financial resources to support the strategic directions established for the college.

1. Implement an earlier annual budget development calendar (All Areas)

An earlier budget development calendar was not implemented.

2. Determine and implement “cost avoidance” strategies (All Areas)

- a. Business Services implemented the following cost avoidance strategies by improving its accounting and financial operations, such as reducing capitalization threshold; elimination of requisition approval requirements for items under \$3000; enhancement of cashier's office time and labor efficiency through reduction in account maintenance brought about by effective utilization of the new software; cost reduction in bid and proposal solicitation through use of new RACC Business Opportunities Web site and the use of electronic forwarding of RFPs vs. mailing.
- b. Academic Affairs reduced section offerings in relation to the reduced student enrollments historically experienced from the Fall to the Winter to the Spring terms in an attempt to equalize the average class size over all three terms. In the 2004-2005 academic year the average class size in the Fall term was 20.4; 18.4 in the Winter term; and 17.1 in the Spring term. During the 2005-2006 the average class in the Fall term was 19.7; 18.7 in the Winter term and 18.9 in the Spring term.
- c. Student Services has continued its efforts to move to a paperless environment through scanning documents which can be viewed by all Student Services staff electronically. The creation of advising files has been eliminated and notes will be stored on Datatel screens. The division has continued to reduce the number of print catalogs and effective with winter term 2007, print schedules will be eliminated and all students will access the term schedule via the web. In developing the 2006-07 budget, new positions were created only if existing funds could be redirected to create the new positions.

Desired Outcomes:

- Improved county and state funding
 1. Develop a multi-year financial projection taking into consideration changes in state funding formula (FA)

Due to the uncertainties involved in the understanding of the new funding formula enacted with Act 46 no attempt was made to update the multi-year financial plan during 2005-2006. Efforts will be made in early 2007 to update the college's financial plans.
 2. Continue to update county sponsor on college needs and programs and to determine ways to increase county financial support of college needs and programs (All Areas)

Berks County provided a one-time increase of \$200,000 to the college in 2006 to address the costs of making Schuylkill Hall ADA compliant.

The Board of Trustees met with the County Commissioners on April 24 to discuss the need for Berks County to provide multi-year funding for the college. Additionally the County Commissioners met with the Board of Trustees at their summer retreat on July 12 to discuss the proposed site master plan for the college.
 3. Improve Capital funding from the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania (PA, FA)

The Commonwealth of Pennsylvania committed to participation in the bond issue funding the construction of the Schmidt Training and Technology Center and the Miller Center.
- A development plan to address needs not met by tuition/fees, state and county sources

1. Pursue a Title III grant to acquire funding for targeted institutional initiatives (AA, SA)

A Title III grant was not pursued in 2005-2006.

2. The Foundation has established a goal to raise \$100,000 in unrestricted funds, to fund the college's emerging needs (PA)

A total of \$87,547.79 was raised in unrestricted funds during FY 2005-06, a portion of which was used to help fund the college's emerging needs for the 2006-07 academic year.

In FY 2005-06, Reading Area Community College received \$67,500.00 in funding from the Foundation for seven new initiatives (emerging needs):

a. Tuition waivers for laid-off workers	\$25,000
b. PDA's (personal digital assistant for nursing faculty)	8,000
c. Cisco Wireless Lab (TTC)	7,000
d. Manufacturing Tech. Curriculum (TTC)	5,000
e. Development Education Curriculum Enhancements	15,000
f. SMART Classrooms (Penn and Berks Halls)	5,000
g. Program/Curriculum Enhancements (TTC)	<u>2,500</u>
TOTAL	\$ 67,500

3. Additional fundraising activities will be directed towards specific needs of the college, such as funding Schuylkill Hall renovations, adding smart classrooms and continuing tuition waiver programs (PA)
 - a. The Foundation introduced a new fundraising vehicle in FY 2005-06 in the form of the "Celebration of Education" gala. This event, held in the newly completed Schmidt Training and Technology Center, raised over \$70,000.00 for scholarships and attracted over 200 guests, many of whom were new donors to RACC.
 - b. In FY 2005-06, the Foundation distributed 67 additional awards over the previous year. This significant increase is due largely to a \$325,000.00 gift received in FY 2004-05 in the form of a quasi-endowment.
 - c. Nine new scholarships reached maturity during FY 2005-06 for distribution in FY 2006-07; and two pre-existing scholarships, which had been inactive due to out-dated criteria, were revised and are ready for distribution. In addition, three initiatives were developed under the Mae W. Langan scholarship fund for implementation in academic year 2006-07. These include 20 new Hispanic Student Scholarships, 100% tuition reimbursement for students required to take the College Entrance class and a Headstart to College for Reading High School program.
 - d. Over 140 students benefited from the Tuition Waiver Program for laid-off workers during the 2005-06 academic year. The breakdown is thus (some duplication of students exists between both categories):

a. Community Education – 83 students	\$42,289.00
b. Undergraduate – 65 students	<u>22,692.10</u>
TOTAL COST	\$64,981.10

Principle 6

The college will provide quality programs and services to meet the needs of students and the community.

1. Prioritize and act upon curricular area reviews completed during the 2004-2005 academic year; establish a plan to evaluate the impact of any changes introduced in these areas (AA, PA)

The entire credit ESL program was revised effective with the 2005 Fall term. All course offerings include a three credit lecture component with a one credit lab tied to the three credit lecture. ESL instruction is now provided in reading, writing, and speaking & listening in four level sequences. A four credit developmental writing alternative to the three credit offering was offered but few sections were offered and few students enrolled in the four credit offerings. The numbers of sections of the four credit offerings have been increased in the 2006-2007 academic year to represent one-half of all of the developmental writing offerings. The math lab to supplement instruction in developmental course work was renovated and equipped during the 2006 summer for implementation in fall 2006. Math Lab Assistants will be hired to assist students using that lab. A computer-based classroom for developmental reading courses was also renovated and equipped during the 2006 summer for implementation in fall 2006.

A Distance Learning Strategic Plan committee was organized in January 2006. The committee recommended that a consultant be hired to assist the college develop a distance learning strategic plan. \$20,000 was allocated in the 2006-2007 college budget for this consulting assistance.

The General Education Core Review and Revision Committee met throughout the 2005-2006 academic year to review the recommendations from the CAR on the General Education requirements in the A.A.S. degree. This Committee's recommendations were subsequently sent to the Vice President of Academic Affairs/Provost and to College Council for their respective deliberations.

2. Develop a plan for the implementation of on-line student services (SA)

Tabled until 2006-07 and the hiring of a new VP/AA; must be coordinated with academic affairs and their plans.

3. Revise the policy for use of the campus facilities by outside groups, including political groups (PA)

The use of facilities policy is being revised in its entirety and will include items that were not previously addressed, such as parking lot usage. The fee schedule is also being revised and will include the new facilities. This revised policy will be published in late fall 2006.

Desired Outcomes:

- Expanded use of alternative course delivery strategies such as hybrid, on-line, and interactive video-conferencing instruction
1. Offer six on-line courses during the 2005-2006 academic year (AA)

The following six on-line courses were offered during the 2005-2006 academic year: COM121- English Composition, ENV130- The Environment, HUM201- Art Appreciation, IFT110- Microcomputer Applications, ORI100- College Success Strategies, and MAT220- Calculus I. All courses ran either during the academic year or during the 2006 summer session.

2. Prioritize recommendation from the Distance Learning CAR (AA)

The top priority from the Distance Learning CAR was to develop a plan for distance learning that follows CHEA (Council for Higher Education Accreditation) guidelines. The distance learning strategic plan developed this year will prioritize the remaining recommendations.

- Redesigned comprehensive staff and faculty development programs

1. Produce a college video that can be used as part of new staff orientation and staff recruitment (PA)

The script is written but the taping was postponed to the fall because of the poor condition of the campus this summer due to the flooding.

2. Continue staff health initiatives, especially the implementation of an employee smoking cessation program geared toward the fall 2006 goal of a totally smoke-free campus (PA)

The college has offered smoking cessation classes for all students and staff this year. Meetings were held during the summer months to discuss implementation and signage issues.

- A comprehensive enrollment management plan emphasizing retention initiatives for all students

1. Investigate increasing College Success Strategies from one credit to two credits in order to adequately cover the course content and competencies, add an instructional component for the WebAdvisor and add a career exploration component (SA, AA)

An ad-hoc committee was formed by the Social Science Division Chair and the Dean of Students with equal representation from faculty and Student Services staff, including staff who teach the course. The committee was given eight charges to investigate and their report is due to the VP/AA and the VP/EM/SS by October 1, 2006. The committee is on task to complete their work by no later than November 1, 2006.

2. Review the probation policy and Student Academic Scale and revise as appropriate (SA, AA)

While the Student Academic Scale was not revised the academic probation procedures were revised to permit a more intrusive intervention by staff members into the course selections and credits taken by students on probation. In certain situations academic advisors can now specify how many credits students on probation can take as well as the specific courses students must take if they wish to return to the college.

3. Refocus the efforts of the Retention Task Force to a First Year Experience Committee in order to address student success from a broader perspective (SA, AA)

The committee has renamed itself the First Year Experience (FYE) committee and has established several goals, all of which are centered on the first year of a student's academic experience. The first goal is to pilot a learning community program throughout the 2006-07 academic year.

4. Complete the implementation of Phase II of a one-stop concept within the Student Services division, including but not limited to the relocation of placement testing and the creation of an advising center (SA)

Phase II is almost complete with all initial student services located on the first floor of Berks Hall. The Advising Center is operational.

5. Create an Advising Task Force to develop a revised model for academic advising utilizing the technology (SA, AA)

As this issue was discussed with the subcommittee on academic advising, the committee did not want to create a separate committee and decided that they would serve in that capacity as needed. The sub-committee approved the Director of Academic Advising plan for advising services.

- A centralized testing center

This concept has been tabled until appropriate space and staffing can be achieved.

- An on-campus theatre available for college and community use

1. A framework will be developed for a fundraising and operational plan for the Miller Center (PA)

As of the date of this report, the opening of the Miller Center will occur sometime in the spring of 2007. The opening of the Center will be celebrated with a schedule of performances and activities geared toward different markets within and outside of the RACC community to take place over a 2 – 4 week period. Prior to the opening of this facility, however, several procedures need to be put into place to ensure the future success of the Center.

Operational Plan

Initially, a committee was formed composed of RACC faculty, staff and board members and others from the community to develop a mission statement for the Miller Center. This task is complete and awaits the approval of the RACC Board of Trustees.

Of the utmost priority will be the hiring of a director for the Miller Center who will have overall authority for the operation, scheduling, programming, development, financial planning and community relations for the facility. A search is currently underway to fill that position.

Other preliminary actions that need to take place before the Center formally opens include:

- Securing custodial and other non-programmatic services
- Contract a firm to provide technical services (i.e., lighting, sound, etc.) on an as-needed basis
- Hire an assistant to the Director of the Miller Center
- Explore course development options for inclusion within the RACC curriculum
- Establish a rental policy for use of the Center by groups outside the RACC community
- Develop a website
- Create box office procedures and obtain the necessary materials (i.e., software program) to sell tickets in-house

Fundraising

A process is underway to create a \$2 million endowment to support performances and events at the Miller Center. About 25% of the funding for this effort already exists in the form of a charitable trust and small endowment both of which were given for the specific purpose of supporting performing arts events at RACC. A course of action will be developed to raise the additional \$1,500,000.00, pending recommendation of the Development Committee of the Foundation Board of Directors.

It is recommended that personnel and operational costs associated with the Miller Center be included in the overall budget for the college.

- Prioritize and implement programmatic responses to the Middle State Association Site Visit Team recommendations and suggestions
- Explore the feasibility of converting the academic calendar to a semester system

At its March 8, 2006 meeting the Board of Trustees adopted the following resolution: That effective with the fall of 2008 Reading Area Community College will convert to an academic calendar consisting of fall and spring semesters of 15 weeks each. The number and length of the summer sessions will be determined through the governance process.

Key:

(PA)	President's Area
(AA)	Academic Affairs
(SA)	Student Affairs
(BA)	Business Affairs
(All Areas)	All four areas involved