



CAREER CONNECTOR:

CONNECTING STUDENTS, EMPLOYERS, AND COMMUNITY



2026-2029
EDISON STATE COMMUNITY COLLEGE
STRATEGIC PLAN



THE 2026-2029 STRATEGIC PLAN

Edison State Community College's 2026–2029 Strategic Plan defines a focused, outcomes-driven approach to advancing student success and strengthening the region's workforce. Grounded in the College's mission and core values, the plan responds directly to evolving workforce demands, changing student needs, and the growing role of technology and artificial intelligence in education and employment.

The plan is built around three strategic priorities:

1. Modernizing Academic Programs for Career Connection
2. Supporting Student Success Via Career Connection
3. Marketing Our Identity as a Career Connector

Together, these priorities position Edison State to deliver flexible, relevant, and future-ready education that leads to meaningful employment and continued learning.

Academic programs will be redesigned to align with workforce needs, incorporate employer engagement, and offer flexible delivery models that reflect students' realities. Every course will integrate AI-related learning outcomes, ensuring graduates are prepared for a technology-driven workplace. To expand opportunity and meet regional demand, the college will also develop bachelor's degrees across all career pathways by 2029.

Student success will be supported through the intentional use of data and AI tools to identify barriers, personalize support, and improve persistence, retention, and completion. From inquiry through post-completion, Edison State will leverage evidence-based practices to ensure students receive timely, targeted assistance throughout their educational journey.

This strategic plan was shaped through extensive engagement with students, employees, employers, and community partners, as well as analysis of institutional data and national research. Ongoing assessment, defined performance indicators, and regular review will ensure accountability and continuous improvement.

Through this plan, Edison State affirms its commitment to student success, workforce alignment, and regional impact—serving as a trusted partner, an innovator in education, and a connector between learners and meaningful careers.

MISSION

Edison State Community College provides the learning opportunities, support services, and commitment that help students to complete their educational goals and realize their dreams.

VISION

Edison State Community College will be the region's premier resource for higher education by employing our core values, commitment to student success, strategic initiatives, and community collaboration.

STATEMENT OF COMMITMENT

1. Edison State will educate students by means of free, open, and rigorous intellectual inquiry to seek the truth;
2. Edison State's duty is to equip students with an opportunity to develop the intellectual skills they need to reach their own, informed conclusions;
3. Edison State is committed to not requiring, favoring, disfavoring, or prohibiting speech or lawful assembly;
4. Edison State is committed to creating a community dedicated to an ethic of civil and free inquiry, which respects the autonomy of each member, supports individual capacities for growth, and tolerates the differences in opinion that naturally occur in a public higher education community;
5. Edison State's duty is to treat all faculty, staff, and students as individuals, to hold them to equal standards, and to provide them equality of opportunity, with regard to those individuals' race, ethnicity, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression.

SITUATIONAL ANALYSIS

WHERE WE STAND

Edison State has a long history of helping students to achieve their educational goals and to realize their dreams, while also being responsive to the region's workforce development needs. As the College looks forward to its next 50 years, however, several potential threats are apparent:

- High enrollment in the College Credit Plus program makes Edison State vulnerable to state policy changes.
- Evolving workforce needs threaten to make the College antiquated.
- The influence of artificial intelligence may render traditional learning environments too inefficient to sustain.
- Increasingly critical public perceptions of higher education require us to evolve to meet stakeholders' expectations.

WHERE WE MUST GO

To secure a bright, thriving future, Edison State must become:

- A career connector
- Integrated with, and driven by, business and workforce needs
- Highly flexible in program delivery, payment options, and student experience
- Infused with artificial intelligence
- Data-focused
- Defined by student employment outcomes
- Expert at communicating our identity as a modern, efficient, and essential career connector



The time is now for Edison State to innovate and evolve its approach to educating students in order to meet the future workforce development needs of our communities. The 2026-2029 Strategic Plan does just that, setting the College on a bold path to becoming the region's leading career connector for students and employers.

DR. SPRADLIN | EDISON STATE PRESIDENT

INSTITUTIONAL FOUNDATIONS

CORE VALUES

- We are accountable to ourselves and to each other to strive for excellence.
- I will maintain integrity to promote trust and cooperation.
- My interactions will express respect for equality and diversity of all.
- I will be adaptable and responsive in an ever-changing world.
- My actions will promote a positive environment.
- We will be responsible stewards of our resources.

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

- **Critical Thinking:** Demonstrate critical thinking skills to understand complex relationships; to evaluate claims of truth, aesthetic value, ethics, and morality; and to make appropriate choices and draw defensible conclusions;
- **Oral and Written Communication:** Use written and spoken English effectively in a free exchange of ideas;
- **Mathematics:** Appreciate the process and structure of mathematics and apply math to the analysis of the physical world;
- **Community Awareness:** Consider various perspectives of differences and awareness of local and global cultures;
- **Interpersonal Skills and Teamwork:** Demonstrate effectiveness when interacting with others, whether the interaction is one-on-one, in a small group, in an organization, or with an audience;
- **Inquiry:** Use information resources and apply basic methods of inquiry from many fields, including scientific methods, social and scientific observation, cause-effect analysis, and artistic criticism.

MODERNIZING ACADEMIC PROGRAMS FOR CAREER CONNECTION

Preparing students for employment through workforce-aligned, flexible, and AI-infused learning.

STRATEGIC GOAL Ensure all courses and programs connect students with careers by aligning with workforce needs, partnering with four-year institutions, and engaging with employers. Courses and programs will be delivered in flexible, student-centered formats that support learners' current realities and future career aspirations.

WHY THIS MATTERS

- ✓ Employers demand graduates with relevant, applied skills
- ✓ Students need flexible pathways that fit work and life responsibilities
- ✓ AI is reshaping how work is performed—and how learning must be delivered
- ✓ Career outcomes increasingly define institutional value and credibility

ACTION & ACCOUNTABILITY

Action A: Curriculum Modernization

Description: All full-time faculty will analyze and redesign courses and programs to implement a modern learning model that is employer-informed, career-connected, and delivered through flexible formats.

Target: All faculty must present a report on modernization changes, including a one-year implementation plan, to the dean, provost, and president by September 1, 2027.

Key Performance Indicators: Modernization must be in place by Fall 2028; template for a report to help determine rubric metrics for the use of the dean, provost, and president.

Action B: Artificial Intelligence Infusion Across Curriculum

Description: AI tools will be taught and used across all programs, aligned with employer application. Every course will include at least one AI-related learning outcome.

Target: All faculty will be trained and must include an AI-focused learning outcome that reflects how employers use AI in the workplace across all course offerings. Increased training on the use of AI will assist faculty with integrating into the curriculum.

Key Performance Indicators: Mandatory AI training by the end of Spring 2027; syllabus review process of learning outcomes on a semester basis will begin Fall 2027 with tracking mechanism for leadership.

Action C: Bachelor's Degree Expansion

Description: Develop at least one bachelor's degree in each career pathway.

Target: Focus on high-demand fields requiring a bachelor's degree within the service region.

Key Performance Indicator: Bachelor's degrees launched across all career pathways by Fall 2029.

STRATEGIC PRIORITY COMMITTEE

Co-Chairs: Jessica Edwards, Stacey Bean, Yvonne Koors

Committee Members: Marva Archibald, Kerry Dowling, Dr. Roger Fulk, Lisa Hartwig, Meme Gillum, William Loudermilk, Blake Madden, Leah Wells

Volunteer Influencer: Joe Lamb, Brian Leingang, Rebecca Schinaman, Sara Young, Scott Zimmerman

Core Team Champion: Dr. Melissa A. Wertz

SUPPORTING STUDENT SUCCESS THROUGH CAREER CONNECTION

Delivering an integrated, data- and AI-informed student success model that connects students to careers from inquiry through post-completion.

STRATEGIC GOAL Develop an innovative, integrated, college-wide, and career-driven student success model that supports students from inquiry through post-completion by coordinating all student resources, using data and AI to identify and address barriers, and improving persistence, retention, completion, and post-college career outcomes.

WHY THIS MATTERS

- ✓ Early career clarity increases student engagement and persistence
- ✓ Fragmented services reduce the effectiveness of student support
- ✓ Career outcomes increasingly define institutional value
- ✓ Data and AI enable earlier intervention and more targeted support

ACTION & ACCOUNTABILITY

Action A: Early Career Exploration and Outcome Tracking

Description: Implement early career exploration and outcome tracking systems that connect students to employers and family-sustaining wage opportunities from inquiry through post-completion.

Target: Establish career exploration infrastructure and data systems as a foundation for coordinated support models and State Share of Instruction (SSI) funding criteria.

Key Performance Indicators: All incoming students complete a career assessment during onboarding, career platform implementation plan in place by Spring 2027; all graduates complete an employment survey during their final semester; faculty incorporate at least one career-focused experiential learning activity (industry site visit, guest speakers, industry forums, etc.); career outcome tracking mechanisms established for leadership.

Action B: Integrated Student Success Model

Description: Coordinate academic and non-academic support services to proactively address barriers and improve persistence, retention, and completion.

Target: Use student journey mapping to implement a coordinated support model with defined structures and dashboards.

Key Performance Indicators: Demonstrate steady, measurable student success, including yearly improvements of 2% in student persistence, retention, program completion, and post completion employment supported by data dashboards used by each academic program to track progress and guide decisions.

Action C: Flexible Pathways and Accelerated Credentials

Description: Expand alternative credential options including micro-credentials, competency-based education, workforce training, prior learning assessment, and non-credit education.

Target: Position Edison State as a regional workforce training hub serving broader populations.

Key Performance Indicators: Credential development plan completed by Fall 2026; launch 2-3 new credential options annually aligned.

STRATEGIC PRIORITY COMMITTEE

Co-Chairs: Aubrey Adams, Dr. Kevin Coghlan, Amber Hare

Committee Members: Carin Benning, Kristina Daum, Lexi DeMarco, Chris Haring, Biffy Nutter, Rich Valerio, Erica Wentworth, Morgan Wick

Volunteer Influencer: Joe Lamb, Tom Looker, Dr. Sara Young

Core Team Champion: Dr. Jeannette Passmore

MARKETING OUR IDENTITY AS A CAREER CONNECTOR

Positioning Edison State as the region's trusted hub for career pathways and workforce partnerships.



STRATEGIC GOAL Craft and communicate an institutional narrative that highlights the value of our collective impact, elevating the voices, achievements, and experiences of students, alumni, faculty, and community partners to tell a shared story of success.

WHY THIS MATTERS

- ✔ Students and families increasingly choose colleges based on career outcomes
- ✔ Employers seek visible, reliable workforce partners
- ✔ Strong storytelling builds trust, relevance, and regional identity
- ✔ Clear messaging amplifies the impact of academic and student success initiatives

ACTION & ACCOUNTABILITY

Action A: Launch a Career Connector Communication Campaign

Description: Launch a comprehensive Career Connector Communication Campaign.

Target: Implement the campaign by Fall 2026, aligning all branding and storytelling around career outcomes.

Key Performance Indicators:

Brand Awareness: Develop a campaign tagline to accompany all College branding; increase recognition of the College as a career connector by 30% (measured via surveys and media metrics);

Content Output: Publish 12 career-focused success stories within a year;

Engagement Metrics: Evolve the online academic catalog to include real-time career statistics; achieve 15% growth in engagement on career-related content; secure five external media features highlighting the College's role in workforce development and career readiness annually utilizing advisory boards and community partners;

Training: Professional development completed for employees contributing to career-related content.

Action B: Increase Strategic Partnership Engagement

Target: Achieve 20% growth in engagement among existing partners through collaborative initiatives and communication.

Key Performance Indicators: Increased joint initiatives with current partners; partner satisfaction score (via quarterly surveys); attendance rate at partner-focused events or meetings.

Action C: Expand Strategic Partnerships

Target: Grow employer and workforce partnerships aligned with high-demand pathways.

Key Performance Indicators: Number of new partnership agreements signed; percentage of partnerships generating measurable outcomes (e.g., experiential learning, funding, and joint programs); average time from initial contact to formal agreement.

STRATEGIC PRIORITY COMMITTEE

Co-Chairs: Andrea Francis, Christina Hughes, Jordan Keith

Committee Members: Trisha Elliott, Hanna Keller, Vickie Kirk, Heather Lanham, Christina Raterman, Dr. Julie Willenbrink

Volunteer Influencer: Melissa Eve, Christine Rezk, Sharon Thomas, Ryan Tilley, Morgan Wick

Core Team Champion: Dr. Rick Hanes



INVESTMENT AND EVALUATION

RESOURCE ALLOCATION & BUDGET IMPLICATIONS

This plan requires strategic shifts in spending. The institution commits to reallocating resources toward the three strategic priorities.

- a. Budget Commitment: The annual college budget will serve as the mathematical representation of the strategic plan.
- b. Revenue Generation: All priority projects will generate revenue through enrollment, the career connector portal, facility rentals, new programming, and other creative options.

ASSESSMENT & EVALUATION

- a. Progress of the strategic plan will be reviewed weekly by the President's Cabinet, monthly by the Strategic Core Team, and quarterly by the President's Council and the Board of Trustees.
- b. An annual public report will be provided detailing KPI results, budget utilization, and plan adjustments.
- c. A comprehensive review will be conducted by the Priority Co-chairs and the Core Team at the end of Year 2 to confirm that the strategic direction remains relevant. A gap analysis will be conducted at the beginning of Year 3, based on performance data and environmental changes, to determine any adjustments needed to complete the plan.
- d. Institutional Research and members of the leadership team will provide data from SSLI, state reporting systems, employment follow-up surveys, and financial reports for analysis.



My goal is to become a firefighter-paramedic, and Edison State is the perfect first step. Multiple people recommended their great emergency medical technician program and praised their amazing professors. The second I got here, I realized they were 100% right.

CALVIN L. | EDISON STATE STUDENT



Edison State laid the foundation for my journey as a social worker, giving me the skills and confidence to grow in the field and further my education. Building on that foundation, I earned my bachelor's in social work from Bowling Green State University and, most recently, I completed my master's degree.

LAYNE C. | EDISON STATE ALUMNA

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STRATEGIC PLANNING CORE TEAM

Core Committee

Dr. Chris Spradlin, Dr. Melissa A. Wertz, Dr. Rick Hanes, Brandi Olberding, Dr. Jeannette Passmore, Kim Zornes

LEADERSHIP

President's Cabinet

Dr. Chris Spradlin	President
Dr. Melissa A. Wertz	Provost & Chief Academic Officer
Chad Beanblossom	Vice President of College Operations & Chief Operating Officer
Dr. Rick Hanes	Vice President of Advancement, Strategic Planning, and Partnerships Executive Director of The Edison Foundation
Heather Lanham	Senior Executive Assistant to the President & Secretary to the Board of Trustees
James Lehmkuhl	Vice President of Finance & Institutional Effectiveness & Chief Financial Officer
Kara Myers	Chief Human Resources Officer & Director of Human Resources

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