August 2008

Dear MMCC Family,

The past year has been a time of change for all of us. Mid Michigan Community College has clearly turned the corner from a small, localized entity to a major regional provider of education and training. Our rapid growth has presented challenges for all of us, as we struggle to replace informal systems of communication and decision making with formalized, consistent systems that will keep us all moving in the same direction. In the midst of this unprecedented growth, you have had to deal with new leadership, which always introduces a note of uncertainty. I applaud the way in which you rose to the test of last year and continued to so effectively serve our students and our community.

After a year of working with you, I have gained a great appreciation for the vibrancy that permeates MMCC. We are humming with ideas and churning with action. Now is the optimal time to ensure that all of that energy stays focused on our top priorities. Consequently, I urge you to thoroughly review and reflect on this document. This plan will provide the foundation for our activities and decisions over the next few years. It will be a living document, refined as appropriate to correspond with the evolving needs of the organization. As we work to implement the plan, every college employee should be able to see clearly how his or her role at MMCC can support our highest priorities. Every department should be able to develop corresponding plans that will advance the entire institution. Further, we will be able to measure our progress so that we can clearly determine what needs further attention and which best practices to expand.

The document is relatively simple, intended to be a useful and accessible tool for blazing the trail into the future. Further, it reflects the best thinking of nearly 160 people throughout the college and the region who volunteered to share their unique perspectives. We will continue to seek your input and will strive to provide the support you need to accomplish our mutual goals.

Happy reading!

Sincerely,

Carol A. Churchill

Carol A. Churchill
President
Our Purpose

In a time of unprecedented growth and change, it is apparent that working together toward a common agenda, supported by both internal and external audiences, must be our highest priority. During 2007-2008, we purposefully determined to:

• Involve as many people as possible in deliberating about the future of Mid Michigan Community College
• Produce a plan that was clear, concise, and measurable
• Provide ongoing opportunities for all stakeholders who wish to stay involved

To accomplish our purpose, we began with a SWOT analysis (i.e. strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, threats) which each college division had been asked to produce in the spring of 2007. The analysis provided the framework for an in depth discussion with the Board of Trustees regarding the future direction of Mid Michigan Community College. The trustees’ observations provided the impetus for additional input. Consequently, we invited all college employees and community members throughout the region to join in structured discussions about the future of the College. They were asked to help evoke a compelling vision that would propel us forward, a vision that would be supported by concrete goals and actions. In all, over 160 people thus far have shared their thoughts.

The Vision

What kind of a place do you want Mid Michigan Community College to be?

That was the question posed to the Mid Michigan Community College (MMCC) Board of Trustees, faculty, administrators, support staff, and community members during the strategic planning conversations conducted during the 2007-2008 academic year. Approximately 160 people expressed viewpoints that were personal, couched in different words, phrases, and illustrations. Even though every conversation was unique, a note of conviction resonated through each. Participants were passionate about the College’s legacy, about the way the College has transformed lives, and about our challenge to protect and shape MMCC’s promising future.

The vibrant vision painted with such conviction focused on people, quality, and progress.
People

MMCC is about our students, who come to us searching for direction, for purpose, for a better life. MMCC is about our employees, with distinctive talents working in several locations but united in their allegiance to one college. MMCC is about our friends, neighbors, and business associates, those people we interact with every day, who regard the College as the predominant focal point and change agent of the community.

Quality

MMCC is both the college of first choice and an exceptional value. MMCC offers outstanding services and superior instruction, yet will forever remain accessible and affordable. MMCC is committed to continuous quality improvement, striving constantly for excellence in everything we do.

Progress

Grounded in a rich history of service to our local communities, MMCC will continue to respect and build on its heritage. MMCC will prepare for an even more robust future, advancing by measured but sure steps that will continue to transform the College into a major regional resource.

Achieving the Vision

In a time of economic uncertainty and volatility, achieving the vision that has been so powerfully described feels like blazing a new trail. It requires hard work, discipline and focus.

We must work together on a common agenda to move both the College and the region forward. We must thoughtfully garner our resources and engage in those activities that will most effectively produce the desired results.

During the rich year-long conversations with the Board of Trustees, college employees, and community members, four themes emerged that we are embracing as the College’s Enduring Goals for our future. These goals describe the broad focus for our energy, creativity, and work for the foreseeable future. They are the most important topics on MMCC’s common agenda, and we urge you to support and advance these goals by using identified approaches, or strategies.

By working together with cohesive strategies, organizing our work into manageable action steps, we will be able to realize specific results or objectives.

How will we know if we are succeeding? For many of our activities, there will be a specific body of work completed, which we will call deliverables. For other activities, we will make use of Key Performance Indicators (KPI) that will allow us to measure our progress. We will “blaze the trail” methodically and deliberately, and most importantly, together.
To make the Strategic Plan more accessible, it is organized into different levels.

**Enduring Goals** describe the broad focus for our energy, creativity, and work for the foreseeable future. They are the most important topics on MMCC’s common agenda.

**Strategies** provide a context for the goals and set clear directions. These are the approaches we will use in supporting our enduring goals.

**Objectives** focus the organization’s attention on specific long-term and short-term ways to address the Strategies and Enduring Goals. These are the results we wish to achieve during the course of the strategic planning cycle.

**Action Steps** are determined within each department in the College. These provide a description of each stage or component of work that must be accomplished to reach an objective.

Beyond the four levels of the Strategic Plan, we also have ways to measure the plan’s effectiveness.

**Key Performance Indicators** provide measures that let us know if we are achieving our enduring goals. Target ranges are established for each indicator. These are monitored and addressed if the deviation is outside of established acceptable ranges.

**Deliverables** are concrete products that result from a body of work that has been completed.
Enabling Student Success

The success of MMCC is tied inexorably to the success of our students. To accurately assess our students’ success, we must recognize that students choose MMCC for a wide variety of reasons; consequently, we must first accurately identify individual student’s goals and then facilitate each student’s ability to attain those goals. To that end, we must provide relevant, high quality instruction, programming, and services that adapt to diverse learning styles, that enhance students’ ability to perform in a global society, that support career advancement, and/or that facilitate successful transfer to a senior institution.

To maintain both efficiency and a student-centered learning environment, MMCC must thoughtfully balance a high tech/high touch approach.

**Strategy 1.1 Improve student goal attainment**

Objectives
a. Implement a system for identifying and tracking student goal attainment
b. Implement a formal retention plan
c. Refine the College’s work experience and job placement programs
d. Provide for seamless transferability

**Strategy 1.2 Enhance student support services**

Objectives
a. Implement a departmental level assessment plan of student learning for all student services
b. Implement a consistent point-of-service evaluation process

**Strategy 1.3 Create an effective high tech/high touch learning environment**

Objectives
a. Provide more services/courses with flexible delivery
b. Use technology to link College locations
c. Ensure effective technology training for students, instructors, and staff

**Strategy 1.4 Ensure relevancy of programming**

Objectives
a. Assess existing curriculum to determine alignment with stakeholder needs
b. Assess needs/satisfaction of regional businesses

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**Enduring Goal #1**
Enhancing Employee Success

The success of MMCC depends on our employees. We must provide effective leaders who value and support high standards of performance using clear direction and open, honest communication. We must work collaboratively to create, nurture, and sustain a culture of mutual support and service. To do so, we must align and support employees in positions that most effectively utilize, develop, and challenge their talents.

Strategy 2.1  Enhance leadership and communication effectiveness

Objectives
- a. Provide formal structure to improve decision making/communication
- b. Provide professional development activities aligned with organizational needs and priorities
- c. Provide an effective new hire orientation program
- d. Make all approved policies and procedures accessible via the MMCC intranet

Strategy 2.2  Develop effective teamwork and collaboration

Objectives
- a. Develop a model and assess effectiveness of teamwork and collaboration
- b. Develop and implement a model for both internal and external customer service

Strategy 2.3  Achieve excellence in performance and productivity

Objectives
- a. Develop and implement staffing plans to enhance organizational performance and productivity
- b. Enhance the employment and selection process
- c. Develop new performance management review processes
Engaging the Community

The success of MMCC depends on the support of the communities we serve. Consequently, we must continuously and deliberately develop and maintain mutually beneficial relationships with our multiple communities. At the same time, we must provide leadership in uniting our communities by positioning MMCC as a regional service provider. We must identify and prioritize the most significant needs of our communities, assuring that our activities align closely with our mission.

Strategy 3.1
Stay attuned to the status and changes in the external environment

Objectives
a. Implement a system of scanning the environment and disseminating the results
b. Ensure employee civic engagement to support strategic goals

Strategy 3.2
Project a positive image of MMCC throughout the region

Objectives
a. Position MMCC as the regional college of choice
b. Create a shared vision in our communities resulting in concrete support within 4 years
c. Position MMCC as a recognized choice for benefactors
d. Implement a public relations/marketing plan related to strategic goals

Strategy 3.3
Enhance external, regional partnerships to achieve mutual goals

Objectives
a. Position MMCC as a regional business training provider of choice
b. Develop new programs and delivery systems aligned with needs of the region
c. Enhance regional employer participation in work experience and job placement programs

d. Create flexible business model supporting additional business development
Improving Institutional Effectiveness

The success of MMCC depends on the way we work. In an unstable state and national environment, we must create our own stability yet be agile to serve the needs of both our internal and external customers. In times of economic uncertainty, we must develop and use our precious human, financial, and physical resources prudently and efficiently. We must ensure that our means of making decisions, communicating, and planning are streamlined yet inclusive. We must put the principles of the Academic Quality Improvement Program at the center of our operations, using data to guide our constant pursuit of excellence.

Strategy 4.1
Ensure responsible development and use of resources

Objectives
a. Expand foundation through multiple giving channels
b. Formalize fundraising processes
c. Ensure physical resources are developed and preserved at all locations
d. Develop a plan to obtain additional millage and state financial support

Strategy 4.2
Manage growth effectively

Objectives
a. Maximize building utilization
b. Ensure that class offerings align with student demand
c. Identify and achieve an appropriate FT/PT faculty ratio
d. Enhance effectiveness of enrollment management

Strategy 4.3
Increase operational efficiency

Objectives
a. Develop ROI benchmarks
b. Implement a clear, consistent equipment and technology replacement schedule
c. Maximize use of technology in internal operations
d. Align planning/budgeting processes
e. Develop and implement Key Performance Indicators (KPI’s) to measure institutional effectiveness

Enduring Goal #4
What’s Next?

Commit

Amid a myriad of demands, we need to sort out those that capture our greatest attention. We are urging you to commit to this plan for the next three years. At some level, we will all be involved as our individual departments assume the responsibilities that derive from this plan. However, “the difference between ‘involvement’ and ‘commitment’ is like an eggs-and-ham breakfast: the chicken was ‘involved’ – the pig was ‘committed.’” (Martina Navratilova) Let’s pledge to work together, steadfastly, to accomplish the goals that have been identified.

Act

According to Henry Miller, “The ordinary man is involved in action, the hero acts. An immense difference.” Be a hero. Make a difference. Get things done. Keep the plan at the forefront of your work over the next three years.

Plan

The organizational strategic plan captures MMCC’s highest priorities and desired results. The execution of the plan will engage the entire college, with the Quality Action Council as the coordinating body. Within every department and many subgroups, plans will be developed that will bring our goals to fruition. Engage in the planning; we need your input so that you can manage your role effectively.

Measure

Stay attuned to the institutional measures of our progress. Determine how you can impact those measures that do not fall within our target ranges for success. Applaud yourself for contributing to the success that has been validated by measures.

Share

Communicate your results and share your best practices. Help others succeed in meeting their individual and departmental goals. Celebrate our accomplishments.

Thank you to everyone who provided valuable input for this comprehensive plan. For questions about the Strategic Plan, contact the President’s Office at 989-386-6601 or email President Churchill at cchurchill@midmich.edu.