

## Mission

The mission of the Office of Vocational and Adult Education (OVAE) is to support the implementation of Secretary Spellings' action plan for higher education by serving as the hub for community college information and leadership on issues of accessibility, affordability and accountability. To view the action plan visit <http://www.ed.gov/about/bdscomm/list/hiedfuture/plan/index.html>.

## Vision

OVAE will assume a leadership position on all matters related to community colleges within the U.S. Department of Education and the education community at large. OVAE will be viewed as an authority in national dialogues on high school reform, postsecondary education, adult education, workforce development and related transition strategies.

## Core Values

OVAE's community college activities embody the following principles:

- *Collaboration* and *partnership* between key constituency groups are essential to supporting and sustaining community colleges;
- Community colleges need strong *national leadership* to achieve their fullest potential;
- *Innovation* at the federal, state and local levels improves educational opportunities and outcomes for all Americans;
- *Effective communication* fosters partnerships and public support that enable community colleges to thrive; and
- Unwavering respect for *diversity* and a commitment to *inclusiveness* are necessary to ensure high-quality community college systems.

## Constituencies

OVAE reaches out to diverse groups to continue the national dialogue started by the Secretary of Education's Commission on the Future of Higher Education (<http://www.ed.gov/about/bdscomm/list/hiedfuture/reports/final-report.pdf>). Primary constituencies include:

- Community college presidents, faculty and other campus leaders;
- Community college trustees;
- Community college students;
- Adult learners;
- Employers;
- Employees;
- Parents;
- High school students and secondary school teachers, counselors and administrators;
- U.S. Department of Education staff;
- U.S. Department of Labor and other federal agencies;
- Foundations; and
- National organizations representing education, economic development, public policy, and employment and training organizations.

## Goals and Objectives

**1** To establish widespread public support for community colleges as centers of innovation and providers of superior education and training that are affordable and accessible to all Americans.

*Objective 1:* Launch a comprehensive outreach campaign to publicize the benefits of a community college education for individuals, local economies and the society at large.

*Objective 2:* Spotlight exemplary community college programs that deliver quality academics, build strong community and business partnerships, and maximize affordable and accessible education options for adult learners.

**2** To serve as a portal for timely and actionable guidance on community college education for teachers, administrators, students, parents and employers.

*Objective 1:* Develop an online resource center with information about community college accessibility, affordability, accountability and quality.

*Objective 2:* Assist and support community college leaders in strengthening accessibility, affordability, accountability and quality at their institutions.

**3** To develop a structure and culture within the U.S. Department of Education that value and promote the role of community colleges in post-secondary education.

*Objective 1:* To formalize and support the role of the deputy assistant secretary for community colleges within OVAE and the Department.

*Objective 2:* To ensure that the community college perspective is included in discussions of secondary and postsecondary education within the U.S. Department of Education.



The Department of Education's mission is to promote student achievement and preparation for global competitiveness by fostering educational excellence and ensuring equal access.

Contact: Gail Schwartz  
550 12th St. S.W.  
Washington, DC 20202-7100  
(202) 245-7700 (office)  
(202) 245-7837 (fax)

[gail.schwartz@ed.gov](mailto:gail.schwartz@ed.gov)  
<http://www.ed.gov/ovae>

# Serving Community Colleges

## OVAE

Office of Vocational and Adult Education

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION