



**State of New Jersey**  
NEW JERSEY HIGHER EDUCATION

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ROCHELLE R. HENDRICKS  
*Secretary of Higher Education*

May 16, 2014

David J. Rosen  
Legislative Budget and Finance Officer  
Office of Legislative Services  
State House Annex  
P.O. Box 068  
Trenton, NJ 08625-0068

Dear Mr. Rosen:

I am writing in response to the May 9, 2014 letter requesting a written response to questions raised by members of the Assembly Budget Committee following the Higher Educational Services hearing on April 30, 2014:

**Assemblyman Cryan:**

Please provide the data that supported the award of grants to selected projects over other projects, including the award of grants to certain STEM projects.

**Answer:** Due to pending litigation, no comment will be provided in response to this question.

The Secretary of Higher Education indicated that once the "Building Our Future Bond Act" funds were disbursed, there would be plans to monitor the usage of the funds with respect to the grant agreements. Please provide information on any plans for monitoring the implementation of the grant agreements or project oversight to ensure that the funds are being properly used and the projects are on schedule and within budget.

**Answer:** Funds are disbursed to institutions based on requisitions which require invoices for most expenditures. This approach allows for monitoring project spending and helps to ensure compliance with the approved projects. The EFA, in partnership with the Office of the Secretary, has regularly and will continue to regularly request updates of projected draw schedules for projects. Additionally, the regulations and grant agreements provide for termination of grant funding if unnecessary project delays occur.

**Assemblyman Singleton:**

Please provide the list of the projects for which the Secretary of Higher Education has approved the grant agreements, including the overall cost of the project and the amount of the grant. Please provide the total amount of State grant funds released thus far.

**Answer:** The list of the approved projects had been submitted to the Legislature and appears on the Office of the Secretary of Higher Education website:

<http://www.state.nj.us/highereducation/documents/130430CapitalFinancingGrants-ListsofApprovedProjects2.pdf>

There have been a few modest adjustments for compliance with statute and regulation. HEFT agreements have not been executed with any institution. Additionally, the HETI agreements for Princeton Theological Seminary and the BOF agreements for Beth Medrash Govoha have not been executed.

EFA has released funding under the state-backed programs (not including Building Our Future) of \$5.15 million, for 26 total projects (30 separate grant agreements) at 18 institutions.

OSHE has released funding under the Building Our Future program of \$21.96 million for nine (9) total projects at seven (7) institutions.

**Assemblyman Johnson:**

Please provide remediation rates at Hudson County Community College, New Jersey City University, and Essex County College.

**Answer:** The source for the numbers below is the Fall 2013 Office of the Secretary of Higher Education's SURE files.

**Fall 2013 Enrollment in New Jersey Colleges and Universities**

<u>Colleges and Universities</u>	<u>Undergraduates</u>			<u>Full-Time 1st-Time</u>		
	<u>Total Students</u>	<u>In 1 or More Remedial Courses</u>	<u>% in Remedial Courses</u>	<u>Full-Time First-Time Undergrad</u>	<u>In 1 or More Remedial Courses</u>	<u>% in Remedial Courses</u>
New Jersey City University	6,438	540	8.4%	577	414	71.8%
Essex County College	12,175	4,598	37.8%	2,109	1,773	84.1%
Hudson County Community College	9,036	3,686	40.8%	2,106	1,574	74.7%

Also, please find the enclosed responses submitted by New Jersey City University, Essex County College and Hudson County Community College.

**Assemblywoman DeCroce:**

Over the last 10 years, how has the percentage of students enrolled in a four-year degree program but who took five years to complete the program changed? Is there a trend that shows an increasing number of students taking five years to earn their undergraduate degrees?

**Answer:** Enclosed is a chart showing the 4, 5 and 6 year graduation rates at the senior public institutions of higher education for first-time, full-time degree seeking students in Bachelor's Degree Programs.

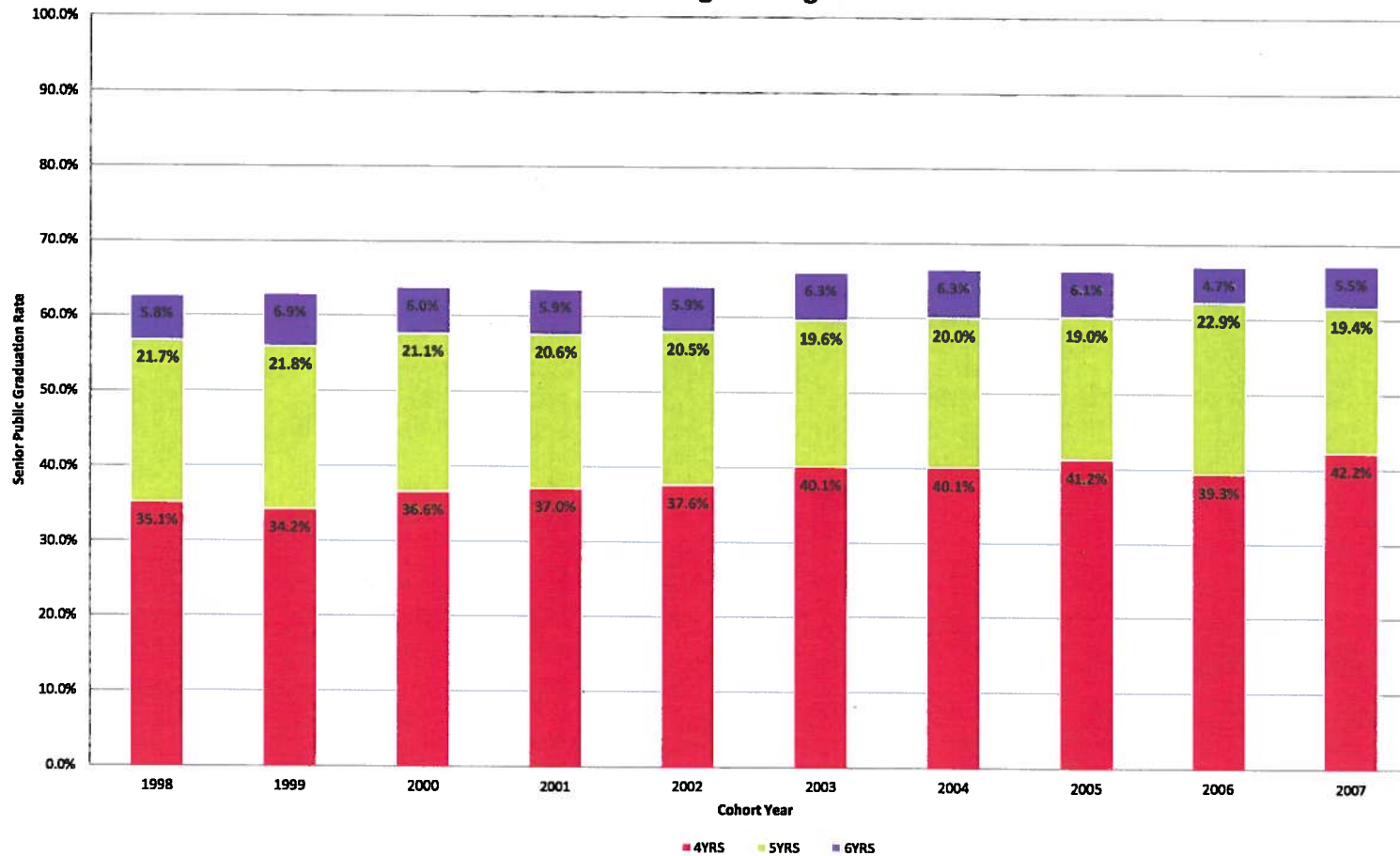
Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Rochelle Hendricks". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "R".

Rochelle Hendricks  
Secretary of Higher Education

Enclosures

## Senior Public Graduation Rates for Full-time, First-Time Degree Seeking Students in Bachelor's Degree Programs



\*The bar graph reflects the total percentage of students that graduated in a 4, 5 or 6 year timeframe, who enrolled at Senior Public Institutions as full-time, first-time degree seeking in Bachelor's Degree Programs in a cohort year. This excludes the University of Medicine and Dentistry and Thomas Edison State College.

**Example:**

40.1% of full-time, first-time degree seeking students in a Bachelor's Degree Program at a Senior Public Institution of the 2004 cohort year graduated in 4 Years, or by 2008; 60.1% of students from that same cohort year graduated in 5 years or by 2009; and 66.4% of students from that same cohort year graduated in 6 years or by 2010.

Source: IPEDS Graduation Rate Survey

The below data tracks the 2008 first time (full-time and part-time) degree-seeking students within 150% time-frame- all outcomes are as of August 31, 2011 (150%, 3 years).

Developmental Math			Developmental Reading			Developmental English		
	Cohort			Cohort			Cohort	
Attempted Developmental Math	1008		Attempted Developmental Reading	983		Attempted Developmental English	975	
Attempted Developmental Math and Completed Developmental Math Series	368	36.5%	Attempted Developmental Reading and Completed Developmental Reading Series	544	55.3%	Attempted Developmental English and Completed Developmental English Series	539	55.3%
Attempted Developmental Math and Attempted a college level math course	311	30.9%	Attempted Developmental Reading and Attempted a College Level Reading Course	519	52.8%	Attempted Developmental English and Attempted a College Level English Course	515	52.8%
Attempted Developmental Math and Completed College Level Math Course	262	26.0%	Attempted Developmental Reading and Completed College Level English Course	468	47.6%	Attempted Developmental English and Completed College Level English Course	464	47.6%
The percent of students that successfully complete the developmental math series and attempt and pass a college level math course	84.50%		The percent of students that successfully complete the developmental reading series and attempt and pass a college level reading course	90.20%		The percent of students that successfully complete the developmental english series and attempt and pass a college level english course	90.10%	

The below data tracks the 2008 first time (full-time and part-time) degree-seeking students that were placed into any developmental course. Outcomes are within 150% time-frame- all outcomes are as of August 31, 2011 (150%, 3 years).

Developmental Cohort	1200	
Earned a Degree/Certificate	115	9.6%
Transferred to a 4 year institution without award	102	8.5%
Earned 30 Degree Credits with GPA of 2.0 or higher	223	18.6%

*\*students that placed into ESL are excluded as this tracks developmental placement only*





## ESSEX COUNTY COLLEGE

303 University Avenue, Newark, New Jersey 07102

Dr. Gale E. Gibson  
President

Alan Guenther  
Manager, Policy and Planning  
Office of the Secretary of Higher Education  
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(609) 984-2804

May 15, 2014

Dear Mr. Guenther:

Thank you for your request to provide outcome-related data and information concerning remedial or developmental courses at Essex County College.

Our primary remedial courses are developmental math and English. For the past two years, we have intensively studied and begun a major restructuring of these courses to improve learning outcomes. In this effort we have been supported by the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation for developing new instructional models and the New Jersey Higher Education Capital Facility GO Bonds to create facilities appropriate to the new models of instruction.

The attached Developmental Pipeline Course Tables address the outcome-related data you are requesting. In traditional developmental and gateway math courses at Essex County College our pass rates are 50%, which are consistent with other urban community colleges across the nation. In traditional developmental and gateway English courses, our pass rates are 67%, which are also consistent with other urban community colleges across the nation. Tables 1-4 show the exact pass rates for students starting in developmental math and English in Fall, 2011 and 2013 and how they progress to the college gateway course.

As already stated, these pass rates are relatively stable and are consistent with rates at peer institutions; however, we believe these rates can be significantly improved and that is the focus of our current efforts in our redesigned courses. Our Strategic Plan makes the improvement of developmental education a top priority, and we are committing significant resources to this project.

In the 2013-2014 Academic year, we piloted our first redesigned developmental course in math to address and improve remediation rates. Redesigned courses and their learning outcomes are different from traditional courses, but because this is a pilot and has only operated for one year, we do not have data on the rate at which students progress to college-level math.

However, a preliminary statistical analysis of the Fall semester comparing students in the redesigned course to students in traditional classes showed a 5% increase in Fall-Spring retention among the students in the redesigned courses. Moreover, about 5% of our students finished two math courses in a single semester, thus accelerating their progress toward graduation, reducing the time they are in

remediation, enhancing their motivation to complete their degree and decreasing the amount of funds they must pay for non-credit bearing courses. It should be noted that the first year of a new curriculum is one where many lessons are learned on the part of the instructors and we anticipate continued improved results in subsequent years.

Additionally, as we examine the redesigned math course, we are discovering that it has many learning, engagement and retention benefits:

1. Redesigned courses are mastery based. Students do not progress to a new topic until the current topic is mastered as demonstrated by correctly solving a problem set.
2. Redesigned courses are individualized and adaptive: artificially intelligent software monitors student responses to math problems and adjusts the topics and level of difficulty to each student so they are neither bored with material they already know nor frustrated with material that is too difficult.
3. Redesigned courses have fixed learning and variable times. Some students will master all the material in four weeks, some will take 12 weeks and some will take 20 weeks. The requirements to pass the course are fixed and students take the time they need to fulfill them.
4. Redesigned courses are continuous. Students often finish a course in the middle of a semester, but they don't wait for the next semester to start the next course. They start the next course immediately.
5. Redesigned courses are not self-paced and are not independent learning. They are instructor-led and assisted. Students have the same number of scheduled class periods as traditional classes. Attendance is taken and factored as part of the grade.

By comparison, traditional courses differ in these ways from our redesigned math course:

1. Traditional courses are calendar based: students progress to a new topic on a specific date regardless of whether or not the previous topic was mastered.
2. Traditional courses are synchronous: all students go through all topics at the same time and the same rate.
3. A traditional course is 15 weeks and the amount of learning that occurs in those weeks varies greatly from student to student.
4. In a traditional course a student cannot master the learning and proceed to the next level until the 15 week course ends. They cannot advance through two levels of courses in one semester.

When analyzing the performance and improvement of Essex County College and our remediation rate, we invite you to factor in our state-of-the art redesigned course pedagogy. The key advantage of this technology supported faculty instructional model is the real-time learning outcomes feedback. It allows us to offer individualized instructions, tailored to the learning rate of each student which are improving retention rates.

As mentioned earlier, since this is a pilot, we will have more data to share during next academic year as we continue to track and improve our remediation rate. We look forward to additional conversations about our success.

Sincerely,



*Gale E. Gibson, Ed.D.*  
*President*



**Tables 1-4: Developmental Course Pipeline**

<b>Math Pipeline For Students Starting at Level I</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Took Developmental Math Level I in Fall 2011	1770	100.0%
Passed Developmental Math Level I in Fall 2011	908	51.3%
Took Developmental Math Level II by Spring 2013	912	51.5%
Passed Developmental Math Level II by Spring 2013	411	23.2%
Took College Math by Spring 2013	390	22.0%
Passed College Math by Spring 2013	221	12.5%

<b>English Pipeline For Students Starting at Level I</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Took Developmental English Level I in Fall 2011	1181	100.0%
Passed Developmental English Level I in Fall 2011	797	67.5%
Took Developmental English Level II by Spring 2013	745	63.1%
Passed Developmental English Level II by Spring 2013	493	41.7%
Took College English by Spring 2013	469	39.7%
Passed College English by Spring 2013	368	31.2%

<b>Math Pipeline For Students Starting at Level II</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Took Developmental Math Level II in Fall 2011	123	100.0%
Passed Developmental Math Level II in Fall 2011	69	56.1%
Took College Math by Spring 2013	67	54.5%
Passed College Math by Spring 2013	34	27.6%

<b>English Pipeline For Students Starting at Level II</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Took Developmental English Level II in Fall 2011	658	100.0%
Passed Developmental English Level II in Fall 2011	453	68.8%
Took College English by Spring 2013	428	65.0%
Passed College English by Spring 2013	316	48.0%