

Mid-Year Evaluation Gateway to College

Provider:

Community College of Philadelphia

Site Visit Date:

Wednesday, December 20, 2017, 8:30 a.m. **and**
Wednesday, January 24, 2018, 10:30 a.m.

Contract Term:

FY 2018-2022

Child Count Compliance:

100%

Program Capacity:

130

Percent of students attending at least 95% of school days: 84%

Site Visit Review Team:

Christina Grant, Assistant Superintendent,
Opportunity Network
Dr. Wanda Y. Jenkins, Director of Special Projects,
Opportunity Network
Majeedah Scott, Director, Multiple Pathways,
Opportunity Network
Marcus De Vose, Assistant Director of Transition
Services, Opportunity Network
Elvis Mucaj, Strategy Analyst, Opportunity Network
Luis Rosario, Project U-Turn Fellow, Opportunity
Network
Christopher Shaffer, Deputy Chief, SDP Curriculum,
Instruction & Assessment
Jere Mahaffey, Director of Executive Strategy,
Philadelphia Youth Network

Program Staff:

Dr. David E. Thomas, Associate Vice President, Strategic
Initiatives, Dean, Access and Community Engagement ,
Community College of Philadelphia
Monifa Young, Director, Gateway to College
Stephanie D. Overton, Assistant Director, Gateway to
College

Domains and Performance Levels:

Programs were rated according to **seven domains**: 1) **Vision for Learning**, 2) **Family & Community Relationships**, 3) **School Safety**, 4) **Positive Environment**, 5) **High Quality Instruction**, 6) **Talent Development** and 7) **Data**. The domains are aligned to the School District's evidence-based High Performing School Practices and the Essential Features of Alternative Education Programs, as well as the Pennsylvania Department of Education's Leadership Framework. Each domain includes three to seven components, that are rated according to **three performance levels**: 1) **Failing**, 2) **Needs Improvement** and 3) **Proficient**. **Failing** indicates that a program could not demonstrate or did not develop practices identified within a domain component. **Needs Improvement** indicates that a program has made some progress or effort towards practices identified within a domain component, but has not sufficiently developed the practice. **Proficient** indicates that a program has made adequate progress towards the implementation of practices identified within a domain component.

Comments/ Considerations:

Mid-year visits for Gateway to College were conducted on December 20, 2017 and January 24, 2018, because classes were not in session on December 20th, due to Community College of Philadelphia's winter break. Classes resumed on January 16, 2018.

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

Vision for Learning

Rating: PROFICIENT [5 of 5 components met]

Strategy for literacy and numeracy skill-building (Yes). Gateway to College (Gateway) discussed the various strategies they utilize to bolster literacy and numeracy skill levels for students. Gateway offers skill-building workshops for students before the semester begins and Tutors for Math, Science, and English through the Community College of Philadelphia (CCP). Every student in the program is administered the Accuplacer diagnostic exam to gauge the level of academic support needed. Mandatory weekly meetings with students are facilitated by Academic Coordinators (ACs). Though students are rostered into small group tutoring and study groups, they meet with Academic Coordinators weekly, which allows the AC to drill down on each student's individual level. The program also implements mandatory Achievement Lab hours, which is classified as a non-credit course, but has proven to be extremely helpful for those students who struggle academically. Additionally, the program incorporates the expertise and representation of English faculty on the advisory board to inform the Gateway team of college-level literacy expectations. All strategies articulated, demonstrates clear and concise techniques to help students improve their reading and math levels. **Retention plan implementation** (Yes). Gateway presented and discussed their retention plan implementation and efforts. The program uses both *MyDegreePath* and Starfish together as an early warning system to monitor student progress, inform needed interventions, and provide academic support. Program staff utilizes faculty academic advising and intervention support for College counselors. Gateway's Academic Coordinators function as intensive case managers, which proves to be viable as they create Individual Learning Plans and Student Success Plans for all students whether they are making academic strides, struggling, or testing into developmental courses. Academic Coordinators constantly review credit profiles and access every student's personal, academic, and social-emotional needs. Gateway conducts ongoing and consistent outreach to students via text, email, and phone call. Moreover, the program implements a Positive Behavior Intervention and Support (PBIS) framework and restorative practices; and employs incentives and student celebrations to encourage retention and success. **Orientation for new students** (Yes). Program leaders discussed the highlights of orientation efforts with the review team. During orientation, new students are presented an overview of the program, what is offered, and what is expected (attendance, grades, and study habits). Students attend Gateway's Boot Camp, which lasts for four days, and has been expanded to cover more hours to include topics such as team building and personality/learning style assessments. Additionally, students receive an intensive academic skill review and are observed by program staff in a classroom setting. Gateway offers College 101 (freshman/seminar/orientation) and FYE (first year experience) courses and students have the opportunity to engage in one on one meetings/interviews with the Gateway Director and team. **Family engagement plan** (Yes). The program presented communication logs, documentation of activities and outreach efforts, and a written plan for maximizing parent and community engagement to the review team. During recruitment, the program holds parent/ guardian information sessions and parent/mentor night, to help families support students throughout their academic journey. Additionally, parents/guardians are routinely engaged by Academic Coordinators to support students through routine phone calls, emails, and home visits, if applicable. Parents/Guardians are also represented on Gateway's advisory

council. **Individual graduation plans** (Yes). Gateway articulated and presented Individual Graduation Plans, which are developed and implemented for every student during their first semester. Credit profiles are routinely reviewed by the Assistant Director and Academic Coordinators. Moreover, to better ensure credit/credential attainment, Gateway aligns academic advising to students with the College's work around Guided Pathways.

Family and Community Relationships

Rating: PROFICIENT [5 of 5 components met]

Parent surveys (Yes). Gateway presented its parent surveys and overall results showed that parents have a positive feeling about the program. Parents stated that they are excited about their child taking college classes and seeing their child growing socially. Additionally, parents are also happy that students are able to make decisions about their course offerings. Survey results not only showed positive feedback but helped inform which parts of the program are going well. Families very often refer other children and relatives to the program. Gateway-specific parent surveys will be revamped and distributed annually along with the SDP's parent survey. **Parent/community outreach** (Yes). The program discussed their outreach activities and presented supporting documents such as Parent/Mentor Night and Gateway to College Advisory Council, which includes two parents. Parents are invited to attend each Advisory Council meeting and Parent/Mentor Night. Most students are over 18 years of age therefore Gateway allows students to select a mentor in their lives who will support their educational efforts. The program has developed partnerships with KeVen Parker's Ms. Tootsies Restaurant, United Bank of Philadelphia, and Daddy University as part of Gateways' internship program, and other agencies on campus such as: ELECT (Education Leading to Employment Career Training), KEYS, Center for Male Engagement, and the LEADS leadership program. Gateway leverages resources from the College, the Institute for Civil Engagement at CCP, and focuses on volunteer work and engagement. The Division of Access and Community Engagement's (DACE) newsletter and Gateway-specific communication are emailed/mailed to parents; moreover, home visits are made to students who are chronically absent or late. **Communication logs** (Yes). Gateway presented evidence of communication and tracking logs, which were well-organized and showed that Academic Coordinators (ACs) make daily and weekly contact with students and check-in with them before class. The program utilizes the Starfish communication application to alert/flag ACs and students about missed assignments, progress, as well as kudos. The Student Assistance Team (SAT) meets to support students and sends flyers and letters to engage students. Gateway's Breakfast Club is another strategy ACs and the Gateway Director use to check-in with students. **Strategy to improve family engagement** (Yes). In alignment with the evidence noted under the parent/community outreach component, Gateway presented their documented efforts to improve family engagement. Gateway holds town hall meetings, awards ceremonies, and hosts an event once a semester to engage parents. Additional strategies to improve family engagement include: community service projects, [Thanksgiving](#) celebrations, and a recent trip to Universoul Circus. **Partnerships with employers and postsecondary institutions** (Yes). Gateway presented the partnerships they have with employers and colleges/postsecondary institutions. Students are enrolled into college automatically by nature of the program model, which is a great benefit of students being on a college campus. Gateway has 15 dual admissions partnerships and agreements with local area 4-year institutions, which include: Arcadia University, Cabrini College, Chestnut Hill College, Cheyney University, Drexel University, Eastern University, Harrisburg University, Holy Family University, Immaculata University, Kutztown University, LaSalle University, Peirce College, Rosemont College, Saint Joseph's University, and Temple University. Program staff helps students complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA); additionally, students must complete four transfer applications. Collaboratively with students, program staff creates a success plan, an individual graduation plan, and a Choices Planner, which helps with career choices and transition to another college or postsecondary institution. Students are offered college tours to other institutions, services through CCP's career

services office, CCP's Transfer Fair, and CCP's Majors Fair; students who have jobs and are parents work with the ELECT program. Partnerships with employers include: KeVen Parker's Ms. Tootsies, United Bank of Philadelphia, CCP's Offices: Safety and Security, Athletics, Division of Access and Community Engagement, and Daddy University. Ten (10) students have been selected thus far to participate in paid internships. Gateway is currently working on adding Uptown Theater and State Representative Emilio Vasquez's office by Summer 2018.

School Safety

Rating: PROFICIENT [6 of 6 components met]

Average Daily Attendance (Yes). Gateway uses multiple points of data to collect attendance information such as building entry card swipes, program suite swipes, and daily class attendance sheets. The program obtains the entry swipes from the College at the end of the day to enter the attendance data into the District's Student Information System (SIS). Due to Gateway's format of dual enrollment, attendance is not only a policy and mandate of Gateway and CCP, but it is also mandated by the college professors from class to class. These multiple layers of accountability help maintain high levels of attendance. Although the data was not available at the time of the walkthrough, 102 students are currently enrolled in the program out of a capacity of 130. Staff cited multiple efforts to increase enrollment to include collaborating with CCP's Marketing Department. **Use of Scholarship with fidelity** (Yes). Students swipe-in utilizing CCP's attendance and security tracking system, not scholarship. Attendance is tracked via comparison to building security logs and swipe-in logs at Gateway's office/site; logs are managed by the Academic Coordinators. **Number of students present in each classroom** (Yes). The review team observed a Senior Seminar class, which had eight students present in class. **Attendance policy & truancy plan implementation** (Yes). Gateway discussed their attendance policy and truancy plan implementation, which aligns with both the official policy of CCP and the program's policy. Attendance and truancy policies are fully explained at enrollment sessions. Constant communication with faculty, implementation of the early alert system, and daily check-in informs attendance. Phone calls are made to students and text messages, emails, and mail are also sent to students in response to attendance issues. Students with attendance issues are referred to the SAT team where interventions are developed and implemented. Gateway conducts home visits for students who are truant. Incentives are provided for students with outstanding attendance. Program staff are currently working to refresh the student handbook, which will also include a review of the attendance policies. **Orderly daily routines and transitions** (Yes). Classes were in session at the time of the visit. In the class, students were observed following the agenda given by the teacher. Late comers joined the class with minimal distraction and quickly began working. All students were engaged in the lesson and answered questions during the discussion. **Program-wide positive behavior system** (Yes). Gateway adheres to the College's Student Code of Conduct to address student behavior challenges. Program staff are also considering Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (PBIS) systems that would be utilized in conjunction with restorative practices. Furthermore, Gateway utilizes two tracking systems to monitor academic and behavior for students. Starfish monitors primarily academic progress and challenges, including attendance/engagement and the SAT reports log ongoing challenges, obstacles, and progress for students. A weekly SAT meeting with program staff allows for collaborative planning for follow-up or interventions, which may include calls, home visits, meetings, etc.; Parent/Mentor input is also utilized in this process. Moreover, the dual-enrollment format of the program creates a robust incentive for completion, that is also reinforced by an enrollment process, which fully assesses a student's compatibility with the program requirements. However, staff also create multiple avenues for incentives including award ceremonies, student recognitions, and leverage leadership opportunities through CCP. Students receive Dean's List recognition for academic performance.

Positive Environment

Rating: PROFICIENT [4 of 4 components met]

Engagement of students and families in building positive environment (Yes). In addition to the events articulated in the Family and Community Relationships domain under the Parent/Outreach component (Mentor Night and Advisory Council), Gateway holds a College Summit (all school meeting) during each semester. Academic Coordinators (ACs) routinely reach out parents and students to discuss successes and offer support. Students have access to the College's wide array of student activities and events, as part of the program's efforts to build a positive environment. Each week a student is recognized for their academic achievement. Honor Roll luncheons are also held to celebrate students. **Respectful interactions between staff, students, and families** (Yes). The review team observed respectful interactions between students and staff. **Staff has a good rapport with students** (Yes). The professor treated students with respect during sensitive and personal topics. Students seem comfortable with the professor and other students in the program and respected each other's opinions during the class discussions. **Team building activities for staff and students** (Yes). The program discussed various team building efforts for staff and students. The Gateway to College Summit and Gateway to College Annual Peer Learning Conference are offered as part of the team building portfolio for students. A plethora of College led professional development sessions are offered each semester and throughout the academic year, which include face-to-face sessions, online opportunities, etc. Gateway utilizes student orientation and Boot Camp to help students develop a sense of connection and teamwork. Additionally, students and staff worked collectively on the Aspen Challenge promotion video, which all enjoyed. Ongoing consistent activities include: Dodge ball game for students and staff at the gym, Movie Night, Cultural Trips, and the Thanksgiving Feast. In an effort to build new experiences, Gateway is currently working on coordinating a trip to take students to see a Broadway play in New York.

High Quality Instruction

Rating: PROFICIENT [7 of 7 components met]

Students actively engaged in class (Yes). The review team observed a Senior Seminar class for about 30 minutes that was taught by Ms. Betty Handy, one of the program's Academic Coordinators. A total of eight students were present in class. All students were highly engaged with the lesson, and all students answered questions and participated in the discussion regarding "The Seven Habits of Highly Effective Teens" by Sean Covey. **Early warning system for academic interventions** (Yes). In order to help identify students who may be struggling academically, Gateway's ACs intensely manage their caseloads, which include 20-22 students each. Academic Coordinators are constantly in contact with their students on a daily basis. All ACs have students on their caseload reach out to their professors via an introductory email. The introductory email allows the student to initiate the first lines of communication. English is a challenge for many Gateway students, thus an Associate Professor sits on the advisory council to learn about Gateway students. The College's Office for Student Success Initiatives provides Gateway with an Academic Early Alert report (Starfish) at the 20% and 50% reporting periods. Through Starfish, professors input missing assignments, failed tests, and class absences. Gateway presented evidence of the Starfish report which detailed acknowledgements and concerns. Additional strategies used to track student progress include: review of student progress in Edgenuity, ongoing check-ins and contact with College faculty to monitor student progress, use of Accuplacer placement diagnostic as a level setting assessment to determine areas of needed academic support, and failure notices sent to parents/guardians after midterm exams. **Students enrolled in the courses they need to meet graduation requirements** (Yes). Program staff provided copies of credit profiles and current rosters for five students. Students are enrolled in the correct courses, which align to the requirements for graduation. **Program has identified students eligible for Keystone**

Exams (Yes). Gateway provided a list of students eligible for the literacy, math, and biology Keystone Exams. **Strategies used to prepare students for Keystone Exams** (Yes). To ensure success on the test, students meet with ACs in advance of the Keystone Exams to review strategies and skills and employ other preparation techniques. **Postsecondary bridging plan** (Yes). Gateway discussed and presented their postsecondary bridging plan. Students are enrolled in the College Success Course, which focuses on college and career exploration once students complete the program. Additionally, students have to complete a Senior Project that includes: an individual career component, an interview, a paper: 4-6 pages (college track and career track components), a portfolio (resume, interview transcript, and research paper), and a 15-minute presentation of the project. **Postsecondary exploration and preparation program** (Yes). In conjunction with the postsecondary bridging plan, *MyDegreePath* on MYCCP is used to explore how many classes students are currently enrolled in and which courses count toward a degree of their interest. Moreover, the CCP Majors Fair, CCP Transfer Fair, and CCP Career Fair are postsecondary exploration and preparation activities students attend. Gateway leverages its dual admission partnerships with local area 4-year institutions, as articulated under the Family and Community Relationships domain, to ensure a seamless transition into the College upon graduation from Gateway and to provide students “preferred access” into the College.

Talent Development

Rating: PROFICIENT [7 of 7 components met]

Common planning time for teachers (Yes). Gateway presented their schedule to the review team, which included regular allotment for common planning, program planning, and student academic support and intervention. The program partners extensively with CCP Professors as the latter are largely responsible for core courses that the students take. College faculty meet routinely throughout the semester within their respective departments regarding curriculum, program learning outcomes, student learning outcomes, general education requirements, and core competencies. Staff meetings and professional development sessions are aligned with the rest of the college's staff. Gateway staff also have specific planning times (every 3rd Friday of the month) to improve the services they provide to students. In addition to internal meetings, Gateway’s administration spends a considerable amount of time attending division meetings within CCP to ensure that their students are offered the full spectrum of resources that the college has to offer. **Differentiated staff supports** (Yes). CCP offers a diverse array of professional development and training opportunities to all staff including face to face and online options. Gateway to College is part of a larger "Gateway" network that gives staff ample opportunities to receive specialized professional development within their larger community. Staff also have access to CCP’s plethora of instructional and student centered professional development supports. Employees for CCP receive bi-annual evaluations that cover several domains, which helps to determine the level of differentiated staff supports that are needed. The staff performance review process provides a tool to allow focus on areas of performance deficits as well as a plan to address/support areas of need. Part of this evaluation process offers the opportunity to provide feedback and suggestions to staff. Individual staff meetings occur once per semester to review the status of the goals outlined in the performance evaluation. **Staff turnover** (Yes). Gateway has an extremely low turnover rate. The majority of the staff have been working with the program for over three years. Administration stated that a previous program director left due to a new professional opportunity within the Community College space. However, the transition to a new director was seamless as they received ample support from the team. **Professional development calendar** (Yes). The program provided ample documentation regarding their internal professional development calendar as well as integration to CCP’s professional development schedule. Documented professional development activities focused on student supports, content specific topics, and CCP’s procedures. In addition, the Gateway administration further integrates itself into the CCP community by facilitating professional development related to teaching high school students. **Staff selection process** (Yes). All staff are hired through CCP’s staff selection

process. The program provided the review team with evidence regarding job postings, application processes, and the interview and initial orientation procedures for the College's norms and standards. **New staff induction** (Yes). The new staff induction, which is facilitated by the College's Human Resources Office, covers exceptions and human resources considerations, along with an extensive review of College benefits and professional development opportunities. Gateway administration then hosts a series of formal and informal meetings to support any new staff in understanding and functioning within the expectations of the program. **Principal conducts regular observations and provide constructive feedback** (Yes). Gateway does not have CCP faculty under its auspices, administration focuses their observation and feedback efforts on ACs, who are the main interface with students. Main feedback conversations discuss the individual staff member's understanding and progress toward Gateway's expectations and goals, which can lead to suggestions and support from leadership. Moreover, administration performs file audits, which can lead to additional conversations about staff progress. The review team believes that Gateway would benefit from a more systematized outline of how observations and feedback take place, which can include formal and informal observations.

Data

Rating: PROFICIENT [4 of 4 components met]

Strategy to track student academic progress and provide interventions (Yes). Prior to enrollment in the program, Gateway offers students a four-day long "boot camp" in math, reading, and writing. This boot camp serves as a preparatory course for the Accuplacer – the intake exam used by CCP to assess students' placement levels. After students take the Accuplacer, program administrators analyze results and place students in the proper introductory/remediation level courses. After students are fully enrolled into courses across campus, they remain directly supported by the Program Director, Assistant Director, Academic Coordinators, and Academic Mentors on a daily basis. Academic Coordinators are administered a caseload of 20-22 students and are specifically tasked with tracking the academic and social progress of their students. Academic Coordinators maintain a constant relationship with both students and professors. Student course performance is monitored on a daily basis by program leadership through Starfish, an enterprise software platform that shows if students are struggling or exceed expectations in a course. If a student is struggling in a course, Academic Coordinators and Academic Mentors make sure to connect students with a rich variety of remediation resources such as the Student Academic Computing Center (SACC), Learning Lab, Academic Advising, or the program library. Program administrators then continue to have daily inquiries before classes with students to ensure that the academic interventions are working and that the students' grades are improving. **System to collect and analyze data** (Yes). To monitor student-level performance, Gateway has created an extensive Student Academic Profile, which serves as an individualized dashboard used to track students' grades, high school credits, and college credit hours. Program administrators also use the Starfish platform to reframe student-level performance, giving them a personalized analysis of each student's strengths and weaknesses. Gateway also engage in formal monthly meetings to review and discuss program-level data. The Program Director has created a report which monitors critical program performance metrics such as attendance, literacy and numeracy gains, retention and promotion, standardized testing, graduation, and postsecondary outcomes. This report is primarily used to track historical trends while also comparing most recent program results to Network objectives. **Program improvement plans and related data reports** (Yes). Gateway's strategic plan is called the "GPS Improvement Action Plan." This Action Plan lays out specific goals related to "Student Academic Success", "Program Shared Vision of Success", and "Data Implementation Strategies". Each domain has extensive "intervention strategies" that offer school administrators new perspectives on how to reach program goals. Each goal is given a specific timeframe of expected completion and program leaders progressively monitor whether goals are being met throughout each term. **Formative and summative assessments** (Yes). Gateway has a rich differentiation of formative and summative assessments. All of these assessments are customized by college professors.

Professors use formative assessments to create a collaborative classroom environment and to fine-tune instruction according to students' needs. Examples of formative assessments include review quizzes, group leadership projects, peer evaluations, and classroom discussions. All summative assessments are also crafted by college professors. These assessments are usually in the form of midterm or final exams, though some professors opt to assess students by administering research assignments or rigorous group projects with major writing components. Gateway also requires all Seniors to present a comprehensive senior project prior to graduating. This project gives students the opportunity to put into perspective everything they have learned during their time at Gateway and map out their next steps upon completing the program.