

2025 Budget Testimony

Opening Remarks

- Council President Johnson, and members of Council, thank you for the opportunity to meet with you today.
- On behalf of the Board of Trustees and the College community, we appreciate your ongoing support of Community College of Philadelphia and look forward to working with all of you as we continue to advance the “city’s college.”
- I am joined at the table today by the College’s new interim president, who has the full confidence of this board and our great institution.
- Also in attendance are members of the Cabinet, who have worked cohesively in recent weeks as the College has experienced a transition in leadership. I am grateful to them for their collaboration and guidance during this important time.
- Today, we are eager to share information about successes and accomplishments related to the College, including increased enrollment and retention; the City College for Municipal Employment; our upcoming Commencement ceremony; and the finalization of a four-year contract with our Faculty and Staff Federation.
- We remain grateful for the funds provided last year, which were helpful in covering the costs of our contract, and will be happy to answer any questions you may have after we conclude our testimony.

Enrollment

- At a time when many institutions of higher education face significant enrollment challenges, the College’s enrollment has steadily risen over the past three years.
- In fact, in the fall of 2024, the College reported the highest enrollment of all 15 community colleges in Pennsylvania.
- I am proud to report that as of right now, the College’s unduplicated credit enrollment for 2024-2025 is 18,326 students, up 4.5 percent from last year.
- Spring enrollment is up 8 percent in headcount.
- Summer I enrollment is up 17 percent in headcount, and Summer II is up 20 percent in headcount.
- While it’s early, fall is up nearly 47 percent in headcount.
- These gains extend to our dual enrollment program, which permits high school students to take College courses. Many of these students simultaneously earn a high school diploma and an associate degree. In 2024-2025, we enrolled 1,732 dual enrollment students, up 8.5 percent from last year.
- We have also seen increased enrollment among our Octavius Catto scholars. This scholarship initiative is a result of a partnership with the City of Philadelphia and

provides last-dollar funding and support services for eligible students to earn their degree for free. This fall, we welcomed our largest cohort to date with 706 scholars. Since the initiative launched in 2021, we have enrolled approximately 3,350 Catto scholars.

- I am also happy to report a significant enrollment increase at our Northeast Regional Center. This spring, we are up 32 percent from the same time last year. And in the fall, we were up nearly 25 percent from the prior fall.
- And we find that we are retaining these students once enrolled. The retention rate among full-time, first-time students was at 60 percent in 2024, up three percent from the prior year. Improved retention rates are a key indicator of subsequent student success.
- There are many reasons enrollment and retention continue to rise at the College, including the quality of program offerings and the flexibility in course formats provided.
- However, I would be remiss if I did not acknowledge the tremendous efforts of the admissions, enrollment, and support services staff. They go out of their way to make open houses and open enrollment events a success, and provide students with the necessary resources and encouragement once they enroll.
- Support services like our Center for Male Engagement; the I Am More Re-entry Engagement Program, which has hosted several record clearing and pardon clinics in recent years; the Food Collaborative; the Gender and Sexuality Resource Center; and the Veterans Resource Center all provide important services that ensure our students are able to thrive outside of the classroom so they can continue to excel academically.
- The College's continued growth in enrollment and retention is largely thanks to these individuals who work tirelessly on behalf of our students.

City College for Municipal Employment

- I am also delighted to share that since last year's budget hearing, the College partnered with the City to officially launch the City College for Municipal Employment, or CCME.
- The initiative intentionally provides career pathways for Philadelphians seeking an opportunity to enjoy social and economic upward mobility.
- Specifically, CCME provides free career training and education to Philadelphians interested in working for the City in the areas of business administration, healthcare, skilled trades, technology, and public safety.
- We exceeded our initial goal of enrolling 100 students in the first year and will celebrate the graduation of the first completing students at a ceremony with the mayor next month.

- We also have 37 high school students from 6 charter schools enrolled in CCME Power Skills courses in the pipeline to be screened for Water Community Apprenticeship and Future Track job opportunities.
- That's in addition to 22 high school seniors from District schools enrolled in Fleet Services and Department of Public Property career and tech education programs that will enroll in CCME Power Skills courses this summer to complete their municipal pathway and prepare for job opportunities with the City.
- We also have a student who completed in the fall who will be starting at the College as an administrative associate for CCME this week.
- We look forward to continued partnership to support CCME and our shared goal of a safer, cleaner, and greener Philadelphia for all.

Workforce and CATC

- Also related to training our city's workforce, our Career and Advanced Technology Center in West Philadelphia continues to expand access to programming geared toward strengthening our region's economy.
- In the 2024-2025 academic year, the CATC served approximately 1,100 students, up 36 percent from the prior year.
- Thanks to a recent partnership with BlueForge Alliance, funded by the United States Navy, we are proud to be launching a new noncredit program at the CATC this fall that will prepare 150 Philadelphians for high-demand jobs in the fields of naval welding and nondestructive testing.
- This is the only two-year program of its kind in the country, offering hundreds of hours of hands-on training to fill critical construction and advanced manufacturing roles in the growing maritime industry. We are confident this program will be just the beginning of a fruitful relationship with the Navy.
- The following companies are hiring CCP students: Holtec Industries; Rhoads Industries; B&G; Naval Foundry and Propeller Center; American Wireworks; and Deval.
- I look forward to sharing success stories from the program, which will also provide scholarships to students, once it is up and running.
- Also at the CATC, our transportation technology programs are flourishing, with enrollment in these programs up 45 percent from last year.
- Many programs, including our Electric Vehicles and Hybrids proficiency certificate, were recently included in a series 6abc is producing about the vehicles of the future.
- Our signature Toyota T-TEN program, the only one of its kind in the region, also continues to offer students the opportunity to work at local dealerships while attending classes, so they earn money while attending school.

- And we recently added a medium and heavy truck technology degree program, which was featured on WHYY's "You Oughta Know."
- We know that students who have graduated from these programs are employed at places like Chapman Ford, Chapman Nissan, the City of Philadelphia, PGW, SEPTA, Penske Trucking and the University of Pennsylvania.
- We are also proud that the CATC serves as a community meeting space in West Philadelphia. We have recently hosted events like a police commissioners' community forum, roundtable discussions with elected officials, and more, and look forward to continued partnership with the community.

Health Care

- We are also making great strides to help meet the needs of our area's growing demand for medical and health care professionals, and other professions in STEM.
- Our popular health care degree and certificate programs train students to become nurses, nurse aides, dental assistants, aseptic technicians, and pharmacy technicians, among other sorely needed health care professions.
- Enrollment in our hallmark Nursing program for 2024-2025 is up nearly 12 percent from the prior year, with approximately 420 students enrolling this past year.
- And Health Care studies represents the largest uptick in the number of spring students among all academic programs at the College, with an increase of 485 students.
- In response to the region's needs and demands, we have introduced new programming, including a proficiency certificate in community health and wellness, and a popular accelerated post-baccalaureate program for students with bachelor's degrees seeking to become registered nurses.
- This year, we will celebrate the fifth cohort to graduate from this program, which regularly has a waiting list.
- We also look forward to enhancing academic offerings this fall with the addition of an A.A.S. degree program in electrical engineering technology and a proficiency certificate in clinical trials.
- To ensure students have access to quality hands-on learning opportunities, we have also made significant investments in our facilities.
- We recently updated our respiratory care technology and physics labs.
- We also renovated our dental hygiene clinic, which provides care to members of our community and allows students the opportunity to safely practice patient care.
- I am also delighted to announce we are constructing a state-of-the-art health care simulation lab where health care students and professionals can practice and refine their skills without risking patient safety.

- This lab will be available to a variety of health care programs, allowing students from different disciplines to work side by side in a space that will mimic real clinical settings.
- We look forward to cutting the ribbon on this high-tech lab when it is complete, and thank you for your continued support of our STEM programs that provide such important opportunities for our students and our city.

Commencement

- And, as we close out this semester, I am proud to announce we will honor approximately 1,700 graduates as part of the Class of 2025 at Commencement on Saturday, May third, at the Liacouras Center.
- Our Commencement speaker is Pennsylvania Lieutenant Governor Austin Davis, the youngest lieutenant governor in the country and the first Black lieutenant governor in Pennsylvania history.
- We are honored to have Lieutenant Governor Davis join us, and we look forward to the words of wisdom he will share with our graduates.
- We also look forward to hearing one of our own graduates address her classmates. Fatoumata [fought-oh-MAHT-ah] Sacko is an immigrant, a non-native English speaker, and a mother who, despite the challenges she's faced, has received several scholarships and made time to participate in extracurricular activities.
- She is also a semifinalist for the Jack Kent Cooke Undergraduate Transfer Scholarship, which is a highly selective, national program providing funds for community college students seeking to complete their bachelor's degrees.
- Fatoumata is one of five CCP students to be selected as a Jack Kent Cooke semifinalist – the most in all of Pennsylvania!
- We look forward to celebrating these students, in addition to all of our graduating students, at Commencement next month.

Negotiations and Budget Impact

- Before I conclude my remarks, I am pleased to provide an update regarding negotiations with the Faculty and Staff Federation.
- As you know, the College recently finalized four-year contracts with the Faculty and Staff Federation that provides for wage increases, reduces class sizes, and enhances our best-in-class medical benefits for certain employees.
- The contracts also provide for some of the highest starting rates of pay for classified positions in the City of Philadelphia.
- However, while we are glad to have finalized these contracts that recognize the hard work of our employees, we simultaneously remain cognizant of our duty to act fiscally responsibly on behalf of the College.

- As a result, the Board adheres to best practices, similar to those embraced by accrediting organizations, that call on the College to maintain 25 percent of our operating budget in reserves at all times.
- To do so is to ensure the College's fiscal stability and health, preserving accessibility for generations of Philadelphians to come.

Budget Ask: Upcoming Fiscal Year/Closing

- We are grateful for the \$3 million allocation in Mayor Parker's proposed budget.
- We request an additional \$5 million annually from City Council to continue to provide a high-quality educational experience to students and cover the costs of our contract.
- With these funds, we will build upon our continued successes and ensure the College remains a desirable institution where Philadelphians can learn and grow.
- Thank you again for the opportunity to share this information with you today.
- We look forward to answering any questions you may have.