

President's Report to the **BOARD OF TRUSTEES**



SOUTHERN STATE
COMMUNITY COLLEGE

AUGUST 2025 | DR. NICOLE ROADES, PRESIDENT

State Budget Update

On July 1, 2025, Ohio's Biennial Budget for fiscal year 2026/2027 was enacted. Among the higher education provisions, there were several notable outcomes that we had been watching closely. Among them include:

- **State Share of Instruction (SSI) and Tuition Flexibility** – The budget included a 1% increase in SSI as well as a provision to authorize the Board of Trustees to increase tuition by up to \$10 per credit hour.
- **Employment Outcomes** – While some aspects of this new funding mechanism were vetoed, the general spirit of the provision remained intact. Despite agreement that the data is difficult to verify, there is \$100 million in each fiscal year that will be distributed according to a formula devised by the chancellor. To leverage this provision more fully, it will be necessary for Southern State to graduate substantially more technical graduates in specific programs as designated by the Chancellor. Currently, our allocation is just over 1%.
- Redistribution of up to \$5.4 million in FY26 from the Community College SSI allocation for the final distribution of Eastern Gateway close-out.
- **Technician Aligned Degrees** – Although the process for allocation has not yet been determined, additional funding may be accessed by the completion of technician-aligned associate degrees.

Overall, the final outcome was mostly consistent with our expectations. The allocations, which clearly prioritize student outcomes, provide a natural direction from which institutional goals can be established.

Education Provisions of “One Big Beautiful Bill Act”

In the days leading up to the One Big Beautiful Bill Act (O3BA), higher education was anxiously awaiting the final verdict on several provisions related to federal aid, student outcomes, loan repayment, and accountability, among other things. As reported in June, advocacy among colleges and universities appeared to be largely successful in diverting problematic adjustments

to the credit hour minimums for full- and part-time status. When the bill was unveiled on July 4, the existing definition for credit hours remained the same. Other provisions, however, including those related to an earning metric standard, are very much on our radar as colleges and universities are unwrapping the details of this standard. Today, it appears that loan eligibility for incoming students, in specific programs, will be contingent on a wage-earning metric for students who have previously completed the program and have median earnings that exceed the average income of high school graduates, ages 25-34. Clearly, there is much research remaining to understand how to obtain and monitor the benchmark.

Major Investment in Southern State to Scale the Ohio Code Scholar Program

As part of the Biennial Budget, Southern State was graciously awarded \$2.5 million (\$1M FY26 and \$1.5M FY27) for purposes of scaling the Ohio Code Scholar program across Ohio. Through the advocacy of Senator Shane Wilkin of Ohio's 17th District, and the talent of Dr. Josh Montgomery, alongside the project management expertise of Ms. Amy McClellan, this program has grown from a few students across several local schools to nearly a thousand participants across many schools, near and far. Southern State is both humbled and grateful to have such a substantial investment in our College to reach underserved populations and help advance their technology knowledge and skills. In collaboration with the Ohio Department of Higher Education and the Department of Development, the College is eager to begin shaping the formal scaling strategy and identify early target regions.

Strategic Planning Engagement to Commence

Early conversations with our planning consultant from Bellwether confirm a planning period of September to December, keeping us on track to finish our current plan and be ready with a new plan in 2026. The executive team and I have been working to identify the Steering Committee representatives, including representation from the Board of Trustees. Additionally, we have been putting some early suggestions forward for stakeholder engagement participants, including survey populations, focus group contributors, and individual interview participants. A SharePoint has been established, and we are actively loading the page with reports and information that will help frame the environmental context.

Update on Strategic Enrollment Management Project

Congratulations to the entire Southern State team, and particularly those who have been actively involved in the Steering Committee and work groups, for completing the heavy lift of Phase I & II of the Strategic Enrollment Planning Project. The project officially migrates from "planning" to "management" as the work in Phase III & IV gets underway. A complete

summary is available in your packet, and **Ms. Amy McClellan** will provide additional insights during the meeting.

OACC Executive Director Visits Southern State

We were honored to have the opportunity to host Avi Zaffini, Executive Director of the Ohio Association of Community Colleges, on campus in early August. In addition to the updates and campus tour the Southern State team shared with him, he reciprocated by updating us on how OACC can support our efforts and his vision for the organization going forward. As part of his visit, Mr. Zaffini spent time with the Executive Leadership Team and was able to tour the campus and meet guests who happened to be on campus that day. We are thankful for the relationship we share with OACC and for Avi's local and extended team's contributions to helping Ohio's community colleges remain competitive in Ohio's higher education landscape.

President's Activities and Involvement

Since my last report, I have been involved in the following meetings, calls, and events:

- Highland County Chamber of Commerce Board Meetings
- Meeting with Highland County Democratic Party Representatives re: Scholarship Setup
- RNL Site Visit Six | Executive Leadership Team
- SSCC and Adena Partnership Calls
- Call with Forvis Mazars Representative
- Call with dotEDU Live | The Big Beautiful Bill Has Passed. What's Next?
- OACC Strategic Planning Committee Meeting
- SSCC and SSEA Negotiations Meetings
- STEEL Conference Committee Meetings
- Introductory Call with TRIAD Representative
- Call with TPMA Representative | Exploring Micro-Credentialing Opportunities
- Meeting with Shell Family Representatives | Scholarship Criteria
- RNL Site Visit Six | Debrief
- SSCC and University of Cincinnati Collaboration Meeting
- Navigating AI in Higher Education Call | Live Panel
- Strategic Planning Call with Bellwether Representative
- AACC Federal Policy Webinar | Reconciliation and Funding
- Campus Tour/Visit with OACC President & CEO
- Call re: Mt. Orab Sanitary Sewer Project

- College Completion Plan Discussion | OACC Leadership Academy
- OACC Presidents Meeting

ACADEMIC AND STUDENT AFFAIRS

ACADEMIC AFFAIRS

Opening Week of Fall Semester

Our Fall semester begins Monday, August 25, and the week of August 18 is opening week for faculty and staff. The week includes a variety of meetings and professional development opportunities including an All-College Meeting, a Keynote Speaker (Dr. Bob Haas, OACC), academic faculty meetings and trainings, kick-off of the year's Deep Data dive series, sessions from our health plan vendors, as well as social events like an all-campus lunch, and the "Perk Me Up" Strategic Enrollment Plan Appreciation Break. Selected staff have online drop-in sessions for our adjunct faculty, as well as our CCP instructors and high school counselors.

Of course, getting students registered for Fall is our top priority! Several departments will be open on Saturday, August 23, to assist students with registration, advising, admissions, financial aid, learning services and accessibility, library, bookstore, IT, Testing Center, and Business Office. There will also be a "Fall into 50" event on that Saturday. The Marketing department will have sweet treats to celebrate our 50th birthday!

Higher Learning Commission Comprehensive Visit

The HLC will visit campus April 13 and 14, 2026, as part of the Commission's Comprehensive Review. The final report and supporting materials are due to HLC by March 16, 2026. Our Federal Compliance report is due in October 2025. There are currently two writing teams for the review: an assurance argument writing team and a federal compliance writing team. Our thanks to everyone involved!

Adjunct | CCP Faculty Professional Development Event

On Wednesday, July 23, the Adjunct Faculty Committee hosted the annual Adjunct | CCP Faculty Professional Development Event on Central Campus. Thirty (30) faculty participated in the event – (4) adjuncts | (26) CCP teachers. There were also more than 20 SSCC staff and

faculty in attendance. Topics covered during breakout sessions included: Library Services & Resources; Mental Health Concerns; AO/ChatGPT; Simple Syllabus; CCP-Specific Q&A; and CANVAS. The attendees enjoyed a nice lunch catered by Rachel's House, WCH. The day ended with Division Meetings.

Transfer Activities

Transfer fairs for students looking to continue their education beyond their associate degree are scheduled in the 9th week of the Fall and Spring semesters. Transfer partners from public and private institutions in Ohio, Kentucky, and Indiana participate in the events. Students focused on a 2 + 2 transfer with partner schools are connected with advisors at intended institutions to ensure a smooth transition of coursework and pathway onto their bachelor's degree. Southern State staff will be presenting at two conferences this fall with several partners on seamless guided processes for community college students to bachelor's degree programs.

Brown County Campus

Summer session activities were a healthy blend of students in classes and community partners facilitating trainings and workshops. Summer academics were predominantly nursing, science (chemistry/biology), and truck driving courses. Full tutoring support (face-to-face and Zoom) for Math and Science courses was offered twice weekly during the term.

Community partner activities included Chamber special events and county leadership training, Educational Service Center Steamology training and preparation, Business Advisory Council for career technology opportunities, County Economic Development industry partner recruitment, and local social services training sessions. This Fall, the SSCC Brown County campus is the host site of Brown Leads Youth Academy (Chamber Leadership program for high school juniors and seniors).

STUDENT AFFAIRS

Student Affairs Annual Summer Retreat

The Student Affairs team participated in an in-house retreat on Monday, July 21. The primary purpose of the event was to strengthen the *team* through various activities. A discussion was held about the importance of and how to achieve work-life balance.

Academic Advisors

The chart below gives an overview of academic advising appointments at Central and Brown Co. Campuses during the month of July 2025.

MONTH	NEW: TRAD/NON- TRADITIONAL	NEW: CCP	TOTAL NEW	RETURNING: TRAD/NON- TRADITIONAL	RETURNING: CCP	TOTAL RETURNING	TOTAL ADVISING*
JULY 2025	82	96	178	156	53	209	387
JULY 2024	55	37	92	154	59	213	305

Accessibility and Learning Services (A&LS)

Accessibility Services (AS) | Summer 2025

- We have 22 students registered with Accessibility Services.
- We have proctored 31 exams (Hillsboro and Mt. Orab).
- Five new students registered with Accessibility Services in preparation for Fall 2025.

Learning Services (LS) | Summer 2025

- Summer term Tutors/Coaches had approx. 70 tutoring sessions with students since the term started on May 26.
- We have and continue to offer 60-70 hours of tutoring. This availability is for both campuses and includes online/Zoom tutoring options.
- LS is continuing to partner with the Nursing department on the launch to help students attain a passing score on the Nursing HESI Entrance Exam. This program was launched in May 2025. The goal is to help students who do not pass this exam on their first attempt to remediate so they can pass on their second attempt to help gain admission to the Nursing program. Approx. 50 students have started the process with approx. 50% seeing enough improvement to take the test for a better score. Working with the Nursing department on getting updated data.

Admissions

Although we are down a couple of CCP schools participating in the Fall 2025 term from last fall, we are currently up on the number of CCP onsite classes offered *from 71 to 84* (if all classes have registered students). High schools' onsite registration will start coming in once schools start to return. The majority will be returning mid-August.

Fall CCP applications are still coming in. Typically, the CTC schools do not know their students until fall, so many applications are late. If the same occurs this year, we are on the way to having an increase in CCP applications. Last year, there was a total of 1124 CCP applicants for summer/fall. To date this year, 1094 students have applied through CCP.

Financial Aid

Southern State Community College's Financial Aid Program Participation is scheduled for reauthorization this fall. This is an essential compliance practice that determines the College's ability to offer financial aid. The reauthorization process, led by the Financial Aid department, includes oversight of essential policies and practices. The reauthorization application has been submitted well in advance of the September 30 deadline. Upon receipt, the Department reviews the application and asks for additional documentation if needed.

1,629 FAFSA applications were processed by Financial Aid for the 2024-2025 academic year.

Financial Aid paid 2024-2025 academic year through August 6, 2025:

Federal Student Loans:	\$1,764,682
FSEOG:	\$97,778
Federal Pell Grant:	\$2,489,647
Trustee/Foundation Scholarships	\$469,633
State Aid	\$354,637
Other Aid	\$130,588

Activities the Financial Aid Office was involved in for July:

NASFAA Virtual Training Conference
ADN Orientation
Student Affairs Retreat

Testing Center

The following chart shows the July 2025 testing activity of the testing centers at both the Hillsboro and Mt. Orab Campuses. Testing is provided for those testing with Pearson Vue,

taking the Accuplacer, the HESI exam for the nursing program application, ACT WorkKeys, Certiport, and proctored exams.

JULY 2025 TESTING ACTIVITY LOG			
TEST	HILLSBORO TESTING CTR	MT. ORAB TESTING CTR	TOTALS
Pearson Vue	48	30	78
ACCUPLACER	138	77	215
HESI	0	10	10
ACT WorkKeys	6	0	6
Certiport	0	0	0
Proctored Exams	0	0	0
TOTALS:	192	117	309

Campus Security Report

Security and Emergency Response Coordinator, **Gary Heaton**, reports the following activity since the last report:

- Monitored and assisted at the Adult Opportunity Center Recognition Ceremony
- Coordinated Fall Semester Off-Duty Detail schedule with Hillsboro and Mt. Orab Police Departments
- Attended two Zoom sessions presented by the Ohio Emergency Management Department, Ohio Public-Private Partnership on disaster preparedness and recovery

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY AND INFRASTRUCTURE

Copier Fleet Replacement

After twenty years with the same copier vendor, Southern State recently signed a five-year lease with Woodhull USA, a reputable copier and print solutions provider that serves the Cincinnati, Dayton, and Columbus area. Woodhull was selected from five bidders vying to provide our copier fleet service.

This process allowed us to restructure and reduce our copier footprint based on employee input about utilization and current needs, while maintaining the same copier brand and interface that

employees are accustomed to. We are encouraged to see that Woodhull is already providing exceptional service. This project was a lengthy and complex process, and we are pleased to report that we anticipate an annual savings of \$67,500. Special thanks to **Tyler Bick** (Technology Coordinator) for his detailed work to make this project a reality.

Computer Science Renovation Project

BHDP is actively working on the design phase of the Computer Science renovation project. Additionally, the design will include a small portion of the adjacent student services office complex. With the pre-design and schematic design phase complete, the team is moving into design development. We still anticipate a construction start in January 2026.

Adult Opportunity Center Building Renovation

Renovation efforts are moving along well. The facilities team is continuing to remove old material and assess the needs while seeking quotes for repair work and new furnishings that involve the roof, drywall repair, HVAC systems, flooring, ceiling tile, restrooms, etc.

The project will transform the former daycare operations into a modern professional workspace for additional classroom and office space for the Adult Opportunity Center, Workforce Development training, and other community meetings and events. Special thanks to **Loren O’Cull** (Facilities Manager), **Jeff Knauff** (Facilities Technician), and **Steve Bikowsky** (Maintenance) for their hard work on this project.

Central Campus HVAC Renovation

Six of the ten failed heat pumps have been replaced, and the four remaining units are scheduled for completion by the end of September. However, we are still focusing on completing the design for the larger project, which includes boilers, controls, and remaining heat pumps.

Design and space changes required for the Computer Science renovation project have led to some mutual planning for HVAC needs between Heapy Engineering and BHDP. The two teams are working together to determine the best path forward for this space and its impact on the larger HVAC project.

WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT & COMMUNICATIONS

Grants

ASPIRE

The program has begun using online testing, which has been beneficial to the students and the instructors. Students electing to complete the online testing come into the department to complete their orientation and continue to their selected class. The online test provides scores immediately after the test has been submitted, making it an easier transition into the learning process.

Performance Information:

Performance Target	May-25	Jun-25	Change	June 25 State Average
Measurable Skill Gains	51.80%	53.19%	1.39%	48.73%
Persistence (hours)	58.41	59.47	1.06	52.49
Progress Test Rate	47.79%	50.00%	2.21%	46.55%

Ohio Code Scholar

On August 6, coordinators and leaders of the Ohio Code Scholar project welcomed 28 teachers from across southeast Ohio to the fall professional development day at Southern State to learn about the 2025/2026 project and program.

Workforce Development

Truck Driving Academy (Class A and Class B)

The TDA equipment passed all state (ODOT) inspections of equipment with no additional actions required. Congratulations to Director **JT Smith** and the entire TDA team on this accomplishment.

The Pass Rate (obtaining their CDL) is currently 97%.

Enrollment Information

	2024-2025	2025-2026
July	8	5
August	17	8
September	9	
October	17	
November	14	
December	15	
January	10	
February	12	
March	10	
April	15	
May	10	
June	19	
Y-T-D	156	13

Microsoft Excel Training Sessions

In August, Excel training sessions were conducted at both the Mt. Orab and Hillsboro campuses. Each location offered two 4-hour sessions, allowing participants to choose between a Basic Excel Overview or an Advanced Excel Overview. Attendance was strong, with a total of 23 participants across the two sessions in Mt. Orab and 31 participants across the two sessions in Hillsboro. Feedback was highly positive for both the training content and the facilitator, reflecting the value and impact of these professional development opportunities.

Fiber Optics Technician Training

Congratulations to **Todd Guden** (Southern State Alumni) for passing the certification to train our community as a certified Fiber Optics Technician training facilitator. Classes will resume in early September.

Communications and Marketing

Presence Report

Southern State Community College

Marketing Area	May	June	July
Press Release	10	4	6
Advertising / Print	3+	3+	10+
Email Campaigns	1	1	1
Emails Deployed	25,000	25,000	25,000
Number Opened	4,201	4,023	4,107
Percentage Opened	16.80%	16.09%	16.43%
Clicks within content	522	640	593
Percentage of total clicks	2.09%	2.56%	2.37%
Social Media/Geofencing			
Impressions/ads Deployed	43,948	172,726	25,732
Clicks	577	835	287
CTR (click through rate)	1.31%	0.48%	1.12%
Top 3 locations of activity	Georgetown, Chillicothe, Wilmington	Georgetown and Chillicothe (paper plant closure location)	Georgetown and Chillicothe (paper plant closure location)

Truck Driving Academy

Marketing Area	May	June	July
Email Campaigns			
Emails Deployed	25,000	25,000	25,000
Number opened	4,157	4,203	3,736
Percentage Opened	16.63%	16.81%	14.94%
Clicks within content	596	522	556
Percentage of open and clicked	2.38%	2.09%	2.22%
Audience Management			
Impressions/ads Deployed	47,769	50,513	54,026
Clicks	56	155	130
CTR (click through rate)	0.12%	0.31%	0.24%

Recent Southern State Appearances | Since the last report, Southern State has appeared in the following media outlets:

- Press Releases**

Southern State Community College honors three employees who will receive SOCHE Excellence Awards

Southern State to offer Online Sport Management Course This Fall ([Enrollment](#))

SSCC Board of Trustees to meet June 26

Southern State's Adult Opportunity Center hosts recognition celebration for the Aspire and Graduation Alliance Programs ([Student Success](#))

Southern State Business Degree Opens New Career Path for Recent Graduate ([Enrollment](#), [Student Success](#))

Southern State named Best Local Community College by Cincy Magazine's Family Choice Awards for Second Year in a Row ([Enrollment](#), [Relevance and Excellence](#))

Southern State Congratulates Newest Graduate of Ohio Leadership Academy for Student Success

SSCC to Offer Microsoft Excel Training to Boost Workforce Skills ([Workforce Development](#))

SSCC Foundation and the Highland County Democratic Party announce new scholarship opportunity

Auditions for SSCC Theatre's "Hamlet" will be on August 29 and 30

- **Advertising/Print/Direct Mail:**

June e-blast promoting Online programming to the Columbus area – Franklin Co. ([Enrollment](#))

June e-blast promoting summer start dates for the TDA program ([Enrollment, Workforce Development](#))

July e-blast promoting Online programming to the Chillicothe area – Ross Co. ([Enrollment](#))

July e-blast promoting August/September start dates for the TDA program ([Enrollment, Workforce Development](#))

Adams Co. Fair ads and Jr. Fair shirts

2025 Clinton Co. Progress Edition ad and story ([Enrollment, Relevance and Excellence](#))

2025 Clinton Co Fair ads and Jr. Fair shirts

Highland Co. Jr. Fair shirts

542-piece mailing to new applicants, never registered. (excludes CCP since January 2025) ([Enrollment](#))

840-piece mailing to current students not yet registered for Fall (excludes CCP and Grads) ([Enrollment](#))

New billboard in Clermont Co./Goshen area promoting online programs and fall semester registration. 80,000-plus traffic count location. The duration of the ad is 1.5 months. ([Enrollment](#))

- **Social Media:**

- June Facebook Insights**

- Reach: 21.2K
 - Views: 64.6K
 - Content Interactions: 1.2K

- June Facebook Top Content**

- Sports Management Online Course
 - Reach: 9,597
 - Views: 13,868
 - President's and Dean's List
 - Reach: 3,461
 - Views: 7,915\
 - In Our Nursing School Era
 - Reach: 4,714
 - Views: 7,535

- July Facebook Insights**

- Reach: 116.2K

- Views: 206K
- Content Interactions: 378

July Facebook Top Content

Excel Workshop Ad (*Relevance and Excellence, Enrollment*)

- Reach: 20,668
- Views: 41,490

Online Business Program Ad (*Relevance and Excellence, Enrollment*)

- Reach: 30,289
- Views: 39,990

Online Education Program Ad (Still running) (*Relevance and Excellence, Enrollment*)

- Reach: 22,358
- Views: 32,170

HSSR Program Ad (Still running) (*Relevance and Excellence, Enrollment*)

- Reach: 17,262
- Views: 20,947

Computer Science Program Ad (Still running) (*Relevance and Excellence, Enrollment*)

- Reach: 4,443
- Views: 10,195

Health Sciences Program Ad (Still running) (*Relevance and Excellence, Enrollment*)

- Reach: 2,997
- Views: 8,531

Engineering Program Ad (Still running) (*Relevance and Excellence, Enrollment*)

- Reach: 2,484
- Views: 5,393



June LinkedIn Insights

- Impressions: 3,022

July LinkedIn Insights

- Impressions: 4,226

Events/Publications

50th Anniversary activities – ongoing through Dec. 2025 ([Relevance and Excellence, Enrollment](#))

June/July Employee Newsletter Email

August Employee Newsletter Email

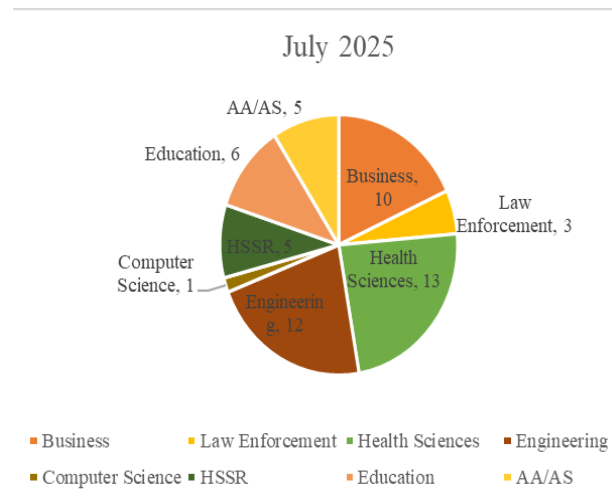
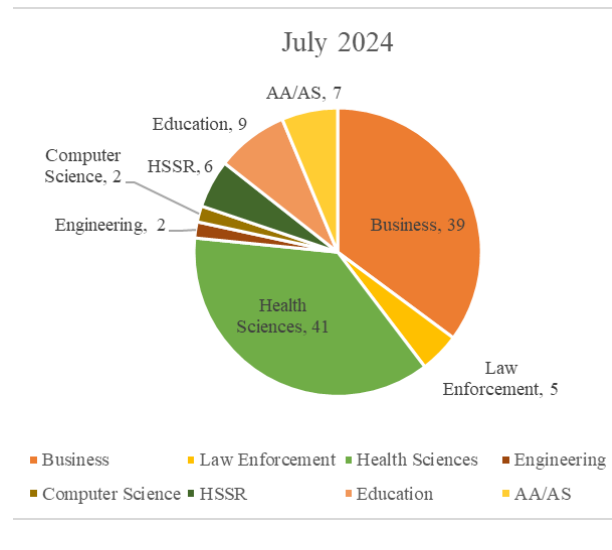
2025 Fall College Guide ad – Cincinnati market ([Enrollment](#))

Fall into 50 Registration Blitz event prep for Sat., August 23. Mailing invites to the following groups: 585 New Applicants not yet registered for the fall semester, and 885 current students who still have not yet registered for the fall semester ([Enrollment](#))

RNL-SEP Working Group Activities ([Enrollment](#))

Recruitment

Program Information Requested:



Recruitment Efforts:

- Adams County Fair
- Adams/Brown County Community Event
- Patriot Palooza: First Responders (Fayette, Clinton, Brown Counties)

Professional Development:

- EAB: Recruiting the anxious generation—insights to help you in 2025
- OACAC Webinar: Maximizing Enrollment Strategy: Understanding List Sources & Their Impact
- OACAC Webinar: Building Trust, Inspiring Confidence: Cultivating Relationships with Students in Their College Search
- Handshake Academy

Projects:

- New Student Orientation (August 20th and 21st)
- 50th Anniversary
- Handshake Implementation—
RM Call: Intro to Implementation ✓
RM Call: Implementation Kick Off ✓
RM Call: Pre-Employer Launch ✓
Employer Launch
Pre-Student Launch
Go Live!