

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



SOUTHERN STATE
COMMUNITY COLLEGE

OCTOBER 2025 | DR. NICOLE ROADES, PRESIDENT

U.S. Department of Education Approves Southern State's Participation in the Federal Student Financial Aid Program

I am pleased to congratulate **Jaime Simmons**, Director of Financial Aid, as well as other members of the Student Affairs group, who contributed to a successful application for program participation. The eligibility application requires a high level of precision as well as evidence of solid processes and procedures supporting responsible institutional operations.

Approval is generally granted for three or five years. In the last cycle, the institution received a three-year rating with minimal explanation why we weren't eligible for the longer period. Certainly, this elevated our attention to this current application, which makes the five-year certification announcement even more rewarding. The next scheduled reapplication date is March 31, 2031.

Ohio Department of Higher Education Efficiency Report

As an annual measure of compliance with Ohio Revised Code Section 3333.95, state colleges and universities are required to submit an annual Efficiency Report to the Chancellor. Intended to address affordability and efficiency, the report aims to sharpen our focus and set a course for increasing efficiency. This legislation was passed in 2017, the first report was submitted in 2018, and subsequent reports have been submitted annually since then.

The 2025 report highlights the College's continued efforts in strategic partnerships and practices, as well as academic initiatives such as textbook affordability, and other measures implemented to create efficiencies. Southern State continues to highlight our efforts in Program Vitality as one of the College's most consistent efficiency initiatives. Additional efforts include reviewing and renegotiating long-term contracts, such as printing, to achieve new savings.

Strategic Planning Engagement Update

The strategic planning engagement with Bellwether Consulting is well underway. The Steering Committee met on September 15 for the project kickoff. During this session, the group spent time considering Southern State's greatest opportunities for impact, external challenges, most

significant strengths, and growth points, among other things. Following the kickoff, individual stakeholder interviews were launched, while weekly project update meetings continued with **Dr. Erika Goodwin** and me.

Phase 1 will continue through October, where the team will synthesize findings from internal and external assessments into a fact base and generate insights and implications for a “go forward” strategy. On October 22, consultants will visit campus for a work session to process findings from the fact base, laying the groundwork for Phase 2 efforts, which include articulating strategic priorities, creating contingency actions, and identifying measures to manage, maximize, and demonstrate impact.

Special thanks to the many stakeholders, both internal and external, who agreed to participate in the process through one-on-one interviews. Additionally, we would like to thank the members of the Steering Committee, including **Dr. Steven Hinshaw, Mr. Brian Rice, Ms. Amy McClellan, Ms. Karen Daniels, Mr. Brian Prickett, Mr. Zac Kronick, Ms. Katy Markey,** and Ms. Julie Bolender.

Moving Forward with an Enrollment Management Professional is the Essential Next Step to Continue the Strategic Enrollment Planning Work

In early July 2025, Southern State was in the final stage of “strategy development” within the Strategic Enrollment Planning engagement. Among the various action plans was the addition of an Enrollment Management professional. Among other action plans, nearly half included some element of recruiting, admissions, orientation, outreach, and communications, all of which require a more comprehensive leadership foundation specific to this work than is currently in place. The delay in implementing many of the ideas that emerged through the first few phases of the engagement has been largely due to the hesitation in prioritizing funding for an enrollment professional.

After several weeks of reviewing the action plans and determining which plans can move forward, the Executive Leadership team acknowledged that a vast number of the action plans rely on strong leadership, particularly in enrollment management. I concur with this rationale and believe that such a professional would not only bridge many of the key services across the institution but would also enhance our outreach to targeted populations such as adult and online learners. Furthermore, a renewed emphasis on data specific to recruiting, admissions, retention, persistence, and completion could positively impact our strategic efforts and, subsequently, our financial sustainability.

Final Enrollment Reflects More Students but Taking Fewer Hours

While many may turn to the enrollment snapshot on the first day of the term as the final word on enrollment, the “final, final” count doesn’t occur until several weeks into the term.

Generally, the fluctuations aren’t significant, but we typically expect some minor backsliding before the end of the tracking period. Fall 2025 began slightly behind projections, and this is still the case in the final period of tracking.

On the 36th day, “total enrollment,” the number used for budgeting purposes, reflected a slight decline of 2.9%, while headcount, which refers to the number of individuals, reflected an increase of 0.9%. This discrepancy is not entirely out of the ordinary and actually reflects a positive trend—we are attracting more people. Unfortunately, they are enrolling for fewer credit hours, but this, too, is a scenario we can influence to some extent. When students are able, and it makes sense, we can provide an extra nudge to increase their enrolled credit hours. There is ample empirical evidence to suggest that students who stretch themselves more frequently tend to graduate at a higher rate than those who are more conservative in their credit hour attempts. That said, it is also important to recognize that life circumstances play a significant role in these decisions, and for many students, life involves tough choices about work, childcare, family, and school. It’s a challenging thing to balance, which makes the role of advisors even more important in student outcomes.

To regain our planned budgetary position, we need to see an uptick in Spring enrollment of over 7%. As in all circumstances, we will closely monitor this scenario and make adjustments as necessary.

More 50th Anniversary Celebrations

On September 16, guests from across Highland County and beyond joined at the Central Campus in Hillsboro for a Chamber of Commerce-supported Ribbon Cutting in honor of the College’s 50th Anniversary. Including recognition that had previously been sent for events earlier in the year, the College proudly accepted congratulatory recognition from Governor Mike DeWine and Lt. Governor Jim Tressel, the Ohio House of Representatives under the representation of Bob Peterson of the 91st District, and our friends from the Adams County Chamber of Commerce.

Special thanks to the Highland County Chamber of Commerce Director, Jamie Wheeler, and members, **Liz Burkard**, **Ally Osman**, and **Kaylynn Bell-Wolfinger** of Southern State’s Communications Team, **Tyler Bick**, Southern State Technology Coordinator, **Robin Tholen**,

President's Office, as well as **Loren O'Cull** and **Jeff Knauff** of the Southern State Maintenance Team.

A similar Brown County Chamber of Commerce Ribbon Cutting Ceremony will be celebrated at our Mt. Orab location on Thursday, October 30. The brunch reception will take place from 9:00 a.m. to 10:30 a.m.

President's Activities and Involvement

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

- Fall Semester Opening Week Sessions:
 - The Importance of Self-Awareness and Stress Management to Prevent Burnout
 - Title IX Training
 - Keynote Speaker, OACC's Director of Institutional Effectiveness: AI Training
 - Deep Data Dive | Self-Service Report Options and Data Request Forms
 - "Perk Me Up" Break | Strategic Enrollment Planning Appreciation
- SSCC All-College Meeting and Lunch
- New Student Orientation
- SSCC Faculty Senate Meetings
- Strategic Planning Meeting with Bellwether Representatives
- SSCC Board | Long-Term Planning/Facilities Committee Meeting
- Dean of Academic Affairs Position Interviews
- Scaling Shortened Terms Informational Webinar
- Highland County Chamber of Commerce Board Meetings
- SSCC Foundation Board | Quarterly Meeting
- STEEL Conference Preparation and Committee Meetings
- OACC Strategic Planning Committee Meeting
- SSCC Project Leads Weekly Meetings with Bellwether Representatives
- Southwest Tech Prep Agreement Update Meeting
- Deep Data Dive | Ohio's Biennial Budget and What it Means for Southern State
- "Walk-A-50" | 50th Anniversary Celebration Event
- OACC Presidents' Meetings
- Fall Student Success Leadership Institute (SSLI) | Sinclair Community College
- The Ohio Ethics Law Webinar: The Refresher Course
- SSCC Steering Committee Kick-Off Meeting with Bellwether Representatives
- Unlock Effective Data Governance on Campus: Practical Steps for Higher Ed Leaders

- President's Council Meetings
- Weekly Meetings with Vice President of Academic and Student Affairs
- Highland County Chamber of Commerce | SSCC 50th Anniversary Celebration and Ribbon Cutting
- OACC Strategic Planning Committee Work Session
- OACC Networking Breakfast | Columbus State Community College
- 2025 Governor's Trustee Conference | Columbus State Community College
- Highland County Chamber of Commerce | Golf Outing
- Strategic Thinking in Uncertain Times: Partnership, Programs, & People Webinar
- SSCC and Adena Partnership Call
- "See You at the Poll" Patriot Campus Ministries Event
- America 250 Tree Planting and Ribbon Cutting
- SOCHE Executive Board of Trustees Meeting
- Photos with SSCC Scholarship Recipients
- Highland County Forum Event
- Deep Data Dive | Paying for College: Scholarships, Federal and State Support

ACADEMIC AND STUDENT AFFAIRS

ACADEMIC AFFAIRS

The campus continues to prepare for our April 2026 Higher Learning Commission (HLC) Comprehensive visit. Senate Bill 1 compliance has also been a main priority of Academic Affairs, with writing new policies and completing a number of waivers and forms for ODHE as required to meet the new Ohio Revised Code.

New Dean of Academic Affairs

Dr. Peter Hanson has joined SSCC as our next Dean of Academic Affairs. Dr. Hanson replaces **Dr. Jeff Montgomery**, who retired from that position in May but is now back part-time as our CCP Coordinator. Dr. Hanson is coming to us from Tennessee, where he was most recently the Assistant Vice President of Academic Affairs for Jackson State Community College. He was also the former Chief Academic Officer and Dean at Chatfield College and had a nearly 20-year career as a tenured Associate Professor of Chemistry at Wittenberg University. He holds a Ph.D. in Organic Chemistry from the University of Wisconsin-Madison and a B.A. in Chemistry from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. He brings of wealth of experience in academic affairs, assessment, accreditation, advising, grant writing, and previously oversaw areas of

student services, library, registrar, and academic assistance center. He served as the accreditation liaison with HLC when he was with Chatfield. He is a published author and presenter. We welcome Dr. Hanson and his wife, Lynn, who is also a history adjunct faculty member for us. Many thanks to the search committee - *Dr. Erika Goodwin, Meg Storrs, Dr. Jessica Wise, Ann Ernst, Dr. Peggy Chalker, Dr. Julie Krebs, Zac Kronick, Tom Payton, Kelly Schradin, Dr. Tatiana Luna Pineda, Michelle Callender, Paula Campagna, and Brian Rice.*

Nursing Program Update

The most recent nursing graduates have completed the licensure exam process with successful outcomes well above the national mean. Practical Nursing Program graduates of December 2024 obtained a first-time NCLEX-PN pass rate of 92%. The May 2025 Associate Degree first-time NCLEX-RN pass rate is 93.94%. The graduate employment rate is 100%.

The Practical Nursing Program will be expanding in volume with a section provided on Central Campus during Spring 2026. In the past, the program was offered on our Brown County Campus only.

The Bright Pathway, a collaborative partnership with interested clinical partners to support improved nursing student outcomes, has a planned launch in January 2026. The pathway will assist the student to develop a structured support system to better navigate their educational, personal, and professional journeys.

The STNA Program, provided in collaboration with Workforce Development, continues to serve an increasing student volume with 20 students currently enrolled. The short-term training prepares the student for an entry role in healthcare for a role of high demand in our communities.

Our Dean of Health Sciences, **Dr. Julie Krebs**, has announced her retirement in December 2026. She has been a foundational part of our nursing program for many years. We are actively searching for a new Director of Nursing for the program.

Brown Campus Activities

Campus activities, beyond the welcome week treats and study aids, came with a “50” theme for the College anniversary activities. “Fifty and Fueled” gourmet coffee bar doubled up with “Walk for 50” during the week between two county fairs. Students lined up for their shot of “caffeinated energy” and walked it off with a 3K loop (7x) around the parking lot. Signs of inspiration (reflecting our vision statement) marked the path around the campus. Students

enjoyed the excellent weather and the opportunity to walk with friends. Central Campus also hosted a “Fifty and Fueled” and a Walk-a-50 event. The events were organized by our Marketing Department Director, **Elizabeth Burkard**.

The College community partners, Mt. Orab Economic Development and the Brown County Chamber Youth Leads Academy, have been very grateful for our partnership. Mt. Orab and Brown County Economic Development offices showcase the county in the College’s facilities. Highlighting the academic opportunities and workforce development training available to potential economic partners provides an added incentive.

The Brown County Chamber, in partnership with the Brown County Education Service Center/Business Advisory Council, has launched its first year of Brown Leads Youth Academy. This outreach to 40 Brown County high school juniors and seniors focuses on discovery and mentorship into career pathways, as well as cultivating leadership skills and interest in service to the community. These students are both non-CCP and non-CTC. Our campus in Mt. Orab is the host for many of the sessions.

SW Ohio College Tech Prep Center Grant Position

The College Tech Prep program (soon to be named *Career Pathway Support Network*) partners with both the Ohio Department of Higher Ed and the Ohio Department of Education and Workforce to provide student access to career technical pathways. Students who start technical education in secondary education systems or adult training often earn credit that transfers as foundational courses into college technical programs. This program is grant-funded and managed through the ODEW’s Office of Career-Technical Education and ODHE.

Southern State partnered with the Southwest Ohio College Tech Prep Center in 2018. That partnership provides a funded position to state higher education institutions in the region. The employee is hired and housed by the partnering college and is jointly managed by both the institution and the regional center. SSCC’s Tech Prep liaison connects local high school career tech programs and adult career training centers to the College’s twelve technical certificate and degree pathways. The liaison also connects college faculty to regional showcases in order to promote their technical programs and professional development opportunities to potential students. Southern State has committed to another year of partnership and will soon be in the process of recruiting for the position once this year’s grants are awarded.

Articulation and Transfer Activities

ODHE initiated a major update of general education course alignment several years back, post-COVID. The OT36 re-evaluation of general education courses is wrapping up, as well as the update of guaranteed transfer pathway maps (OGTP) for each institution. SSCC's Transfer Resources web page highlights the College's transfer alignments with all 35 state institutions, as well as independent (private) institution articulations. In addition to the OT36, TAG, and OGTP pathways, SSCC has 12 career pathways for students earning CTAG credit (technical training through tech centers). Students can see how their training aligns with the college courses, which moves them through their program faster.

Dr. Peggy Chalker, Dean of Articulation and Transfer, is a part of the coordination team for the SW Ohio Transfer Partners training summits. The Fall Summit, held at Miami University-Hamilton, September 26, focused on some strong models and promising practices for CCP Transfer Pathways and Early College Academies. The Coordination team is targeting better structure and coordination between professionals working with high school students and supporting transition at the college level for the Spring Summit.

Dr. Chalker is also presenting at the October SOCHE Articulation Conference – “Making Plays for Transfer Success: Tools and Strategies for Relationship Management Across Institutions.”

Instructional Technology

The Department of Instructional Technology continues to support academic excellence and student success through strategic initiatives, faculty development, and instructional design support. Below is a summary of the Director, **Dr. Angel Mootispaw's** recent activities.

Strategic Initiatives and Institutional Planning

- Received NC-SARA renewal approval for 2025–2026, ensuring compliance and continued interstate access for distance learners.
- Attended the Ohio Quality Matters (QM) Executive Committee meeting, contributing to statewide quality assurance and best practices in distance education.
- Attended the Canvas Customer Success Manager (CSM) monthly webinar to stay informed on learning management system enhancements and best practices.

Quality Assurance and Professional Development

- Delivered professional development workshops on the implementation of Simple Syllabus and the integration of Generative AI in teaching and learning.

Curriculum Development and Faculty Support

- Developed and provided guidance for the development of Elementary Spanish I and Elementary Spanish II online asynchronous courses.
- Completed updates for twenty-one fall Blueprint courses to maintain consistency with curriculum changes, design quality, and compliance with regular and substantive interaction standards.
- Provided multiple support services for faculty in instructional design and andragogical best practices for online learning, including course revisions, accessibility compliance, and innovative engagement strategies.
- Delivered seventeen individual coaching sessions, providing faculty with targeted instructional design guidance, RSI compliance strategies, and best practices for effective online teaching.
- Onboarded 4 new adjunct faculty members—all of whom successfully completed *INST 501: Facilitating Distance Education*.

Faculty Achievement

Congratulations to adjunct faculty, **Lisa Brinkman, Kara Juillerat, Abra Koch, and Gabriella Lochbaum** for completing INST 501: Facilitating Distance Learning, a professional development course designed to enhance online teaching effectiveness.

The Instructional Technology Department is pleased to announce the addition of **Maria Chepulis**, a new part-time instructional designer, to the team. Maria is an experienced instructional designer who has worked in education, training, and business leadership for over 25 years.

Maria will assist with faculty training, course design, and the integration of innovative teaching tools that support student success. This position strengthens SSCC's commitment to academic excellence, accessibility, and continuous improvement in distance education.

Campus Safety and Security

Security and Emergency Response Coordinator, **Gary Heaton** kicked off the Student Affairs Lunch and Learn Series for the year by co-presenting with **Dr. Jessica Wise**, Dean of Student Affairs and Instructional Operations, on Bystander/Upstanding training and other security updates. His other recent activities include:

- attended All College meeting, associated sessions, and 50th Ribbon Cutting event
- attended the Ohio Corporate Security Symposium in Columbus sponsored by Homeland Security and the Ohio Department of Public Safety
- assisted staff with several security concerns involving students and instructors (one incident involved a prospective student carrying a weapon on campus)
- attended September and October HFC Safety Council meetings
- monitored installation of 3-M Safety Treatment to doors and windows at Central Campus by Solar Tint

STUDENT AFFAIRS

Constitution Day Recognition

The Student Affairs team created a display in honor of Constitution Day on September 17. The exhibit centered around all aspects of the U.S. Constitution, its history, and purpose. Games were provided to test an individual's knowledge of this important document and the "*who, what, when, where, why*" of its purpose. Special thanks to **Jaime Simmons** and **Billie Powell** for their above-and-beyond efforts.



#1 Speaker Series Lunch & Learn: Kick-Off | Bystander Intervention Training

About a dozen SSCC employees attended the September 17 Speaker Series Kick-Off | Bystander Intervention Training on Central Campus. Bystander Intervention is defined as the willingness of someone to intervene in a potentially harmful situation and de-escalate it in a positive way. This year, **Gary Heaton**, Security and Emergency Response Coordinator, presented information about bystander | upstander intervention.



This year’s Speaker Series events include:

STUDENT AFFAIRS CAMPUS ACTIVITIES 2025-2026AY				
DAY	DATE TIME	TOPIC	TYPE	SPEAKER
Wednesday	9/17/25 12-1 pm	Kick-off to the Speaker Series Bystander Training	Lunch & Learn Central rm 346	Dr. Jessica Wise Gary Heaton
Wednesday	10/8/25 12-1 pm	National Depression and Mental Health Awareness	Lunch & Learn Central rm 346	Tom Payton Elizabeth Crabtree
Wednesday	11/12/25 12-1 pm	Domestic Violence Awareness	Lunch & Learn Central rm 346	Tom Payton Elizabeth Crabtree

Wednesday	2/11/26 12-1 pm	Human Trafficking	Lunch & Learn Central rm 346	Jody Bishop
Wednesday	3/18/26 12-1 pm	Sexual Assault Violence Awareness	Lunch & Learn Central rm 346	Tom Payton Elizabeth Crabtree
Wednesday	4/8/26 12-1 pm	Drug & Alcohol Awareness	Lunch & Learn Central rm 346	Tom Payton Elizabeth Crabtree

Academic Advisors

The chart below gives an overview of academic advising appointments at Central and Brown County Campuses during the month of September 2025. For comparison purposes, September 2024 numbers have also been included.

MONTH	NEW: TRAD/NON- TRADITIONAL	NEW: CCP	TOTAL NEW	RETURNING: TRAD/NON- TRADITIONAL	RETURNING: CCP	TOTAL RETURNING	TOTAL ADVISING*
SEPT '25	17	9	26	74	38	112	138
SEPT '24	28	21	49	80	28	108	185

Accessibility and Learning Services (A&LS)

Accessibility Services (AS)

- 52 students are registered with Accessibility Services
- Updated AS web page to enhance student and community information
- Proctored 10 exams in September 2025
- Participated in the SOCHE Accessibility and Disability Services Committee (9/21)

Learning Services (LS)

- Spoke to several classes about Learning Services
- In the process of onboarding another HSSR intern as a Peer Academic Mentor
- Converting HESI test prep materials from paper handouts to online access via Canvas
- Coordinator **Ryan Hall** is devoting more time to Mt Orab campus due to reduced academic coaching availability

Financial Aid

SSCC has been re-certified to offer federal financial aid, with certification running through June 30, 2031. This is a process the financial aid office goes through every 3 to 6 years.

The majority of our aid for the Fall semester has been disbursed. As of September 30, the financial aid office has disbursed the following aid:

- Pell Grant \$1,090,859
- Direct Loans \$622,457
- Trustee Scholarships: \$56,768
- Foundation Scholarships: \$149,919
- FSEOG: \$34,800
- State Aid: \$78,251
- Outside Scholarships \$37,290
- Sallie Mae Loan \$7,958

*The 2026-2027 FAFSA is now open. An email has been sent out to all current students letting them know that they can go ahead and apply. As always, the financial aid office will sit down with any student to help them complete this form.

Records

Summer Graduates

All diplomas have been mailed to students who completed their degree and/or certificate requirements at the end of the 2025 Summer Semester. Below are the totals with a three-year comparison.

Degrees/Certificates	Conferred 8/5/2025	Conferred 7/30/2024	Conferred 8/1/2023
AA	13	16	22
AS	12	11	2
AAB	3	4	6
AAS	9	3	4
ATS	0	0	0
Certificate	5	3	6
Totals	42	37	40
Less-Than-1-Year (LT1) Certifications			
Summer Semester	2025	2024	2023
Police Academy	0	0	10
Real Estate	3	7	11
Phlebotomy Training	0	0	1

Veteran Services

We are continuing to see an increase in the total number of students using VA Education Benefits. This current 2025 Fall Semester, we have 27 students using VA Education benefits. This is an increase from last Fall semester's student total of 20. There has been a considerable increase in the use of Chapter 35 education benefits that can be used by spouses and dependents. Last Fall, 25% use of benefits was under Chapter 35, and this current Fall term, the percentage has increased to 52%.

Registration

The Spring semester is scheduled to begin on Monday, January 12, 2026. Registration for students will open on the following dates:

- Veteran and Service Members – Monday, October 20
- Sophomores – Monday, October 27
- Freshmen and New Students – Tuesday, October 28

Testing Center

The following chart shows the September 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.

September 2025 TESTING ACTIVITY LOG			
TEST	HILLSBORO TESTING CTR	MT. ORAB TESTING CTR	TOTALS
Pearson Vue	28	15	43
ACCUPLACER	7	11	18
HESI	2	12	14
ACT WorkKeys	0	0	0
Certiport	0	0	0
Proctored Exams	0	0	0
TOTALS:	37	38	75

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY AND INFRASTRUCTURE

Professional Development

Brian Rice, Vice President of Technology and Infrastructure, participated in two high-impact public sector events in September, both focused on advancing cybersecurity and responsible AI.

Cybersecurity Strategy Event

Featuring Ohio's Cybersecurity Strategic Advisor to the Governor and the state's Chief Information Security Officer and Chief Privacy Officer, the session examined Ohio's transition from strategic planning to operational execution in cybersecurity. It emphasized the importance of cross-functional coordination among policy, IT, and operations teams to proactively address rapidly evolving cyber threats. The insights shared were especially relevant for leaders focused on breaking down silos and building resilient infrastructure.

Ohio Government Innovation Research Council Roundtable

The roundtable, held at Ohio State University, focused on the theme: *Capabilities for Responsible AI: Technology, Services, and Policy of an Agentic Government*. Discussions explored the future of Artificial Intelligence and its safe, ethical deployment—particularly in ways that uphold data privacy. The council emphasized AI's transformative potential to enhance efficiency, productivity, and scalability across the public sector, with a strong emphasis on cross-sector collaboration, strategic partnerships, and innovation.

Computer Science Renovation Project

BHDP has completed the design development phase and transitioned the Computer Science renovation project into the Construction Documents (CD) phase. Initial construction estimates exceeded the budget, prompting adjustments to the scope and the identification of several alternate items for consideration during the general contractor bidding process. Construction is anticipated to begin in February 2026.

Building Renovation

Renovation efforts are progressing smoothly. The roof has been completed, and new gutters are scheduled for installation next week. Drywall preparation is finished, and the painter will begin taping off areas shortly. Painting is expected to be completed by October 17. Lighting supplies

will arrive on Wednesday, with installation of new fixtures to follow. Afterward, work will begin on the flooring and restroom fixtures.

This project will transform the former daycare space into a modern environment designed to support expanded classroom and office use 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 outstanding contributions to this project.

Campus Safety Grant Improvements

With support from a Campus Safety Grant awarded by the Ohio Department of Higher Education, Southern State has initiated a series of safety and security upgrades across its campuses.

- Physical Security Improvements:
 - Blue safety bollards have been installed in front of glass entryways at Central Campus, providing a critical physical barrier to protect facilities.
 - 3M 8-millimeter security window film has been applied to glass doors and windows throughout Central Campus to reinforce vulnerable entry points.
- Cybersecurity Initiatives:
 - The grant has also funded the purchase of KnowBe4 cybersecurity awareness training for both employees and students.
 - The first round of training will launch on Monday, October 6, aligning with National Cybersecurity Awareness Month and reinforcing the College’s commitment to protecting digital assets.
- Upcoming Enhancements:
 - The next phase of the grant will focus on expanding the camera system at Central Campus and upgrading door hardware in preparation for the installation of modern access control equipment.

These improvements reflect Southern State’s comprehensive approach to campus safety, addressing both physical and digital security to ensure a safer environment for students, staff, and the broader community.

WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT & COMMUNICATIONS

Grants

ASPIRE

After much angst concerning adult education federal funding issues over the last few months, Aspire funding was finally determined and released to local programs. While we anticipated a possible 11% cut in federal funding, we were pleasantly surprised to receive an amount of federal dollars comparable to those received in previous years. There was a very minimal reduction in the amount of state funding we received. The Coalition of Adult Basic Education members, including our staff, played a crucial role in advocating for the necessary funding.

When compared to the same time period last year, our FY26 enrollment is 11% greater, and our persistence rate is 4.2% higher. The first state data pull of FY26 is scheduled for October 14.

Workforce Development

Truck Driving Academy (Class A and Class B) | Enrollment Information

	2024-2025	2025-2026
July	8	5
August	17	5
September	9	15
October	17	
November	14	
December	15	
January	10	
February	12	
March	10	
April	15	
May	10	
June	19	
Y-T-D	156	25 (-9 YTD)

Communications and Marketing

Presence Report

Southern State Community College

Marketing Area	July	August	September
Press Release	6	3	5
Advertising / Print	10+	10+	10+
Email Campaigns	1	1	1
Emails Deployed	25,000	25,000	25,000
Number Opened	4,107	4,323	
Percentage Opened	16.43%	17.29%	
Clicks within content	593	640	
Percentage of total clicks	2.37%	2.56%	
Social Media/Geofencing			
Impressions/ads Deployed	25,732	53,235	
Clicks	287	231	
CTR (click through rate)	1.12%	0.43%	
Top 3 locations of activity	Georgetown and Chillicothe (paper plant closure location)	Georgetown and Chillicothe (paper plant closure location)	

Truck Driving Academy

Marketing Area	July	August	September
Email Campaigns			
Emails Deployed	25,000	25,000	25,000
Number opened	3,736	5,430	
Percentage Opened	14.94%	21.72%	
Clicks within content	556	731	
Percentage of open and clicked	2.22%	2.92%	
Audience Management			
Impressions/ads Deployed	54,026	64,706	
Clicks	130	132	
CTR (click through rate)	0.24%	0.20%	

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

- **Press Releases**
 - Southern State's Fall Semester begins August 25 ([Enrollment](#))
 - SSCC Board of Trustees to meet August 21
 - SSCC announces honors list for summer semester ([Student Success](#))
 - Southern State to Celebrate 50th Anniversary with Community-Wide Celebration ([Enrollment](#), [Student Success](#), [Relevance & Excellence](#))
 - Southern State Appoints New Dean of Academic Affairs ([Relevance & Excellence](#))
 - Southern State's Practical Nursing Program Accepting Applications for January 2026 Cohort ([Enrollment](#))
 - Allen Named 2025 Coca-Cola Leaders of Promise Scholar ([Student Success](#))
 - Southern State Recognized as Industry Leader in Experiential Learning ([Workforce Development](#), [Relevance & Excellence](#))
 - Southern State Launches Online OSHA Training Program ([Workforce Development](#))

- **Advertising/Print/Direct Mail:**
 - August e-blast promoting Online programming to Pike County, Scioto County, and Jackson County ([Enrollment](#))
 - August e-blast promoting Fall start dates for the TDA program ([Enrollment](#), [Workforce Development](#))
 - September e-blast promoting Online programming to Pike, Scioto, and Jackson County ([Enrollment](#))
 - September e-blast promoting Fall start dates for the TDA program ([Enrollment](#), [Workforce Development](#))
 - WNJ – Clinton Co. HS Fall Sports ad/publication ([Enrollment](#))
 - Champion Media – Clermont, Adams, and Brown Co. HS Fall Sports publication ads ([Enrollment](#))
 - Times-Gazette Highland Co. Fall Sports ad/publication ([Enrollment](#))
 - WCH Record Herald Fall Sports ad/publication ([Enrollment](#))
 - Highland Co. Fair ad and T-shirt sponsor for high school students ([Enrollment](#))
 - Brown Co. Fair ads and T-shirt sponsor for high school students ([Enrollment](#))
 - Miami Trace HS Yearbook ad – full page ([Enrollment](#))
 - North Adams HS Yearbook ad – full page ([Enrollment](#))
 - North Adams HS Basketball Program ad – full page ([Enrollment](#))
 - Series of ads promoting the LPN Spring Cohort pathway ([Enrollment](#))
- **August Social Media:**
 - **Facebook:** ([Relevance & Excellence](#))
 - Views: 236,423 (+11%)
 - Interactions: 598 (+57%)
 - Content Interactions: 1.5K (+44.3%)
 - Reach: 111.3K
 - **Instagram:** ([Relevance & Excellence](#))
 - Accounts Reached: 11,252 (+1.8%)
 - Profile Visits: 73
 - Followers: 324 (+2.2%)
 - **LinkedIn:** ([Relevance & Excellence](#))
 - Impressions: 1,878
 - Engagement Rate: 5%
 - Followers: 5,587
 - Program Specific Ads (Facebook & Instagram) ([Relevance and Excellence](#), [Enrollment](#), [Student Success](#))
 - Completed on August 5th – Truck Driving Academy Commercial
 - Views: 1,434
 - Reach: 838
 - Interactions: 16
 - Impressions: 937
 - Completed on August 5th – Business

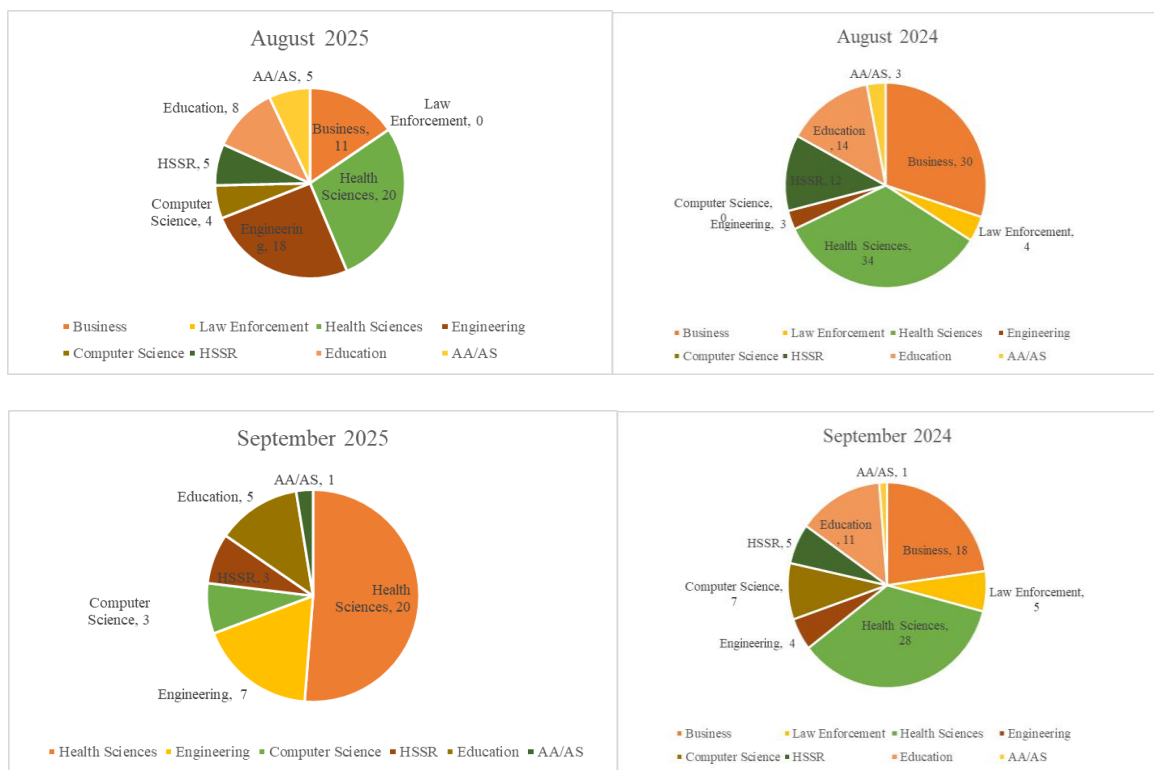
- Views: 46,333
 - Reach: 45,297
 - Link Clicks: 334
- Completed on August 5th – Computer Science
 - Views: 4,556
 - Reach: 12,555
 - Link Clicks: 269
- Completed on August 5th – Engineering
 - Views: 3,644
 - Reach: 3,239
 - Link Clicks: 299
- Completed on August 5th – Human & Social Services
 - Views: 45,295
 - Reach: 45,136
 - Link Clicks: 344
- Program Ads, targeted towards adult students (all ads are currently active)
(*Relevance and Excellence, Enrollment, Student Success*)
 - Education
 - Views: 33,198
 - Reach: 32,087
 - Link Clicks: 293
 - Business
 - Views: 25,113
 - Reach: 25,864
 - Link Clicks: 264
 - Computer Science
 - Views: 23,668
 - Reach: 23,430
 - Link Clicks: 286
 - Engineering
 - Views: 13,355
 - Reach: 15,145
 - Link Clicks: 203
 - Health Sciences
 - Views: 3,841
 - Reach: 3,283
 - Link Clicks: 170
 - Human & Social Services
 - Views: 3,841
 - Reach: 3,283
 - Link Clicks: 170
- Suicide Prevention Month Post (*Relevance and Excellence*)
- Labor Day Post (*Relevance and Excellence*)

- 50 & Fueled (*Relevance and Excellence*)
- Fall Orientation (*Relevance and Excellence*)
- **September Social Media:**
 - **Facebook:** (*Relevance & Excellence*)
 - Views: 125,892
 - Interactions: 792 (+33%)
 - Content Interactions: 782
 - Reach: 56.5K
 - **Instagram:** (*Relevance & Excellence*)
 - Accounts Reached: 11,919 (+8.0%)
 - Profile Visits: 45
 - Followers: 325 (+0.6%)
 - **LinkedIn:** (*Relevance & Excellence*)
 - Impressions: 1,596
 - Engagement Rate: 3%
 - Followers: 5,620
 - Program Ads, targeted towards adult students (*Relevance and Excellence, Enrollment, Student Success*)
 - Education
 - Views: 34,117
 - Reach: 33,498
 - Business
 - Views: 26,292
 - Reach: 26,960
 - Computer Science
 - Views: 27,561
 - Reach: 27,477
 - Engineering
 - Views: 19,467
 - Reach: 18,289
 - Health Sciences
 - Views: 13,577
 - Reach: 3,794
 - Human & Social Services
 - Views: 40,301
 - Reach: 3,618
 - LPN Program Ad – currently active (*Relevance and Excellence, Enrollment*)
 - OSHA Classes Ad - currently active (*Relevance and Excellence, Enrollment*)
- **Events/Publications**
 - 50th Anniversary activities – ongoing through Dec. 2025 (*Relevance and Excellence, Enrollment*)

- Fall into 50 Registration Blitz Open House – Sat., August 23
- 2026 Spring/Summer Registration Guides
- 50 & Fueled Coffee Event
- Walk-A-50 Challenge
- Ribbon Cutting and Open House event – Sept. 16
- Water Workshop Brochures and mailing for the Hillsboro program, Barnesville Program, and N. Canton program (*Workforce Development*)

Recruitment

Program Information Requested:



Event Review: NSO

Total Student Participation: 72 between both locations

Total Faculty/Staff Participation: 19

Review: Overall, a good turnout at each location, numbers that were registered versus numbers that attended were different due to the large number of walk-ins (which is good!)

Need to look into the idea of an “open-house” concept rather than a formal program. Most students want to come for one stop on the map, and the rest are not needed.

**Dirty soda bar went over VERY well!*

Recruitment Efforts:

- Brown County Fair
- High School Visit: Bethel Tate
- High School Visit: Greenview High School
- Clermont County College Fair
- Fayette County College Fair

Professional Development:

- Brown LEADS Professional Development Seminar: Leading wherever you are
- OACAC Webinar: Building the School Profile: Research and Resources for Counselors
- ABCAP: AI Without the Overwhelm
- Handshake Academy

Projects:

- New Student Orientation (August 20th, and 21st)
- 50th Anniversary
- Connect to College
- Highland County College Fair
- College Credit Plus Nights
- Handshake Implementation —
RM Call: Intro to Implementation ✓
RM Call: Implementation Kick Off ✓
RM Call: Pre-Employer Launch ✓
Employer Launch
Pre-Student Launch
Go Live!