CONNeCT
A Southeastern Massachusetts Public Higher Education Partnership

Sustainability
All six CONNeCT campuses were early signers of the American Colleges and Universities Presidents’ Climate Commitment, an agreement to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and to educate students about the environment, create solutions, and provide leadership-by-example for the rest of society.

In December 2011, 85 faculty and staff from the six CONNeCT colleges and universities came together for a CONNeCT Sustainability Conference with keynote speaker Dr. Debra Rowe, president of the U.S. Partnership for Education for Sustainable Development and professor of energy management, renewable energy technology and psychology at Oakland Community College. Presentations and materials from the conference, including the keynote speech, have been posted to CONNeCT’s Sustainability webpage. Also available is an inventory of sustainability-related campus resources and educational offerings compiled by CONNeCT Faculty Fellow in Sustainability Ann-Marie Burke. CONNeCT is currently working to organize a second Sustainability Conference next year, showcasing student projects.

What are the benefits of CONNeCT?
- Our members’ contributions leverage funding for important projects from other sources: CONNeCT received $60,000 in grants from the Department of Higher Education to continue our STEM work, $50,000 from the Southeastern Massachusetts Readiness Center for our college readiness project, and conference sponsorships of $1,500 from the Macs Clean Energy Center (Sustainability Conference) and $1,000 from Lockheed Martin Sippican (STEM Expo).
- One campus, following a discussion at a CONNeCT CFO meeting, switched office supply vendors to save an estimated $8,000 per year.
- Ninety-six CONNeCT members attended a technology in teaching training at BSU (in addition to 133 BSU attendees).

At an estimated savings of $190 per person compared to similar events, our campuses saved $18,240.
- In 2011, 833 community college students transferred to a CONNeCT four-year institution. These students received a total of $193,000 in scholarships from CONNeCT baccalaureate institutions.
- The Human Resources Managers organize the CONNeCT Leadership Development Program (CLDP), an annual professional development series for mid-level managers. Thirty participants took part in 2011-12. By participating in the CLDP as opposed to sending management trainees to outside providers, CONNeCT members collectively save around $14,000 per year.
- Presentations and materials from the conference, including the keynote speech, have been posted to CONNeCT’s Sustainability webpage. Also available is an inventory of sustainability-related campus resources and educational offerings compiled by CONNeCT Faculty Fellow in Sustainability Ann-Marie Burke. CONNeCT is currently working to organize a second Sustainability Conference next year, showcasing student projects.

Farewell to Two Founding Members: CONNeCT CEOs Retire
Kathleen Schatzberg
Jean MacCormack

The end of the 2011-2012 school year also marks the retirement of two of CONNeCT’s founding leaders, Cape Cod Community College President Kathleen Schatzberg and University of Massachusetts Dartmouth Chancellor Jean MacCormack. CONNECT thanks Chancellor MacCormack and President Schatzberg for their leadership and vision.

CONNECT Working Groups
CONNECT coordinates 18 standing and ad hoc working groups of higher education leaders to promote collaborative projects and sharing of resources and best practices:

CONNECT Leadership

Chairman
Dr. Charles Wall
President, Massasoit Community College

Treasurer
Dr. Dana Mohler-Faria
President, Bridgewater State University

Dr. John J. Sbrega
President, Bristol Community College

Dr. Kathleen Schatzberg
President, Cape Cod Community College

RADM Richard Guron
President, Massachusetts Maritime Academy

Dr. Jean F. MacCormack
Chancellor, University of Massachusetts Dartmouth

Executive Director
Dr. Kathleen Kirby

CONNECT’s mission: to improve the quality, accessibility and affordability of higher education; and to advance the economic, educational and cultural life of southeastern Massachusetts.
CONNECT’s Main Themes 2011-2012: Easing College Pathways, STEM, Economic/Workforce Development, Sustainability

EASING COLLEGE PATHWAYS There are many paths to higher education. Some students go to college straight from high school. Some start at a community college and earn a certificate or Associate’s degree there. Others earn part of a degree and move on to another institution to finish. At every point, CONNECT is there making transitions easier.

College Readiness In January 2012, CONNECT, in partnership with the Southeastern Massachusetts Readiness Center (SEMARC), awarded mini-grants to five of its member campuses to “Continue the Collegial Conversations” started at the April 2011 College Readiness Conference. High school and higher education faculty are meeting to discuss the disconnect between secondary and post-secondary education, and working to build bridges so that more southeastern Massachusetts high school graduates enter college prepared for success. The partnerships are:

- Bridgewater State University
- Bristol Community College
- Cape Cod Community College
- Massasoit Community College
- University of Massachusetts Dartmouth

The CONNECT Registrars met throughout early 2012 to propose a process for implementing Reverse Transfer at our schools. Massasoit Community College provided leadership based on a Reverse Transfer program piloted with UMass Boston in 2011. The CONNECT CEOs signed a Memorandum of Understanding to institute the program across all six campuses at their June 2012 Annual Meeting.

Ensuring Transfer Success In 2011, 833 CONNECT community college students transferred to one of the CONNECT four-year institutions. Transfer success is fostered through faculty groups meeting in the disciplines to promote curriculum alignment between the two- and four-year institutions. Alignment in the disciplines is ongoing in Chemistry, History, Physics/Engineering, and Biology, and has been completed in Writing/Composition and in Mathematics.

The final CONNECT Math Seminar was held, Wednesday, March 23, 2012. During the reception, Becky Metcalf (BSU) and Greg Gilewars (BCC), co-facilitators of CONNECT Math, thanked colleagues for their contributions to the success of the collaboration over the past six years.

The CONNECT Transfer Coordinators meet regularly to ensure that students who start their studies at one school are prepared for success if they choose to transfer to another CONNECT institution. The Transfer Coordinators are entering their eighth year of collaboration. This year, their accomplishments included the completion of new MassTransfer agreements (bringing the total to 94) and articulation agreements (total of 30). Mass Transfer and articulation agreements mean that students are able to seamlessly transfer courses from one institution to another, without delaying progress toward their degrees.

Rebecca Candiotti, Dean of Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics at Bridgewater State University, featured as a panelist during the 2012 SE MA STEM Expo.

Students at the SE MA STEM Expo make a battery out of lemons at a workshop presented by Lookheed Martin Sippican.

STEM STEM stands for Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math. CONNECT administers the SE MA STEM Network, one of seven networks statewide. Its goal: to promote interest and achievement so that more of our state’s students are ready and willing to enter the high-tech workforce that powers our innovation economy.

SE MA STEM Expo attendees learn about Geography at Bridgewater State University’s Earthview display.

ECONOMIC AND WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT Collectively, our institutions enroll more than 53,800 students, employ 9,400 faculty, staff, and students, and infuse a combined $670 million into southeastern Massachusetts. We aim to partner with area employers to ensure that our region has the highly skilled and educated workforce needed for our economy to thrive.

At the last Economic Development Summit, businesses in attendance asked CONNECT Couldn’t you set up a one-stop site for companies to seek interns from the six CONNECT colleges and universities? That way, employers who have openings for students wouldn’t have to search six different sites for contact information and enter internship information into six different systems.

The Internship Directors have set to work to create and market the consortia site. This one-stop shop for the region’s employers to access our student talent pool is expected to launch in 2013. Following the 2010 Economic Development Summit, CONNECT compiled a list of resources and contacts of workforce training programs and offices on our campuses. Visit the website: http://www.connectsemass.org/economicdevelopmentsummit.htm.