

Public Institutions of Higher Education

9. P.L.2013, c.170 (C.18A:62-4.4) provided that a person without lawful immigration status who meets other criteria may qualify to pay the in-State tuition rate at a public institution of higher education.

- *Question:* In the current academic year, how many students at each institution are paying the in-State tuition rate pursuant to this law?

At Stockton University, 38 students in Fall 2017 and 34 students in Spring 2018 were paying the in-State tuition rate pursuant to this law.

10. The "Madison Holleran Suicide Prevention Act"; P.L.2016, c.18 (C.18A:3B-72 et seq.) requires that each institution of higher education have individuals with training and experience in mental health issues who focus on reducing student suicides and attempted suicides available on campus or remotely for students 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

- *Question:* Please describe the efforts made by your institution to comply with this requirement. How has your institution publicized these services to its students? How many individuals are employed by the institution for the purpose of complying with this law?

The Stockton University Counseling Center serves as a place that provides services for suicide prevention and counseling on a daily basis. Upon the mandate of the Madison Holleran Act, the Stockton University Counseling Center has publicized its suicide prevention services, all national and local hotlines and connecting university links five times each semester.

The student population receives notification of services before residential students move in, the first day of class, before spring break, the first day of the last week of class, and during final examination week. Stockton also provides Mental Health First Aid training four times annually to University faculty, resident assistants and staff.

Stockton University recognizes Suicide Prevention Month in October where the University had more than 800 and 900 mental health screenings in one week in the last

two academic years respectively. In addition, Dr. Santana Ono, President of the University of British Columbia, spoke in November 2017 on his odyssey for suicidal thoughts, actions, and treatment. Stockton also advises "Active Minds" which is a national organization that adds to the depth and breadth of suicide prevention outreach for students.

Finally, the Counseling Center staff has one full-time Director (a Clinical Psychologist), one Psychiatrist, one full-time Director for the Women's Gender and Sexuality Center, and five full-time and one part-time licensed Assistant Directors/Counselors that provide counseling for suicidal concerns/ideations. One Assistant Director/Counselor is dedicated specifically for Military and Veteran's Services and a second is a certified Mental Health First Aid trainer.

11. According to the 2016 report of the College Affordability Study Commission, which was established pursuant to P.L.2015, c.4, the increasing cost of higher education is posing a significant barrier to students hoping to pursue postsecondary education. Nationally, after adjusting for inflation, the tuition and fees at public four-year institutions of higher education have increased over 40 percent between the 2005-2006 and 2015-2016 academic years, while increasing by 29 percent at two-year public institutions.

- *Question:* Please discuss initiatives that the institutions have taken in recent years to minimize increases in tuition and fees or to provide institutional support to their students.

Among the programs and initiatives that the University has in place, the University charges flat-rate tuition for full-time undergraduate students to continue to provide significant cost-savings and an earlier graduation timeframe as evidenced by significantly higher four- and six-year graduation rates since its implementation (61% and 73%, respectively). Notably, this unique program allows students to take anywhere from 12 - 20 credits for the same cost. As a result, more than 94% of Stockton's students are enrolled full-time, yielding significantly improved retention and graduation rates while curtailing student indebtedness.

Stockton provides a range of options to support student success and minimize the cost of higher education. These include dual-credit agreements with several area high schools, reverse transfer options at community colleges as well as more targeted

initiatives that facilitate transfer of coursework or competency-based credits, such as ACE, the Go Global Initiative, and an agreement with NJ Plan.

Stockton University provides millions of dollars in institutional funds to students in the form of scholarships and grants to assist students financially with the rising costs of higher education. For fiscal year 2018, more than \$14 million will be allocated by the University to assist financially needy students.

The University is sensitive to the financial needs of its diverse population and has created new programs to ease the financial burden on students. New programs include the Stockton Grant-in-Aid award and the Urban Leadership award. Both of these scholarships are designed to award funds to students who have a "gap" in their aid package between demonstrated need on the FAFSA and the amount of aid received from federal and/or state sources.

The Educational Opportunity Fund program is designed to meet the educational and financial needs of students whose potential for college may not be reflected in their academic grades and whose economic background makes it extremely difficult for them to pursue a college education without financial aid. Stockton's program makes higher education possible by building a community of students who are eager to learn by exposing them to academic and co-curricular experiences. Stockton is significantly expanding its EOF program in connection with the opening of the Stockton University Atlantic City campus in Fall 2018.

The University provides comprehensive support for veterans and active service members to meet their unique academic needs. A primary mission of the military and veteran's program is to guide Stockton service members to a variety of services that may benefit them and help them to connect with one another. In January of 2009 the Office of Military and Veteran Services was created. Through this office, service members and veterans can explore their eligibility for G.I. education benefits, receive referrals to a wide range of support services and connect with their fellow veterans by becoming a part of Stockton's Student Veterans Organization.

In an effort to reduce textbook and other non-tuition costs, the Stockton bookstore offers up to 80% off on rental of textbooks rather than their purchase. This program is a popular program among students.

To promote financial literacy, the Financial Aid Office offers workshops and webinars on student borrowing, budgeting, and cutting costs. The Center for Economic and Financial Literacy at Stockton offers a broad and wide array of programming including peer counseling. Every student who applies for financial aid and is otherwise eligible for aid receives a financial aid award notification with a detail breakdown of costs. Stockton's financial aid webpage contains a direct cost calculator for parents and students so they can budget accordingly.

Using institutional and Foundation funds, the Financial Aid Office provides funding to students to assist them with meeting their billable cost obligations once they have exhausted all other financial aid options. Notably, Stockton uses almost 76% of its annual direct State appropriated funding towards financial aid.

In order for Stockton to continue to minimize increases to tuition and fees, progress toward developing an equitable funding methodology must be a priority of the State. Stockton University receives materially less funding per full-time student headcount. Currently, Stockton receives \$2,043 per student compared to the Public college sector average of \$3,261 per student, and the high of \$4,102 per student within the sector. See below chart.

Senior Public Universities

FY19 Student Enrollment & Direct State Appropriation

INSTITUTION	Budgeted FY19 Students	Recommended FY19 Direct State Appropriation (\$000's)	Direct State Appropriation Per Student
New Jersey City University	5,888	\$24,154	\$4,102
William Paterson University	7,715	\$30,357	\$3,935
College of New Jersey	7,099	\$27,177	\$3,828
State Average			\$3,261
Kean University	10,644	\$30,469	\$2,863
Ramapo College	5,348	\$14,953	\$2,796
Stockton University	9,001	\$18,391	\$2,043

Source: SNJ Detailed Budget FY2019

The lack of a funding rationale effectively penalizes students and their families simply because they selected Stockton. The lack of a funding rationale also discourages public institutions from increasing capacity necessary to stem the outmigration of over 30,000 New Jersey students annually. New Jersey will never optimize its \$250,000 investment per student towards K-12 education if students continue to attend college out of state, many never returning after graduation.

Developing and implementing an equitable funding methodology will allow Stockton University to provide more robust financial aid, academic advising, financial literacy, and other critical resources to increase access for New Jersey students, reduce costs of attendance, and expedite degree completion, while maintaining excellent academic standards.