

Illinois Community College Board Complete College America Overview and 2025 ICCB Graduation Goal

Complete College America (CCA), established in 2009, is a national nonprofit that aims to increase the graduation number and rate of college students. Illinois was in the first group of states to join the initiative and be part of the CCA Alliance of States (<http://www.completecollege.org/>). To advance higher education graduation rates, CCA officials developed a series of metrics identified under three categories: **Progress (PM)**, **Outcomes (OM)**, and **Context (CM)**. Generally, each metric has subsets including full-time/part-time status, race/ethnicity, gender, age groups, remedial status at entry, and Pell recipient status. ICCB generates the entire set of metrics for the state and each community college using agency longitudinal data systems. Detailed CCA Progress, Outcome, and Context metric data can be found at the dedicated [ICCB CCA website](#).

Community colleges have been identified as pivotal in addressing the national priority to increase the number of college graduates. Additional college graduates are needed to strengthen the economy and improve the United States' competitive position in the world marketplace. Recent Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OCED) international comparisons show the United States continues to slip and is now 12th in the world in college attainment – share of adults age 25 to 34 holding degrees (OECD, 2014). To compete in the world economy and again have the highest proportion of college graduates in the world, President Obama called for America to once again lead the world in college credentials by having 5 million additional community college graduates by 2020, including students who earn certificates and Associate Degrees or who continue on to graduate from four-year colleges and universities ([White House, 2009](#)).

Fiscal Year	Graduate Goal	Actual Graduates	Progress
2009	53,053	53,053	--
2010	55,253	56,884	+1,631
2011	57,453	61,538	+4,085
2012	59,653	64,246	+4,593
2013	61,853	69,036	+7,183
2014	64,053	69,812	+5,759
2015	66,253	71,787	+5,534
2016	68,453		
2017	70,653		
2018	72,853		
2019	75,053		
2020	77,253		
2021	79,453		
2022	81,653		
2023	83,853		
2024	86,053		
2025	88,253		

Source: ICCB Centralized Data System

Illinois has committed to a goal of 60 percent of all adults – between 25 to 64 years of age – with a college certificate or degree by 2025. According to the 2013 Census figures, 43.0 percent of Illinois' adult population holds an Associate's Degree or higher compared to 40.8 percent in 2008 ([Lumina Foundation, 2015](#)). NCHEMS utilizes US Census data which currently does not capture certificate-level credentials. Credentials at the certificate-level will be essential in meeting state and national postsecondary credential completion goals.

To track educational attainment progress, ICCB and Illinois public community colleges have set annual postsecondary credential benchmarks through 2025 to ensure the state meets workforce demand for higher education certificates and degrees. ICCB has created action plans, collaborated with state partners including the Illinois Governor's Office, Illinois P-20 Council, Illinois Board of Higher Education, and Illinois Student Assistance Commission and evaluated policy to meet the need for increased certificate and degree credentials.

As depicted in Figure 1, the Illinois Community College System is annually exceeding the statewide CCA Illinois Community College Graduation Goal. To continue progress, ICCB and local community college officials have

Figure 1. Statewide Graduation Goal For Illinois Public Community Colleges
initiated an array of innovative approaches to increase the production of degrees and certificates. The Illinois Community College System is well positioned to help additional students graduate and meet the CCA Graduation Goal at the state and local levels.

ICCB also developed and released the ICCB Complete College America Web Portal in January, 2013. The web platform houses trend CCA Progress, Outcome, and Context metric trend data by community college and is intended for system use only to promote program improvement and increase the number and rate of college graduates. The Illinois Community College System is encouraged to analyze local, peer, and statewide trends over time.

Detailed comparative data from participating states are available for select metrics through *Complete College America's Game Changer State Data* [webpage](#). Out of 33 states that are currently part of CCA's alliance, Illinois is one of 28 states that provided data in 2013. For more information on the Illinois Community College System please see the [Reports & Publications section](#) of the ICCB [website](#).

