Achieve 2015 is the six-year strategic plan developed in 2009 by the Virginia Community College System (VCCS) to contribute to the economic and civic vitality of Virginia and its international competitiveness. VCCS is enhancing access to affordable education and training for more individuals so they may acquire the knowledge and skills to be successful in a global economy.

The Achieve 2015 strategic plan focuses on five major goals which include Access, Affordability, Student Success, Workforce and Resources. This Research Brief is the third of five briefs and presents data for the Affordability goal from 2007-08 to 2012-13. Affordability in the Achieve 2015 strategic plan requires colleges within VCCS to maintain tuition and fees at less than half of the comparable average cost of attending Virginia’s public four-year institutions.

Table 1 and Figure 1 (see next page for Figure 1) compare the average annual tuition and mandatory fees of colleges within VCCS to Virginia’s public four-year institutions. The average annual VCCS tuition and fees increased by 55% from 2007-08 to 2010-11 while the average annual tuition and fees at Virginia’s public four-year institutions increased by 40%. VCCS continues to achieve the Affordability goal in its strategic plan by maintaining less than half (34-38%) of the average annual tuition and fees of Virginia’s public four-year institutions from 2007-08 to 2012-13.

Table 1. Affordability: Average Annual Tuition and Mandatory Fees at VCCS Compared to the Average Public Four-Year Institution in Virginia: 2007-08 to 2012-13

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
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<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>VCCS</strong></td>
<td>$2,404</td>
<td>$2,584</td>
<td>$3,000</td>
<td>$3,225</td>
<td>$3,570</td>
<td>$3,735</td>
<td>$1,331 55.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public 4-Yr**</td>
<td>$7,083</td>
<td>$7,582</td>
<td>$7,984</td>
<td>$8,830</td>
<td>$9,534</td>
<td>$9,926</td>
<td>$2,843 40.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VCCS % of Avg. 4-yr</td>
<td>33.9%</td>
<td>34.1%</td>
<td>37.6%</td>
<td>36.5%</td>
<td>37.4%</td>
<td>37.6%</td>
<td>3.70% 10.9%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*VCCS tuition for 2009-10 reflects Summer 2010 tuition rate.
**As of May 17, 2012, the 2012-13 average 4-year tuition is projected.
Data source for the average tuition of a Virginia four-year institution is the SCHEV Tuition and Fees Report which is published every August and is available on the SCHEV website (http://www.schev.edu/reports/reportsindex.asp).
In addition to maintaining reasonably priced tuition and fees within VCCS, the Affordability goal in Achieve 2015 aims to increase the annual number of students who receive financial assistance through grants and scholarships by 36,000 individuals. Table 2 and Figure 2 present the number of grant and scholarship recipients at NOVA and within VCCS. The number of annual recipients at NOVA increased by 123% from 2007-08 to 2010-11. Likewise, the number of recipients increased by 80% within VCCS. When Achieve 2015 was crafted in 2009, the target was 87,000 individuals within VCCS receiving grants and scholarships by 2015, which was surpassed in 2010-11.

Table 2. Affordability: Grant and Scholarship Recipients at NOVA and within VCCS: 2007-08 to 2010-11

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grant and Scholarship Recipients</th>
<th>2007-08</th>
<th>2008-09</th>
<th>2009-10</th>
<th>2010-11</th>
<th>% Change from 2007-08 to 2010-11</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>NOVA</td>
<td>8,693</td>
<td>10,232</td>
<td>15,676</td>
<td>19,359</td>
<td>10,666 122.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VCCS</td>
<td>50,711</td>
<td>59,145</td>
<td>78,880</td>
<td>91,356</td>
<td>40,645 80.2%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 2. Affordability: Unduplicated Grant and Scholarship Recipients at NOVA and within VCCS: 2007-08 to 2010-11