**From:** Keith Curry <kcurry@compton.edu>
**Sent:** Thursday, August 6, 2026 6:56 PM

# President/CEO Message - August 6, 2026

Campus Community,

I wanted to begin this President/CEO Message talking about, you guessed it, "Return on Investment and Economic Mobility." In previous President/CEO Messages, I have shared a lot of information and reports related to our ongoing conversations on Return on Investment and Economic Mobility (March 28, May 2, July 10, July 31, August 7, August 29, September 19, September 26, October 24, November 7, November 14, November 21, January 16, January 23, February 27, May 1, and July 9).

In addition, over the past couple of weeks, I have shared information in the President/CEO Message (July 16 and July 30) about the Federal Direct Loan Program. On ***July 1, 2026***, many of the higher education provisions in H.R. 1, also known as the "One Big Beautiful Bill Act," took effect, including the Student Tuition and Transparency System, Earnings Accountability, and Workforce Pell. As these new accountability provisions are implemented, there will likely be significant discussion across the country about the new U.S. Department of Education earnings benchmark and its potential impact on colleges and students. Today, I want to share the Association of Community College Trustees comparison table, which details the similarities and differences in accountability regulations for degree and certificate programs and Workforce Pell programs.

The work we are implementing through the Return on Investment and Economic Mobility Framework Initiative places Compton College ahead of many institutions in preparing for these federal accountability conversations. Our recent discussions and actions related to the Federal Direct Loan Program also position us to understand better and respond to the potential impact of these new requirements on our students and programs.

However, the larger issue that has not received enough attention is the potential sanctions associated with the Student Tuition and Transparency System and Earnings Accountability requirements:

- If a program fails to meet the required metric in two out of three consecutive years, the program becomes ineligible to participate in the federal Direct Loan Program for no less than two years.
- If a program, or group of programs, fails to meet the metric, and if those low-earning programs account for half of a college's students or half of its revenue, the program or programs may become ineligible for all Title IV federal student aid, including Pell Grants, federal loans, and Work-Study. The institution's provisional certification would be revisited during its normal recertification cycle to regain eligibility for all Title IV aid.

***Let me be clear about what this means.*** As soon as ***July 1, 2028***, if a Compton College program fails to demonstrate return on investment for its graduates in two out of three consecutive award years, that program could lose eligibility to participate in the federal Direct Loan Program. After three years of consistently failing the earnings premium measure, the U.S. Department of Education could also terminate Title IV eligibility, including Pell Grant eligibility, for the institution's low-earning outcome programs.

This is why Return on Investment and Economic Mobility continue to be a priority for Compton College. Over the next year, we will participate in advocacy efforts to ensure state and federal elected officials understand the work we are doing and the potential consequences these requirements could have for our students, programs, and the community we serve. More information on the Student Tuition and Transparency System, Earnings Accountability, Federal Direct Loan Program, and Workforce Pell will be included in future President/CEO Messages.

On ***Monday, August 10, 2026***, the Compton CCD Board of Trustees will hold its annual Board Retreat in the Board Room. This retreat is an opportunity for the Board to review and discuss the Board of Trustees'

Evaluation for 2025–2026, establish their goals for 2026–2028, and review the Compton College 2035 Institutional-Set Goals.

This week's message includes a fall 2026 enrollment update, the recent drop-for-nonpayment process, fall 2026 Professional Development Day and faculty orientation activities, the 2026–2028 President/CEO Priorities, and a reminder to submit recommendations for the Fall 2026 reading list.

## Compton College Fall 2026 Enrollment Update

As of ***August 6, 2026***, Compton College has generated 1,194 full-time equivalent students (FTES) for fall 2026. Currently, 8,283 seats are filled, representing 44% of available seats. Fall headcount is 3,877 students, which is 8% lower than the same time last year.

With fall classes beginning in just 16 days, now is the time for students to finalize their schedules, check their student accounts, and connect with support services as needed.

Continuing students who are completing summer classes should meet with an academic counselor to update their educational plan and make sure they are on track for graduation, transfer, or their next academic goal. Students are also encouraged to complete the FAFSA and meet with a financial aid staff member to review their status and available options for fall. From counseling and financial aid to other student support programs, we have resources available to help students stay enrolled, address challenges early, and keep moving toward their goals.

## Fall 2026 Drop for Nonpayment

As part of the District's enrollment management and fiscal responsibility practices, students with outstanding balances who did not make payment arrangements or secure financial assistance by the payment deadline were dropped from their Fall 2026 classes. This process is conducted in accordance with the District's Administrative Regulation 5030 – Fees.

On ***August 4, 2026***, approximately 160 students were affected by the Fall 2026 drop-for-nonpayment process. While this represents a relatively small portion of the College's overall student population, the impact on affected students was significant. On average, students who were dropped lost nearly three classes, and some lost their entire fall schedule.

Please encourage students to monitor their student accounts regularly, apply for financial aid, pay outstanding balances, and seek assistance as early as possible. Financial Aid, Admissions & Records, Counseling, and other student support services are available to help students understand their options and remain enrolled. Students remain financially responsible for balances owed to the District, and unpaid balances may result in holds that prevent registration for future terms until the obligation is resolved. Employees seeking additional information or resources for students may refer to the College's Student Fees & Holds webpage.

## Fall 2026 Professional Development Day

The fall 2026 semester begins with our mandatory Professional Development Day on ***Thursday, August 20, 2026***. The general session will commence at 9:00 a.m. and conclude at 4:00 p.m. The general session will be held in the gymnasium, where breakfast will also be available at 8:00 a.m. All full-time Compton College faculty and classified professionals are required to participate in the mandatory Professional Development activities on ***Thursday, August 20, 2026***.

We are honored to welcome Dr. DeRionne P. Pollard, president and CEO of the American Association of Community Colleges. A nationally recognized higher education leader, Dr. Pollard has dedicated her career to advancing student success, equity, and institutional transformation while advocating for community colleges nationwide.

An in-person New Faculty Orientation will be held on ***Tuesday, August 18, 2026***, from 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. in the Student Services Building, Room 212. The virtual Adjunct Faculty Orientation will be held later that day, from 5:00 to 7:10 p.m. via Zoom.

## Final Thoughts

As we begin the 2026–2027 academic year, I want to share my 2026–2028 President/CEO Priorities, which are aligned with Compton College 2035, the 2026–2028 Compton College Goals, and our continued focus on student success, institutional sustainability, and community impact.

Please submit your recommendations for my Fall 2026 reading list to kcurry@compton.edu by ***Wednesday, August 19, 2026***, as I intend to release my Fall 2026 reading list in the President/CEO Message - August 27, 2026.

In closing, please enjoy your weekend with family and friends.

Sincerely,

Keith Curry, Ed.D.
(*pronouns: he/him/his*)
President/CEO
Compton College