

ABSTRACT Edison State College (ESC) is a dynamic and growing institution serving students in a five county area of Southwest Florida. The ESC main campus, located in Lee County, is two hours south of Tampa and two hours Northwest of Miami. ESC is one of the nine institutions, governed by the Florida Community College System, selected to pilot the new State College System. As such, ESC is charged by the Florida legislature to maintain the primary mission of community colleges in Florida while offering limited bachelor degree programs to help meet the employment needs of the state. ESC is an open admission/open access college with a fall 2009 enrollment of just under 20,000 students. Currently three percent of ESC students are enrolled in seven baccalaureate degree programs limited to the areas of education, health care, and supervision and management. However, the majority of ESC students are enrolled in associate degree programs with plans to matriculate into a bachelor degree program. From this group of students the Student Support Services Program (SSSP) will select and serve 200 low-income, first generation or disabled students annually who meet federal eligibility requirements, providing the support and services outlined in the proposal to ensure graduation and transfer into a 4-year program of study either at ESC or the college or university of their choice.

ESC has a long history of supporting educationally opportunity. Dr. Kenneth Walker, ESC President, in his 2009 Convocation address stated “We must assure that everyone is afforded an equal chance to achieve a quality education” and that ESC will “Serve as a model for breaking the cycle generational poverty that diminishes us all.” The mission and goals of the College go hand-in-hand with the goals and objectives of the SSSP. ESC is in full support of this proposal to make a Student Support Services Program available to its students in need. To this end, ESC has made generous institutional commitments to the SSSP and the students that will be served, ensuring that at-risk students may also obtain their dream of a college education.