



Strategic and Action Plan

A FOUNDATION FOR DAILY STRATEGIC THINKING AND ACTION



2019–2024



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The Planning Process

This document describes the strategic direction for Kirtland Community College from 2019–2024. It is the result of an all-day thinking and visioning session with key stakeholders: students, faculty, staff, members of the board of trustees and members of the foundation, representatives from local government and community members. The direction Kirtland takes during the next five years will be driven by the wishes of these 123 key players who worked diligently at 13 tables throughout the day on September 20, 2019.

A team of four employees facilitated the summit using a powerful process called Appreciative Inquiry. The process elicits positive stories and experiences from the participants on both personal and organizational levels. The facilitators led participants in a discussion on what Kirtland does best and how it can do more of that.

Participants were asked to engage in inquiry regarding Kirtland's future. They were encouraged to dream and envision ideas without limits. Freedom and creativity generated fun and laughter. This document contains parts of dream statements and personal commitments from employees, generated from each table/group's story or vision.

Kirtland is grateful for the generosity and expertise of the facilitators Luann Mabarak, David Cable, Amy Kuczynski, and Tom Quinn who contributed to the design and orchestration of the all-day session. Special thanks go to Nick Baker for his contributions from the Office of Institutional Research and to Heidi Jo Wayco who gathered the information and wrote this plan. Kirtland also appreciates its employees and students, the members of the greater community, and board trustees who participated in the planning summit.

During the 2019 – 2020 academic year, students report their homes from 195 zip codes.



Assumptions for Planning

It is assumed that change at any college is limited by legal, political, geographic and economic realities which cannot or should not be changed. While creating a vision for the future, these assumptions must be considered. Planning at Kirtland is bound by the following realities:

STUDENTS AND INSTRUCTION

- 01** Faculty will continue to seek new and innovative methods of instruction that have application to learning in both the workplace and world environments.
- 02** Digital technologies will increasingly become integrated into instruction.
- 03** The last two years of high school will functionally disappear for an increasing number of high school students as they recognize the financial savings from enrolling at Kirtland while still in high school.
- 04** Colleges will increasingly be seen as “transcripting” institutions because students will move more often, enroll in more colleges and universities, and take more online courses.
- 05** General education will increasingly become a commodity that students shop for online, making it essential that general education become distinctive in delivery.
- 06** Advertising strategies will change as the average age of students continues to decline at Kirtland.
- 07** Online enrollment will expand and remain a significant portion of college revenues.
- 08** Incomes will remain comparatively stagnant in the foreseeable future, placing increasing financial pressure on families who want to send children to college or university.
- 09** College and program accreditation will continue to be expensive yet important for quality programs that lead to jobs.
- 10** Students will continue to question the value of a university degree because of perceptions of increasing cost of attendance and stagnant growth of salaries for jobs requiring bachelor’s degrees.
- 11** The high percentage of students that work full and part time will continue to influence the design of course schedules and methods course delivery.
- 12** Apprenticeship training will continue to grow, requiring new processes for managing enrollment in traditional college courses.
- 13** Due to parental pressure and a desire to provide students greater choices in vocational education, local school districts look to Kirtland to provide dual enrollment options to their students.

**77% of students
work full time or
part time.**



STATE AND REGION

- 01** With the general decline in the service area population and a significant increase in the average age of citizens in the area, enrollment will decline unless the college expands its market boundaries.
- 02** Enrollment pressures and increasing demand for programs that lead to good jobs will cause competitor colleges to increase technical program offerings.
- 03** Kirtland must offer distinctive programming, attractive facilities, attentive student services, and quality instruction to attract out-of-district students to remain competitive in increasingly competitive and smaller markets.
- 04** State universities facing enrollment declines will look for new market territories, including central northern Michigan.
- 05** Members of the general public will continue to question the use of their tax dollars for higher education.
- 06** Legislators look to community colleges to become engines of a stronger economy through the development of human talent for business, industry and commerce.
- 07** Kirtland will continue to make facility and operational changes that reduce costs and keep Kirtland affordable and competitive.
- 08** Local tax levies will continue to support college operations and state financial allocations to support Kirtland will remain relatively constant in the coming years.

**Kirtland graduates
experience a 22.4%
return on their
investment at Kirtland.**

FACILITIES

- 01** A third addition will be constructed at Kirtland-Grayling.
- 02** Kirtland-Grayling will become a meeting and educational place for thousands of people per month and establish this campus as a center for innovation and creativity.
- 03** Kirtland will no longer need, nor can it afford to keep the West Branch and Roscommon locations.
- 04** Financial pressures facing universities and a move toward more online programming will limit their ability to offer extension programs at Kirtland facilities, including the University Center in Gaylord.
- 05** M-TEC facilities are in excellent condition, but too small for added programming. Kirtland will evaluate the need for additional facilities in Gaylord possibly using the University Center.

Kirtland's Competitive Advantages



**Kirtland is ranked
in the top 10 in the
nation for its
applications of
technology to
instruction.**

- 01** Kirtland has positioned itself in a valued technical education market while still maintaining excellent programming for transfer students.
- 02** Kirtland's tuition and fees are one-quarter to one-third the cost of a public university.
- 03** Kirtland has a strong, committed faculty prepared to deliver courses online or on-campus.
- 04** Kirtland is a name brand readily recognized in its area and is gaining increased recognition because of its accessible location along Interstate 75.
- 05** The Grayling campus has 188 acres of land in a very desirable location that provides a wealth of options for new revenue streams.
- 06** The Grayling campus is new and energy efficient, allowing it to reduce operational costs.
- 07** Kirtland's location in the middle of the lower peninsula provides the ability to expand offerings in all directions in comparison to neighboring colleges located near a great lake.
- 08** Kirtland has already faced much of the impact of declining enrollment by creating an efficient and cost-effective organization.
- 09** Kirtland is an award-winning college for education.
 - › 60% of Kirtland students want to obtain a two-year degree and enter the workforce.
 - › The average class size on the Kirtland-Grayling campus is 15.4 students.
 - › The U.S. Department of Education reports that student cost of attendance including all costs decreased by 5.6% in the 2018–2019 academic year.
 - › Kirtland is ranked among the top 50 colleges in the nation for value and quality of online learning.
 - › Kirtland is ranked in the top 10 in the nation for its applications of technology to instruction.

The Competition

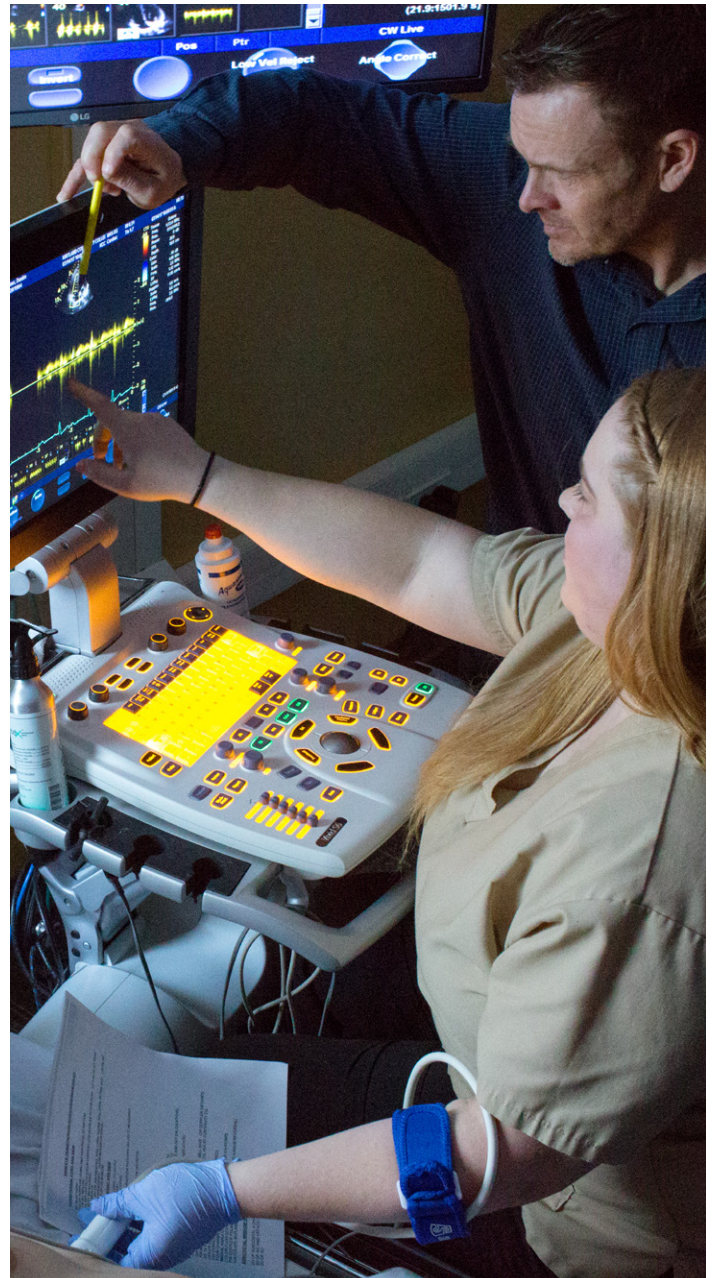
The competition for Kirtland comes from traditional sources including other colleges and universities as well as other external agencies that provide workforce development training. The beliefs about the college's competition are listed below.

- 01** A decline in the population of college age students in Michigan with a reduction in tuition revenue is causing other colleges and universities to be more aggressive in recruiting.
- 02** Declining enrollment encourages other area community colleges to offer more high school dual enrollment courses to area schools, sometimes at reduced prices.
- 03** Other two- and four-year colleges are increasing their use of digital technologies to deliver courses online.
- 04** The competition will suspend programs that are not financially profitable to focus energies on sustainable programs.

Goals of the Board of Trustees: 2019–2020 and beyond

The Board of Trustees of Kirtland has chosen the following goals:

- 01** Develop a five-year plan to construct an additional building on the Grayling Campus to include an event/wellness center.
- 02** Finalize a plan for the Roscommon Campus.
- 03** Encourage local public schools to bring students to the various Kirtland locations.
- 04** Identify funding sources for student housing on the Grayling Campus.





New Beginnings and Beyond: Destination 2024

The following distinctive themes emerged after thorough review of information gathered during the planning summit, summarizing the future direction for the college: Engaging Community, Innovative Programming, and Student Success. These overriding themes are detailed here not just for historical purposes, but to guide Kirtland to its destination: 2024.

ENGAGING AND GROWING COMMUNITIES

There was an overwhelming amount of conversation on public perceptions and misinformation regarding the move from the Roscommon Campus and its future disposition. Participants (alt. referenced as “tables” herein) discussed the perceptions and difficulties with and a desire to work to educate citizens on what Kirtland does and why. Not only did participants discuss the issues but they discussed actions that will help engage the public in college activities which will help them understand the new direction of Kirtland. Participants discussed the need to have internships in all programs to help students gain experience, connect with businesses—and have the college be more visible in public.

There is an enormous sense of deep, genuine pride in what is happening at Kirtland—and the public needs to know this. There was broad recognition of Kirtland’s success in accomplishing its mission is predicated on the success of students. Participants had stories of graduates who completed their education in spite of many personal difficulties. One participant reported that “Kirtland is a steppingstone to the fulfillment of...student dreams,” an indication of the recognition of the importance of Kirtland. Another participant asked for help in creating a presentation she could use in telling stories of success at Kirtland.

Participants noted keen awareness of the poverty throughout the region and the concerns of students about the investment in higher education. Kirtland needs scholarships to address those living in poverty in order to help prospective students create new beginnings. Communities that show concern for people in poverty and view themselves as partners with their community college simply do better. Their communities are enriched—as is Kirtland’s.



Society gains \$9.10 for
each dollar invested
in Kirtland.

To build on our strengths we envision the following:

01 Kirtland-Grayling will become a place where the “creative or innovative class” of people meet to share information and build partnerships for a better economy. Regardless of the reason citizens visit the campus, for classes, meetings, fun, or training, Kirtland has an opportunity to communicate its new strategic direction and to show what it has to offer. In return, it can learn about new economic opportunities, understand community needs and seek advice in developing high-impact curricula and programs.

02 Sense of community and “connectedness” is a strength and hallmark of Kirtland. Non-credit and informal educational opportunities are valuable, and a strength Kirtland can build upon whether on-campus or in its local communities.

03 Kirtland’s taxpayer population base has an increasing percentage of older citizens. Kirtland will address this opportunity by offering non-credit courses that encourage lifelong learning for all.

04 Kirtland has received national recognition for its use of technology. It will build on this by offering additional courses and programs online not only to students but also to communities outside of “our borders.”

05 Kirtland will support area school districts with programs that are mutually beneficial. This includes continuing to support technical education and providing dual-enrollment courses for high school students.

06 Kirtland will continue to partner with other two-year colleges to offer programs when there is an advantage to that partnership. Kirtland will actively seek partnerships with universities to offer four-year degrees to Kirtland with “two plus two” or other similar models.



**65% of graduates
get jobs in Kirtland's
service area.**

CREATING INNOVATIVE PROGRAMMING AND SERVICES

There was common discussion among all participants at the summit regarding innovation and distinctive programming. One table focused its entire discussion on “innovative educational experience that trains for vocations of the future.” There was general recognition that Kirtland is an innovative college with innovative employees and that it can build on this strength. There was general recognition the driver of innovation was the need “to adapt to the changing needs of students and communities.” Student outcomes and success rates should be a driving force in the Kirtland’s decision-making process.

Other institutions are focusing on offering transfer courses to high school students. Kirtland has taken a more difficult path by offering more technical programs that has secured success and stable enrollment. Maintaining this strategic direction will require continued innovation and the establishment of niche market programs with the required support services.

Kirtland employees have developed innovative ways to improve communication between staff, faculty and administration. Processes have been streamlined to make enrollment easier for students.

Participants mentioned the importance of working with business and industry, now more than ever, as they are a source of innovative ideas and resources. They can provide guidance in what is needed in future employees. When Kirtland connects with business and industry, both entities improve.

Participants stated the need to continually review and make courses relevant to what students need at home, in communities, and at work. Focusing on this type of education leads to more on-the-job success. There were recommendations that relevant instruction must occur in general education courses as well as technical courses.

To build on our strengths we envision the following:

- 01** Kirtland will enhance its culture as an optimistic and positive environment for students who are passionate about learning and succeeding, and for employees who are passionate about providing quality service for students, other departments and the surrounding communities.
- 02** Kirtland will provide a leadership culture that encompasses critical/creative thinking, adaptability to change, lifelong learning, accountability, and empowerment to dream with passion.
- 03** Meaningful goals and an inclusive approach to strategic planning will provide the impetus and framework to plan for a strong future, create a positive, cohesive, and collaborative learning and working environment that values and encourages all perspectives and contributions.
- 04** Kirtland values its small-college environment and supports a growing and diverse student population. It will meet the educational needs of the 21st century by offering a rich campus life and innovative programs that prepare students for success in both a local and global community.
- 05** Kirtland will provide professional development and funding to encourage innovation for staff and in the work environment as well as for faculty in teaching practices for online and face-to-face courses.
- 06** Kirtland will collaborate with industry leaders by encouraging participation in apprenticeship programs and innovation in production processes and the development of new products.
- 07** Kirtland will explore possibilities for student housing and recreational facilities on campus. Without these facilities, it becomes increasingly difficult for Kirtland to stand out as a desirable institution of higher learning in the increasingly competitive market for incoming students.
- 08** Kirtland will offer greater opportunities for students to feel connected to it by working to increase the number of clubs and club sports available to students. It will study the feasibility of new athletic programs.
- 09** Kirtland will be a resource center for retirees relocating north while transitioning from workforce to retirement by providing information, services and/or adult-interest classes to enrich their lives.
- 10** Kirtland will evaluate a new degree, which may provide transfer coursework along with specialized education preparing graduates for the workforce.

IMPROVING STUDENT SUCCESS AND TRANSFORMING LIVES

While Kirtland is located in a rural area with smaller pockets of population, it must continue to strive to open doors to the world at large for its students and communities by offering high-quality, innovative programs that will help citizens achieve personal, academic and financial success.

Participants addressed this key question: “Why else are we here?” It is no surprise this theme was highlighted during the daylong event and is rewarding that it received a preponderance of discussion throughout the day.

Underlying discussion was the recognition that it is critical for Kirtland students to be successful AND graduate. It is disappointing when students are left with college expenses and no credentials.

Conversations included overlap on a cultural issue begging to be addressed: Many students in the region do not have parental support; their family legacy does not lend itself to college being part of the picture; and college enrollment may seem financially impossible as prospective students navigate the process. The need to further streamline the application process for student success was discussed. Intimidation and embarrassment are felt because students don’t know where to start and

are afraid that filling out an application is a commitment far beyond what it really is.

Participants also commented about the fact that Kirtland “need(s) to be more aware of (students) self-limiting attitudes, and genuinely relate to (students).” Discussions included the following: Students do not know what is possible. They can’t see their own new beginnings—much less what might be beyond those. They do not know how affordable community college can be. They do not know schedules have been customized to fit theirs. They do not know about the jobs that are available and what those size of paychecks can afford them.

Kirtland recognizes the need for scholarships. Personal commitments from participants that indicate the importance of this discussion included this notable promise: “Raise 100 new scholarships, double my contribution to the foundation, listen to unmet needs, and help students with emergencies.”

Employees expressed commitments to take specific action, notably: learn more about campus resources; educate themselves on the KCC website; talk to one student each week; find ways to speak about academic programs.

To build on our strengths we envision the following:

01 Kirtland is committed to preparing students to become leaders in local communities as well as being a vital part of the economy of northern Michigan. Kirtland will provide a relevant curriculum for students that will be of value to them in the home, the workplace, and in their communities.

02 Kirtland will develop and offer new programs and will update existing programs as it responds to future employment trends which will attract new students from both inside and outside its taxing district.

03 Kirtland employees see the need for providing students with a quality student-life experience, using diversity and a passion for teaching/mentoring to help educate them beyond the normal boundaries of the classroom.

04 Kirtland will create new online programs attracting students from across the state and beyond. Faculty will continually evaluate the use of internet-assisted courses to provide flexibility for students.

05 Kirtland will reinforce the image of being the leading provider of education in the region, supplying affordable training and certification toward placement in the workplace, and for meeting students’ future learning needs at other colleges and universities.

06 With the support of the citizens in Gaylord, Kirtland

will develop a program mix at M-TEC that will attract students and build on its current programming.

07 Kirtland will become a first choice for transfer students by offering expanded transfer agreements beyond the state transfer agreement. It will aggressively pursue a transfer program that provides 60 credits of transfer to a four-year university.

08 Kirtland will continue to support workforce education for workers and will become the choice for adults who are looking for retraining for new jobs.

09 Kirtland will continue to use technology to enhance learning and investigate new ways to use technology to enhance services.

10 Kirtland will assist potential students to create a vision for their future and a better understanding of future careers by helping to resolve barriers.

11 Kirtland will increase the availability of scholarships to meet the financial needs of students.

12 Kirtland will use predictive analytics to identify students most likely to have difficulties in learning and enhance methods of helping students complete their education.

13 Kirtland will seek methods to control the cost of instruction and services with the goal of making college as efficient and affordable as possible.



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Mission

To provide innovative educational opportunities to enhance student lives and build stronger communities.

Vision

Kirtland will be the first choice for learner-centered education guiding students and communities toward success.

Values

Excellence Expectation that all college activities are conducted with attention to quality and the highest levels of academic and professional standards.

Inclusiveness Conduct the activities of the college in a manner that inspires tolerance and welcomes diversity of people and thought.

Innovation Address challenges and issues from multiple perspectives to solve problems and advance college processes and knowledge. Supporting progressive and meaningful research, creative activity and teaching.

Reflection Evaluate processes and assessing success through honest conversation and the use of data.

Character Steadfast adherence to the principles of integrity, honesty, reliability, transparency and accountability.

Respect Respect for the rights, differences and dignity of others and their contribution to the overall success of the college.