History & Mission

Flathead Valley Community College was established in 1967 as a result of collaborative efforts by local citizens supporting area students and employers by providing higher education without leaving the valley.

History

Local, affordable higher education in the Flathead Valley started as a dream of Owen Sowerwine, chairman of the local school board. In 1960, Sowerwine voiced concerns regarding the lack of post-secondary education opportunities for young people in the valley.

A study conducted in 1959 showed that only 20% of Flathead High School graduates were pursuing higher education. Owen and four other visionary community members – Bill McClaren, Thelma Hetland, Les Sterling and Norm Beyer – were determined to create a local higher education option for Flathead Valley students.

Owen traveled around the country to observe different models of higher education. By 1963, after studying several junior colleges, vocational colleges, four-year

universities and community colleges, he concluded that a community college was the best fit for the Flathead Valley.

It was time for action. From 1964 to 1967, college advocates worked diligently to inform citizens about the purpose of a community college and what it could offer in the way of vocational education, college transfer preparation and more.

On April 1, 1967, thanks to the generous support of the citizens, a ballot election passed by more than 1,000 votes and Flathead Valley Community College was established.

Mission & Strategic Plan

Mission Statement

Flathead Valley Community College promotes excellence in lifelong learning, focused on student success and community needs.

Strategic Plan

The strategic plan outlines how FVCC fulfills the mission of the college. The strategic plan sets priorities, focuses resources, and ensures the college is working toward common goals based on mission fulfillment.

The strategic plan aligns with the seven-year accreditation cycle and also reflects FVCC's commitment to student success.

FVCC Strategic Plan 2020-2027

Goal 1: Increase Completion of Degrees and Certificates

- Objective 1a: Offer streamlined pathways for students to graduate

- Objective 1b: Expand learning opportunities and remove access barriers

Goal 2: Cultivate a Supportive Teaching and Learning Environment

- Objective 2a: Provide, encourage, and support faculty and staff professional development opportunities

- Objective 2b: Employ evidence-based college-wide practices to optimize student success and mission fulfillment

Goal 3: Foster an Environment of Access, Belonging, and Success

- Objective 3a: Instill an inclusive, welcoming environment that creates a sense of belonging for students, faculty, staff, and the community

- Objective 3b: Increase opportunities to develop global citizenship and appreciation of diversity

Goal 4: Enhance Institutional Vitality

- Objective 4a: Increase access to data

- Objective 4b: Leverage data to inform decisions, resource allocation, and improvement initiatives

- Objective 4c: Improve internal and external communication