



DEL MAR COLLEGE



Year 1 Progress Report

November 2025

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Introduction: Charting the Viking Way

Charting the Viking Way is Del Mar College's five-year strategic plan for 2024-2029, designed to serve as a roadmap for achieving institutional excellence, advancing student success, and strengthening the College's role in the Coastal Bend community. The plan provides a unified framework that aligns mission, vision, and values with measurable goals and actions ensuring that every initiative undertaken by the College contributes to its long-term purpose and impact.

At the heart of this plan are several key components that define its structure and direction:

- Vision – What Del Mar College aspires to achieve.
- Mission – The purpose that guides the College's daily work.
- Values – The standards that shape decisions, behavior, and culture.
- Guiding Stars – The foundational pillars that organize the plan's priorities.
- Overarching Goals – The long-term outcomes the College is committed to realizing.
- Strategies – The concrete actions and initiatives designed to advance those goals.
- Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) – The data and metrics that track progress and ensure accountability.

Together, these elements provide both inspiration and structure, allowing Del Mar College to measure success, identify opportunities for improvement, and remain responsive to the needs of students and the community it serves.

Vision Statement

Del Mar College empowers our communities to achieve their dreams.

Mission Statement

Del Mar College provides educational pathways that transform lives, build partnerships, and enrich communities.

Values

- Integrity – Operating with openness and honesty in all endeavors at the College.
- Community – The people we commit to serving through access and equity.
- Courage – The willingness to take on challenges and overcome barriers.
- Empathy – To respect and honor the experience of others.
- Resourcefulness – Using all that we have and committing all that we are to ensure student success.
- Tradition – The shared legacy of the people at Del Mar College who have learned, taught, and charted *The Viking Way*.

Guiding Stars and Goals

The *Charting the Viking Way* plan is anchored in three Guiding Stars, each representing a central area of focus that advances the College's mission and vision:

- Guiding Star I: Communicate
 - Goal 1: Collaborate across the College
 - Goal 2: Connect beyond the College
- Guiding Star II: Elevate
 - Goal 1: Increase completion for all students
 - Goal 2: Maximize resources entrusted to the College
- Guiding Star III: Cultivate
 - Goal 1: Nurture our employees to achieve their full potential
 - Goal 2: Optimize the Viking Student Experience

Report Components

Year One Progress Report outlines the early outcomes, lessons learned, and opportunities emerging from the first year of implementation. It highlights progress within each Guiding Star, providing insight into achievements, challenges, and strategies that are shaping the College's forward momentum.

Each section includes:

- Progress Overview – Summarizes major accomplishments, initiatives, and key insights, incorporating analysis of performance data and outcomes.
- Data Table – Presents the Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) used to measure progress for each goal, providing the quantitative foundation behind the narrative.

Together, these elements offer a comprehensive view of the Charting the Viking Way Strategic Plan, demonstrating how Del Mar College continues to translate vision into action and data into measurable institutional growth.

Year 1 Progress Overview

During its first year of implementation, *Charting the Viking Way* laid a strong foundation for long-term institutional growth and student success. Year One efforts focused on strengthening communication, deepening community partnerships, improving student outcomes, and supporting the faculty and staff who make these achievements possible. This report highlights measurable progress and key insights within each of the plan's three Guiding Stars—Communicate, Elevate, and Cultivate—illustrating both accomplishments and opportunities that will guide Del Mar College into Year Two of the strategic plan.

Guiding Star I: Communicate

Purpose: Strengthen internal and external communications to support collaboration and engagement.

Goal 1: Collaborate across the College

Progress Overview

Efforts to improve internal collaboration have shifted from simply measuring communication frequency to meaningfully assessing its impact. Recognizing the limitations of traditional survey tools, the College is moving toward a more tailored instrument to capture faculty and staff satisfaction and engagement levels. This change underscores Del Mar College's commitment to responsive governance and a culture that listens to its employees.

Technology also played a growing role in fostering connection. By integrating new tools to track and manage participation in college-sponsored activities, the College gained clearer insight into how students engage across all campus communities. This data-driven approach allows DMC to identify which programs have the greatest impact and to replicate their success.

Meanwhile, student use of on-campus resources exceeded annual targets, demonstrating both rising awareness and trust in DMC's support systems. Students are not only finding more avenues for involvement but also actively seeking help when needed, reflecting a stronger sense of belonging and well-being on campus.

Key Performance Indicators	2023–2024	2024–2025	Change
Increase faculty/staff satisfaction with frequency and content of internal communications to 70% DMC, CCSFE	In Progress	In Progress	TBD
Increase student participation in college-sponsored activities over the baseline year CCSSE	20%	34%	Increase d by 14% (met)
Increase usage of student resources by 100 students every year SEM Goal 3	425	529	Increase d by 104 (met)

Goal 2: Connect beyond the College

Progress Overview

DMC's external engagement efforts delivered clear, positive results. The number of community partnerships and on-campus events rose, reinforcing the College's role as a regional hub for education, workforce alignment, and civic collaboration. The continued presence of *Communities In Schools* and the ongoing partnership with *Texas Workforce Solutions* strengthened student support and expanded career pathway opportunities.

Increased involvement from the Board of Regents has amplified these efforts, elevating DMC's advocacy at both the state and national levels and strengthening the College's influence on higher education and workforce policy.

Public awareness of the Del Mar College brand remains strong, though the Brand Health Survey highlighted a gap among high school students, a critical audience for future enrollment and workforce alignment. Addressing this requires a more targeted strategy to engage younger demographics through relevant platforms and messaging.

To better understand and expand these efforts, the College is implementing a Customer Relationship Management (CRM) system. Once operational, it will provide precise measures of engagement, participation, and conversion from

interest to enrollment, enabling more intentional, data-driven connections with the community.

Key Performance Indicators	2023–2024	2024–2025	Change
Increase the number of communications and events held jointly between the College and external partners, increasing over the baseline each year SMP Goal 3	55	67	Increase d by 12 (met)
Increase community awareness of DMC and its programs over the baseline year CRO Brand Health Survey	–	36% Baseline	TBD
Increase student participation in community-based projects by 5% every year CCSSE	30%	22%	Decreas ed by 8% (not met)

Guiding Star II: Elevate

Purpose: Enhance student success, program quality, and the effective use of institutional resources.

Goal 1: Increase completion for all students

Progress Overview

Student completion at Del Mar College continues to trend upward, affirming the institution’s focus on student achievement and persistence. The data suggests a steady improvement in completion outcomes, supported by faculty innovation and enhanced advising structures.

Dual Enrollment emerged as one of the most promising areas of growth, reflecting successful collaboration with regional high schools and strong interest from students seeking early college credit. This not only improves the educational pipeline but also strengthens the College’s role in supporting local workforce readiness.

At the same time, the College's investment in faculty e-learning training has delivered strong results. With more faculty equipped to deliver engaging and high-quality online and hybrid instruction, students are gaining access to flexible, technology-enhanced learning environments that directly contribute to higher success rates.

Key Performance Indicators	2023–2024	2024–2025	Change
Increase the total number of students completing a degree, certificate, or award by 5% every year for 5 years THECB, HB8	Credit: 1,938 CE: 2,582	Credit: 2,289* CE: 3,422*	Credit Increased by 18% (met) CE Increased by 24% (met)
Increase total number of students completing 15 semester credit hours in Dual Enrollment by 3% each year THECB, HB8	891	1,202	Increased by 35% (met)
Increase total number of faculty attending E-learning training and increase by 3% yearly for five years DMC E-Learning Office	47	112	Increased by 138% (met)

* Preliminary Data

Goal 2: Maximize resources entrusted to the College

Progress Overview

Year One emphasized stewardship and adaptability. While the Governors tuition freeze temporarily paused tuition related KPIs, DMC maintained competitive affordability, keeping access a top priority. The College also continued work under the HB 8 funding model, which ties state appropriations to measurable student success outcomes rather than enrollment alone. This elevates the importance of credential completion, transfer rates, and progress in high demand fields.

Preliminary data showed strong gains in students completing high demand institutional credentials, a key HB 8 measure. These results reflect the Colleges alignment with workforce needs, strengthening employability and reinforcing DMC’s relevance in a rapidly evolving labor market.

Students transitioning from non-credit to credit programs continue to grow, supporting performance-based funding tied to credential momentum and completion. However, the pace remains slightly below target. As the College reviews these data and determines its course of action, it will focus on outcomes that directly influence success under HB 8.

Key Performance Indicators	2023–2024	2024–2025	Change
Student tuition and fees for 15 SCH will be no greater than the Top 3 peer community colleges by comparison THECB	On Hold	On Hold	Maintained ≤ Top 3 peers (met)
Increase total number of high-demand institutional credentials leading to licensure by 25 the first year and 5 over the next five years THECB, HB8	2,683	2,951*	Increased by 268 (met)
Increase total number of transition students matriculating to credit by 200 every year for a total of 1000 students over 5 years DMC	1,274	1,364	Increased by 90 (not met)

* Preliminary Data

Guiding Star III: Cultivate

Purpose: Foster a supportive culture for students, faculty, and staff that promotes engagement, belonging, and growth.

Goal 1: Nurture our employees to achieve their full potential

Progress Overview

Del Mar College’s employees remain at the heart of its mission. Tenure and tenure-track faculty make up 71% of the full-time instructional workforce, providing a strong foundation for academic stability, though still slightly below the College’s 75% benchmark.

Introducing *The Viking Way* is an important step in defining and strengthening the College’s culture. Centered on care, connection, and shared purpose, *The Viking Way* guides how we support employees and students alike and these values will be assessed in future perception surveys to better understand the employee experience. As the College expands its work on seamless transfer pathways with Texas A&M University–Kingsville (TAMUK), we’re aligning this culture of care with TAMUK’s Caring Campus framework to ensure students experience consistent support from Del Mar College through transfer.

Participation in advisory training remains strong, demonstrating the ongoing commitment of faculty and staff to professional growth and collaboration. Because this is a long-term five-year goal, additional trend data will help determine overall progress. In Year 2, the College will focus on refining participation metrics and ensuring that professional development opportunities are accessible and consistent across all divisions.

Key Performance Indicators	2023–2024	2024–2025	Change
Of full-time faculty, maintain at least 75% of tenure or tenure track faculty DMC	72%	71%	Decreased by 1% (not met)
Maintain high percentage of faculty and staff perception of the college as a favorable place to work after established baseline DMC The Viking Way	TBD	TBD	TBD

Increase the number of faculty and staff who attend advisory training and increase 20% in 5 years DMC	300	217	Decreased by 28% (not met)
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Goal 2: Optimize the Viking Student Experience

Progress Overview

Student engagement and success indicators show strong momentum. Both credit and continuing education enrollment are trending upward, with annual growth surpassing early projections. This expansion signals not only increased demand but also the College's ability to meet diverse educational and workforce needs.

While retention data for 2024–2025 are still being finalized, early trends indicate steady progress toward the long-term goal of a 70% retention rate. The College's emphasis on advising, onboarding, and student support—particularly through initiatives like Freedom to Dream—continues to drive positive outcomes.

Student participation in activities has also risen, pointing to a more connected and vibrant campus culture. The 2nd Annual Viking Fest further illustrated this momentum, drawing an estimated 2,500 attendees, including more than 700 runners in the inaugural Viking 5K and nearly 300 competitors in the Día de los Muertos Welding Competition. In addition, the College kicked off the fall semester with the inaugural Back to the Helm event, a lively parking-lot welcome for students and families that featured food trucks, music, games, giveaways, and opportunities to connect with fellow Vikings and staff. These expanding signature events highlight growing student engagement, increasing community connection, and a strengthened sense of belonging that supports the goals of Charting the Viking Way.

The implementation of the CRM system will further refine how engagement is tracked and supported, ensuring that every Viking has a meaningful opportunity to belong and succeed.

Key Performance Indicators	2023–2024	2024–2025	Change
Increase Continuing Education enrollment by 2.5% each year and Credit enrollment by 3% each year THECB	Credit: 10,256 CE: 14,522	Credit: 11,701* CE: 14,458*	Increased by 14.1% (met)
Increase Fall to Fall retention to 70% over five years DMC SEM	58.7%	TBD	TBD
Increase the number of students participating in college-sponsored activities by 10% each year CCSSE	26%	34%	Increased by 8% (not met)

* Preliminary Data

Major Achievements and Innovation Highlights

The first year of Charting the Viking Way reflected significant institutional progress and innovation in advancing the College’s mission and strategic priorities. A key factor in this progress was The Viking Way Initiative, which established a unifying framework centered on care, connection, and shared purpose. This effort has begun to transform campus culture, creating a stronger sense of belonging and accountability among students and employees alike.

Del Mar College also strengthened its communication strategy, expanding transparency through regular updates and digital engagement channels that connect internal and external audiences more effectively. These efforts have improved trust and collaboration, while also reinforcing the College’s visibility in the community. The marketing and recruitment growth campaign further elevated ’s regional profile, successfully reaching new audiences and expanding the student pipeline through targeted messaging and storytelling that highlight the College’s academic and workforce excellence.

Investments in an IT and technology strategy played a crucial role in modernizing data systems and digital tools to support informed decision-making. These enhancements are building the foundation for improved

analytics, seamless communication, and more efficient operations. Complementing this work, the Freedom to Dream Initiative continued to drive equity and access by empowering students through support services and community partnerships that remove barriers to success. Collectively, these achievements showcase Del Mar College's commitment to innovation, inclusivity, and continuous improvement in pursuit of its strategic vision.

Areas for Continued Improvement

While Del Mar College achieved significant milestones in Year One, some areas have been identified for continued improvement and development. Strengthening K–12 and dual enrollment alignment remains essential to sustaining early college success and ensuring smooth transitions from high school to higher education. This work will require continued collaboration with regional school districts, data-sharing improvements, and coordinated outreach to ensure students and families clearly understand the opportunities available through DMC programs from K3 – 12th graders.

Curriculum alignment also stands out as a critical focus area, particularly as the College continues adapting to evolving state funding models and workforce demands. Aligning academic offerings with the latest economic and industry trends will help ensure that DMC graduates are well prepared for the region's high-demand careers aligning with House Bill 8 to set the College up for optimal funding.

Finally, the College recognizes the importance of enhancing its communication channels, both internally and externally, to ensure information flows efficiently across all levels of the institution. Streamlined communication processes, supported by emerging technologies such as the CRM system, will promote clarity, consistency, and engagement across departments, divisions, and community partners. By addressing these key areas, Del Mar College will build on the strong foundation established in Year One and continue advancing toward the shared vision of excellence embodied in *The Viking Way*.

Conclusion

Year One of *Charting the Viking Way* demonstrates that Del Mar College is not only meeting but often exceeding its strategic goals. The College's progress reflects a unified community—faculty, staff, students, and partners—working collaboratively toward a shared vision of excellence. As Del Mar

College enters Year Two, it will build upon this foundation with renewed focus on data-informed decisions, inclusive communication, and a deep commitment to student and employee success. The Viking Way is more than a plan; it is a collective promise to continue moving boldly forward together.