

COMPREHENSIVE PROGRAM REVIEW TEMPLATE

I - MAIN

Overview

Academic Year: 2025-2026

Originator : Annette Gutierrez

Division: Division Student Support Programs

Department: Basic Needs-Higher AspirationsClick or tap here to enter text.

II - CO-CONTRIBUTORS

- 1) Annette Gutierrez
- 2) Robb Rodriguez
- 3) Thong Vang
- 4) Click or tap here to enter text.
- 5) Click or tap here to enter text.

III - PROGRAM MISSION AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Gavilan College Mission Statement: *Through equitable access and comprehensive support in a welcoming inclusive environment, Gavilan College guides students of diverse backgrounds to achieve academically and pursue lifelong learning. We prepare students for transfer success, career advancement, and meaningful community participation.*

1. Provide a brief overview of how the program contributes to accomplishing the mission of Gavilan College. In addition to a basic overview of your program's structure and services, be specific in connecting your program's services to elements of the mission statement (300 words or less).

The Higher Aspirations program, part of Rising Scholars Network, supports incarcerated, formerly incarcerated and justice-impacted youth through academic counseling, peer mentorship, basic needs services (e.g., food, gas cards), career exploration, transfer assistance, and resource referrals for housing and employment.

This structure ensures equitable access by offering in-detention courses, hybrid learning, and self-referral entry for diverse justice-impacted students, overcoming barriers to enrollment. It provides comprehensive support via case management, financial aid guidance, internships, and mental health referrals in a welcoming, inclusive environment that fosters social support and stigma-free participation. The program directly advances academic achievement and lifelong learning through personalized counseling and degree pathways, while preparing students for transfer success (e.g., to four-year colleges), career advancement (e.g., apprenticeships), and community participation by building economic potential and reintegration skills. Funded by a \$1.5M grant, it expands to juvenile justice in

Santa Clara and San Benito counties, embodying the college's transformative vision.

2. On the [PIPR website](#), locate and review your previous program plan and subsequent annual updates. After reviewing, enter your previous goals below and comment on the progress/accomplishments of each goal. (Enter each goal separately)
N/A This is our first review
3. Have the services or courses of your program changed over the past three years? Please explain (300 words or less).

Gavilan College has supported incarcerated and formerly incarcerated adults since 2007 through a long-standing partnership with San Benito County Probation, though for many years this work was sustained with limited funding. In 2022, the Rising Scholars/Higher Aspirations program entered a new phase of growth in 2022 after receiving \$475,683 over three years. That same year, program oversight transitioned to the Director of Basic Needs, marking a turning point from a small, minimally resourced effort serving just seven on-campus students and offering two noncredit courses in a single correctional facility, to a strategically designed, student-centered program. This shift enabled the hiring of a full-time dedicated Counselor/Coordinator, establishing the foundation for sustainable growth, improved coordination, and higher-quality services.

By 2023, Gavilan introduced peer mentorship cohorts, financial literacy workshops, and transfer navigation supports, while integrating GavConnect early alerts to strengthen retention and proactive outreach. Instructional access also expanded, growing from two noncredit course offerings in one facility to up to four courses per term across two facilities, including credit-bearing options. In 2024, the program deepened student engagement by establishing clear milestones and providing mini grants per term to support persistence and goal completion. During the 2024–25 academic year, the program supported over 180 unduplicated students, demonstrating exponential growth since 2022 and reflecting intentional investments in staffing, infrastructure, and holistic support.

This momentum continues through grant-funded expansion. A \$1.5 million state grant over five years, enabled the launch of juvenile justice services in Santa Clara and San Benito counties, including in-detention education, reentry case management, and expanded basic needs supports such as housing referrals and employment exploration. This funding supported the hiring of a dedicated Juvenile Justice Coordinator and a part-time Program Specialist, allowing Gavilan to serve justice-impacted students across the full continuum, from detention to reentry to degree and transfer pathways.

IV - STUDENT AND PROGRAM OUTCOMES

College Goal for Student Achievement

The following questions refer to data regarding student achievement. To access program review data, go to the [Program Review Data Matrix website](#).

1. **(Instructional Only)** Find your program's course success information. Consider your program success rate trends over the last three years. Compare your overall success to the college average. Are these rates what you expected after comparing with the college average? Are there any large gaps? Is there anything surprising about the data? What trends are suggested by the data?

N/A

2. **(Instructional Only)** Now find your program's persistence information. Consider your retention rate trends over the last three years. Compare your overall retention to the college average.

N/A

3. Are these rates what you expected after comparing with the college average? Are there any large gaps? Is there anything surprising about the data? What trends are suggested by the data.

N/A

Success

The following questions refer to data regarding student achievement. To access instructional program review data, go to the [Program Review Data Matrix website](#).

4. **(Instructional Only)** What are your set goals for course success? Do your individual course and program rates meet this goal? Helpful Question: If your rates for success are lower than your goals, what are your plans to improve them (200 words or less)?

N/A

5. How many students did your area serve (if you don't have an exact count, please provide an estimate)? How did they perform in comparison to those that did not use your services, if applicable? (200 words or less)

Gavilan College

	2022-23	2023-24	2024-2025	2025-26
All Gavilan	5,453	6,589	7,248	7,256
Persistence	61%	62%	62%	64%
Success	72%	72%	73%	75%

Higher Aspirations

	SP23	F23	SP24	F24	SP25
On Campus	21	65	88	97	115
Incarcerated	31	49	36	54	51
Persistence	93%	83%	100%	78%	96%
Success	75%	68%	73%	67%	76%

6. Given this information, how has your service or area supported student success and retention over the past three years? (200 words or less)

Student Survey

Length of Time in Higher Aspirations

	FA 23	SP 24	FA 24	SP 25
1 Semester	50%	53%	45%	23%
2 Semesters	25%	21%	23%	36%
3 Semesters	8%	5%	5%	23%
4+ Semesters	17%	22%	27%	18%

Rate the following statements based on your experience this semester on a scale of 1-5 (1=lowest and 5=highest).

	FA 23	SP 24	FA 24	SP 25
I feel supported by the program.	4 or higher rating = 91%	4 or higher rating = 100%	4 or higher rating = 100%	4 or higher rating = 91%
I feel supported by my counselor.	4 or higher rating = 100%	4 or higher rating = 100%	4 or higher rating = 100%	4 or higher rating = 95%
I feel supported by my Peer Mentor.	4 or higher rating = 100%	4 or higher rating = 95%	4 or higher rating = 95%	4 or higher rating = 91%
I feel supported by program staff.	4 or higher rating = 100%	4 or higher rating = 100%	4 or higher rating = 100%	4 or higher rating = 100%
I feel welcomed in the Higher Aspirations office.	No Data	4 or higher rating = 100%	No Data	No Data
I feel connected to the college campus.	4 or higher rating = 83%	4 or higher rating = 90%	4 or higher rating = 86%	4 or higher rating = 86%
I am confident in my ability to succeed and reach my educational goal.	4 or higher rating = 83%	4 or higher rating = 89%	4 or higher rating = 86%	4 or higher rating = 86%

What direct service(s) did you receive from Higher Aspirations this semester? (Check all that apply)

	FA 23	SP 24	FA 24	SP 25
Peer Mentorship	42%	68%	77%	91%
Counseling	42%	74%	77%	86%
Registration for Classes	33%	63%	73%	91%
Financial Aid Application	8%	42%	9%	36%
Basic Needs Referral	58%	47%	59%	68%
Personal/Wellness Counseling	8%	37%	18%	41%
Legal Referral	8%	16%	27%	36%
Employment Referral	8%	16%	5%	14%
Gas Cards	100%	95%	82%	91%
Personal Hygiene Items	25%	11%	32%	27%
Technology Support	No Data	No Data	18%	41%
Ancillary Support	No Data	No Data	36%	36%
Other	8%	16%	9%	5%

Higher Aspirations has supported student success and retention through a holistic, relationship-centered model that prioritizes intentional engagement, proactive guidance, and wraparound support. Campus engagement events have fostered community, belonging, and connection. Key drivers of persistence for justice-impacted students navigating higher education.

Structured milestone requirements are central to this approach. Required, ongoing meetings with a dedicated counselor ensure students receive consistent academic planning, early intervention, and individualized support. These milestones promote accountability while normalizing help-seeking behaviors and sustained engagement with the college.

Peer mentorship has further strengthened retention by connecting students with mentors who have shared lived experience. Peer mentors provide encouragement, practical guidance, and a trusted point of connection, helping students navigate institutional processes and maintain momentum during challenging periods.

Collaboration across campus departments has amplified impact. Strong partnerships with EOPS, CalWORKs, and Fresh Success allow students to access coordinated academic,

financial, and family-support services without duplication or service gaps. This integrated support model reduces institutional barriers and promotes continuity of care.

Community partnerships, particularly with organizations offering record clearance services, have helped remove legal and employment barriers that often disrupt educational progress. In parallel, Basic Needs support has stabilized students' lives and reduced crisis-driven stop-outs.

7. In your area, what trends do you see and what initiatives need to be developed to support success and retention? (200 words or less).

Over the past several years, we have observed trends among justice-impacted students that directly influence success and retention. Students persist at higher rates when they experience consistent, relationship-based support, have access to peers with shared lived experience, and receive timely intervention when basic needs or legal barriers arise. We also see increasing demand for coordinated services as more formerly incarcerated students transition from reentry into long-term academic and career pathways.

Persistent challenges remain. Housing instability, food insecurity, employment barriers related to criminal records, and limited familiarity with college systems continue to disrupt enrollment and progress. Students are more likely to stop when support is fragmented or reactive rather than proactive.

To address these trends, initiatives must focus on earlier and more intentional engagement. Expanding peer mentorship, strengthening milestone-based counseling, and integrating early alert systems across support programs are critical to sustaining momentum. Continued investment in Basic Needs infrastructure, particularly housing navigation and food access, is essential for stabilizing students' lives. Additionally, partnerships with community organizations offering record clearance, employment placement, and legal services are needed to remove external barriers that impact academic persistence.

Student Survey

What information or services do you want Higher Aspirations to provide? (Check all that apply)

☐ Second Chance Employment	☐ FA 23	☐ SP 24	☐ FA 24	☐ SP 25
☐ Career Planning	☐ 42%	No Data	☐ 55%	☐ 50%
☐ University Campus Tour	☐ 25%	No Data	☐ 32%	☐ 41%

Record Clearance & Expungement	50%	No Data	18%	55%
Reentry Services for Probation or Parole	17%	No Data	45%	32%
Legal Services (Criminal)	25%	No Data	45%	36%
Legal Services (Children & Family)	17%	No Data	50%	41%
Legal Services (Immigration)	25%	No Data	32%	41%
Affordable Healthcare	17%	No Data	27%	36%
Mental Wellness	17%	No Data	59%	59%
Substance use	No Data	No Data	64%	32%
Other	8%	No Data	18%	9%

V - EQUITY

Gavilan College has identified the following populations as experiencing disproportionate outcomes: Males, African American, Native American, Students with Disabilities and Foster Youth.

1. Examine your equity data over the last three years. Comment on what your program has done to address any differences or gaps in the past three years. What has worked? What has not worked? (200 words or less) Helpful Questions: What current factors or potential causes can be connected to these areas of disproportional impact? How might your program or department address student equity gaps? How can your area help increase disproportionate student success? (200 words or less)?

Spring 2025 data highlight course success among students experiencing disproportionate outcomes:

- Male students: 229 enrolled; 181 successfully completed courses (79% success), 11% higher than the college average.
- Black/African American students: 3 enrolled; 0 completed (0% success), –74% gap.

- Native American students: 1 enrolled; 0 completed (0% success), –73% gap.
- Students with disabilities: 195 enrolled; 157 completed (81% success), 12% higher.
- Foster youth: 92 enrolled; 59 completed (64% success), –11% gap.

Low enrollment of Black/African American and Native American students reflects local demographics (Santa Clara and San Benito counties, U.S. Census 2025). Foster youth and students with disabilities remain disproportionately impacted due to structural inequities such as trauma, placement instability, limited support, and criminalization of disability-related behaviors. These outcomes reflect systemic barriers rather than individual deficits.

Higher Aspirations continues to provide holistic support, including basic needs, legal assistance, and health and wellness services. The program collaborates with campus partners, including NextUp and the Accessibility Education Center, to connect foster youth, former foster youth, and students with disabilities to appropriate resources and support, promoting persistence, equity, and academic success.

2. **(Instruction Only)** Find your Distance Education success information. If distance education is offered, consider any gaps in success rates between distance education and face-to-face courses. Do you notice any trends? Do these rates differ? If disparity exists, how do you plan on closing the achievement gaps between distance education and face-to-face courses (300 words or less)?
N/A
3. Our 2023 Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) Plan States: *“Gavilan Joint Community College District (District) is dedicated to proactively cultivating and sustaining a welcoming and inclusive work environment. The District aspires to be Diverse, Purposeful, Inclusive, and Equitable, as reflected in the District’s Principles of Community. The District values the worth and dignity of every person, the pursuit of truth, the acquisition of knowledge, and the nurture of democratic citizenship. These values provide the foundation for an environment of civility, honesty, cooperation, and professionalism.”*
What is your area doing to support district efforts in creating an inclusive college environment? With what programs are you partnering? Did you identify barriers and institute change? How are you creating/ ensuring diversity in your program or in the classroom? **(300 words or less)** *(Some examples might be sponsoring cultural events and diverse speakers on issues dealing with diversity, exploring how to infuse diversity into the classroom and curriculum, integrating diversity into the evaluation of employees, promoting learning opportunities and personal growth in the area of diversity, or evaluating how the physical environment can be responsive to diverse employee and student populations.)*

Higher Aspirations has facilitated multiple professional development opportunities and training to inform the campus and California community colleges on how to support formerly incarcerated students.

- Healing Justice: Trauma-Informed and Evidence-Based Approaches for Rehabilitation and Reentry

- Restoring Pathways: A Restorative Justice Approach to Gender-Responsive and Evidence-Based Practices for Justice-Involved Youth & Adults
- Breaking Barriers: Teaching, Transformation, and Restoration Behind the Walls
- Teaching Behind the Walls: Bridging Education, Healing, and Restoration
- Higher Aspirations Student Panel
- Moving From Allyship to Accompliceship with Justice Impacted Students
- Providing Holistic Support for Justice Impacted Scholars

Higher Aspirations partners with multiple government agencies, community-based organizations, and alternative schools to provide access to higher education for currently and formerly incarcerated students.

- San Benito County Jail
- Elmwood Correctional Facility
- Santa Clara County Main Jail
- James Ranch
- San Benito County Probation Department
- South County Reentry Resource Center
- Carry The Vision
- Pinnacles High
- Polytechnic School
- Opportunity Youth Academy
- Brownell School

4. How do you plan on addressing issues of student and employee equity? In other words, how do you plan on creating opportunities for success of students who have historically been underserved? How do you plan to address EEO outcomes in your employee hires?

Higher Aspirations is committed to advancing equity for historically underserved students by establishing a jail- and prison-to-school pipeline. The program provides instructional and educational support while students are in custody and leverages the Rising Scholars Network to identify and receive referrals for individuals transitioning back to Santa Clara or San Benito County. Higher Aspirations facilitates a seamless transition into higher education by supporting academic preparation, application completion, enrollment navigation, and connection to campus resources upon release. This comprehensive approach reduces barriers, promotes educational continuity, and fosters opportunities for success among students historically excluded from higher education.

To support employee equity, Higher Aspirations prioritizes hiring individuals with lived experience who reflect the populations served. This approach not only strengthens cultural competence and relatability in program delivery but also contributes to broader institutional goals around Equal Employment Opportunity outcomes. By intentionally recruiting staff and mentors who have navigated similar life experiences, the program

builds capacity for responsive, inclusive support while creating professional opportunities for historically marginalized employees.

Through these strategies, Higher Aspirations simultaneously advances student access and success while promoting equity, representation, and inclusion among program staff.

VI - LEARNING AND AREA OUTCOME

Have you reviewed all your Learning and Area Outcomes to ensure that they remain relevant for evaluating the performance of your area?

1. Are your SLOs, PLOs, SAOs, and ILOs mapped in CurriQunet? NO
2. Are your SLOs, PLOs or SAOs up-to-date in CurriQunet? NO
3. Have all of your SLOs, PLOs or SAOs been assessed in the last five years? NO
4. Have you reviewed all of your SLOs/SAOs to ensure that they remain relevant for evaluating the performance of your program? NO
5. If you answered No to any of the above questions, what is your plan to bring SLOs/PLOs/SAOs into compliance?

This is our first comprehensive review

VII - OUTCOME ASSESSMENTS

Review Outcomes data located in CurricUNET Assessment Area. After you have examined your results, what do your findings suggest?

1. Student Learning Outcomes (SLO) or Service Area Outcomes (SAO) Review the SLOs or SAOs assessment data located in CurriQunet. What improvement do you plan to implement based on your assessment data and when will you implement these changes and how will you know they are successful?

Establishing within this PIPR

2. Institutional Learning Outcomes (ILO) How do your SLOs/SAOs support the college ILOs or how do your PLOs support the college ILOs? Be specific.

Click or tap here to enter text.

3. Are you meeting your SLO/SAO success outcomes? What patterns stand out in your results? If your SLO/SAO results are lower than expected, what are your plans to improve them?

Click or tap here to enter text.

VIII - CURRICULUM AND COURSE OFFERINGS ANALYSIS

1. Are there plans for new courses or educational awards (degrees/certificates) in this program? If so, please describe the new course(s) or award(s) you intend to propose (200 words or less).

N/A

2. Provide your plans to either inactivate or teach each course not taught in the last

three years (200 words or less).

N/A

3. Consider and analyze your location, time, and delivery method trends. Are classes offered in the appropriate sequence/ available so students can earn their degree or certificate within two years? Are courses offered face-to-face as well as have distance education offerings? Are they offered on the main campus as well as the off-site areas? Different times of day? (300 words or less).

N/A

IX - PROGRAM AND RESOURCE ANALYSIS

1. Please list the number of Full and Part Time faculty, staff and/ or managers/ administrator positions in this program over the past three years. Focus on your individual program.

Click Add Item to enter information for each year

Select Year 1: 2023-2024

Number of Full Time Faculty: 1

Number of Part Time Faculty: 0

Number of Full Time Classified Professional: 0

Number of Part Time Classified Professional or Student Worker: 4

Number of Full Time Manager, Confidential or Administrator: 1-shared between multiple programs

Number of Part Time Manager, Confidential or Administrator: 0

Select Year 2: 2024-2025

Number of Full Time Faculty: 1

Number of Part Time Faculty: 0

Number of Full Time Classified Professional: 1

Number of Part Time Classified Professional or Student Worker: 4

Number of Full Time Manager, Confidential or Administrator: 1-shared between multiple programs

Number of Part Time Manager, Confidential or Administrator: 0

Select Year 3: 2025-2026

Number of Full Time Faculty: 1

Number of Part Time Faculty: 0

Number of Full Time Classified Professional: 0

Number of Part Time Classified Professional or Student Worker: 5

Number of Full Time Manager, Confidential or Administrator: 1-shared between multiple programs

Number of Part Time Manager, Confidential or Administrator: 0

2. How have and will those with reassigned time, grant commitments and activity, projected retirements and sabbaticals affect personnel and load within the past in the next three years? What future impacts do you foresee? (200 words or less)

Over the past several years, staffing for Higher Aspirations has increased to align with growing funding streams and program expansion. The Director receives a 10% stipend to offset workload, as their responsibilities are shared across Basic Needs, CalWORKs, Fresh

Success, and Higher Aspirations. Each program requires significant administrative management, coordination, and maintenance of grant compliance, ensuring smooth operations and program accountability.

Grant-funded positions, including a full-time Counselor/Coordinator, a Juvenile Justice Coordinator, a part-time Program Specialist, and peer mentors, provide the capacity needed to support students effectively without overburdening core staff. This structure has allowed the program to expand services, engage more students, and maintain a high level of support while meeting all reporting and compliance requirements.

As Higher Aspirations continues to grow, personnel needs will evolve alongside increased student enrollment and service offerings. Maintaining staffing alignment with program demands, cross-training staff, and leveraging grant-funded roles will be critical to sustaining operations and supporting student success. Strategic staffing planning ensures the program can continue expanding its reach while maintaining high-quality services and compliance.

3. Additional Comments: We are in the process of bringing on an adjunct counselor to support the juvenile population, focusing primarily on students in custody and those attending alternative schools. This role will provide targeted academic advising, counseling, and guidance to ensure continuity of education and support during detention and reentry. Additionally, as Higher Aspirations expands into Santa Clara County probation, we are exploring contracting with service navigators to provide case management and support for justice-impacted students. These navigators will help address individualized needs, connect students to community and campus resources, and facilitate smooth transitions from custody to education and career pathways. These planned additions are designed to enhance program capacity, ensure equity of access, and sustain high levels of student support while meeting the growing demands of the program and new funding opportunities.

X - EVALUATION OF RESOURCE ALLOCATIONS AND PROGRAM EFFICIENCY

1. List the resource allocations from all sources (e.g., annual college budget request appropriations, Guided Pathways funds, grant funds, etc.) received in the last three years. **For annual college budget request appropriations, reference your previous three-year plan and annual updates. Do this for the last three years.**

Select Year 1: 2023-2024

Number of Students Served. *How many students did your area serve in this year (if you don't have the exact count, please provide an estimate)?*

- Adult Population: 97
- Incarcerated Adult: 124
- Juvenile Justice Population: 71

Total Allocation (Irrespective of Funding Source): \$485,782.60

Funding Source (**select all that apply**)

Unrestricted General Fund: ☐

Grants & Categorical Programs: ☒

Other Funds: ☐

Total Spent (Irrespective of Funding Source): \$296,329

Select Year 2: 2024-2025

Number of Students Served. *How many students did your area serve in this year (if you don't have the exact count, please provide an estimate)?*

- Adult Population: 100
- Incarcerated Adult: 112
- Juvenile Justice Population: 100
- Juvenile Justice Incarcerated: 1

Total Allocation (Irrespective of Funding Source): \$490,782.6

Funding Source (**select all that apply**)

Unrestricted General Fund: ☐

Grants & Categorical Programs: ☒

Other Funds: ☐

Total Spent (Irrespective of Funding Source): \$422,344.60

Select Year 3: 2025-2026

Number of Students Served. *How many students did your area serve in this year (if you don't have the exact count, please provide an estimate)?*

Fall 2025

Adult Population: 103

Incarcerated Adult: 36

Juvenile Justice Population: 65

Juvenile Justice Incarcerated: 4

Total Allocation (Irrespective of Funding Source): \$558,605.60

Funding Source (**select all that apply**)

Unrestricted General Fund: ☐

Grants & Categorical Programs: ☒

Other Funds: ☐

Total Spent (Irrespective of Funding Source): \$220,987.35

2. Please evaluate the effectiveness of the resources utilized for your program. How did these resources help student success and completion? (200 words or less)

Staffing is critical to student success and completion in Higher Aspirations because it ensures consistent, personalized support at every stage of a student's educational journey. Dedicated counselors, coordinators, and peer mentors provide academic advising, goal setting, and milestone monitoring, helping students navigate course registration, degree planning, and transfer pathways. Regular check-ins with staff allow early identification of academic or personal challenges, enabling timely interventions that prevent stop-outs and support persistence.

Specialized roles, such as the counselor and coordinator roles provide targeted support for high-need populations, including students in custody or transitioning from probation. Peer

mentors offer relatable guidance and encouragement, fostering engagement, motivation, and a sense of community.

Administrative and program management staff maintain program infrastructure, compliance, and coordination across campus and community partners, ensuring students have seamless access to basic needs, legal assistance, and mental health support.

Together, these staffing structures create an integrated support system that addresses academic, social, and structural barriers, directly contributing to higher persistence, stronger course success, and increased completion rates.

3. Evaluate your program costs. Are your costs in alignment with your budget? If not, what improvements can be made? Please explain any trends in spending, inconsistencies and unexpected results. (200 words or less)

We are on track with spending, as the program is fully staffed and in the process of bringing on an adjunct counselor to support the juvenile population. Given the large student population we serve and the multiple touchpoints required, academic advising, counseling, peer mentorship, case management, and basic needs support, we anticipate utilizing all funds allocated for this year.

These expenditures directly support student success by ensuring access to individualized guidance, wraparound services, and proactive interventions that promote persistence, course completion, and educational continuity. Each investment in staffing, program coordination, and student support is aligned with our goal of reducing barriers for justice-impacted students and fostering equitable outcomes. Full utilization of allocated funds reflects the high demand for these services and the program's commitment to maximizing impact for all participants.

XI - INTEGRATED PLANNING AND INITIATIVES

1. What other areas is your program partnering with (i.e. guided pathways, grant collaboration, etc.) in new ventures to improve student success at Gavilan College? What is the focus of this collaboration? Helpful question: What are the program and your Integrated Planning/ Guided Pathways partners' plans for the next three years? (200 words or less)

Higher Aspirations aims for 100% of students to have a completed education plan on file by the end of their first semester. Additionally, the program seeks to support students pursuing an associate or transfer degree in completing their "Golden 4" courses within their first academic year. In alignment with the goals of the Counseling Department, Higher Aspirations has developed a structured intake process to be implemented over the next three years to ensure these objectives are met, providing students with individualized guidance, academic planning, and ongoing support to promote timely progress toward

their educational goals.

Higher Aspirations will continue to collaborate with student support programs such as NextUp and the Accessibility Education Center to connect foster youth/former foster youth, as well as students with disabilities, to appropriate resources and services for students with disproportionate outcomes. The program collaborates with CalWORKs, Fresh Success, EOPS/CARE, and STEM Center to provide multi-layered academic and programmatic support services for students.

XII - OTHER OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES

1. Review for opportunities or threats to your program, or an analysis of important subgroups of the college population you serve. Examples may include environmental scans from the Education Plan/Strategic Plan, changes in matriculation or articulation, student population, community and/ or labor market changes, etc. **Helpful Question:** What are the program plans for the next three years? **(200 words or less)**

Key Opportunities

- The program already demonstrates strong retention (around 85%) and growing completions, with roughly 150 students enrolled and recent cohorts of graduates, suggesting room to scale what is working.
- Higher Aspirations provides robust basic needs and financial supports (book coverage, stipends for educational needs, monthly grants, rental assistance, food pantry access), which positions the program to anchor broader equity and student success initiatives at the college.
- Outreach that begins during incarceration, including transition planning three months prior to release, creates an opportunity to formalize “in-reach” pipelines with local correctional partners and extend them to juvenile and reentry agencies.

Key Threats and Challenges

- Justice-impacted students face persistent barriers around housing, transportation, technology access, and mental health, making continued funding for stipends, rental assistance, and food support a critical vulnerability for the program.
- Regional cost of living and housing pressures, combined with a student body where many come from low-income households, threaten persistence if institutional and external funds for basic needs are reduced.
- Shifts in state corrections and community college funding formulas, or changes to reentry policies, could affect the program’s ability to serve students in custody and maintain specialized staff and peer mentor roles.
- Rising Scholars grant funding is competitive which creates risk of lack of ongoing support and programming.

2. What are you discovering about instruction and/or services in a remote

environment that you would want to maintain post-pandemic? **(300 words or less)**

We continue to provide a variety of modalities for students, offering both virtual and in-person options to maximize engagement and accessibility. These flexible approaches have proven effective in supporting persistence and participation, particularly for students balancing multiple responsibilities or facing barriers to consistent attendance.

Moving forward, we would like to mirror this hybrid approach for in-custody students to increase access to educational and career pathways. However, challenges remain, as we do not have full autonomy over decision-making within correctional facilities, which can limit the implementation of virtual or alternative instructional models. Despite these constraints, lessons learned from remote instruction, such as leveraging technology for advising, workshops, and community-building, highlight strategies that could enhance access, engagement, and individualized support in both custodial and campus-based settings.

3. What kinds of issues are exacerbated or emerging that are likely to remain, unless addressed? **(300 words or less)**

Several internal and external barriers affecting in-custody students have been exacerbated by limited instructional flexibility and are likely to persist unless addressed. Access to a variety of courses across multiple modalities and disciplines, as well as career education pathways, remains a challenge. Offering pathways that lead to certificates, degrees, transfer, and employment is essential to ensuring students achieve meaningful educational and career outcomes. The lack of hybrid or fully online options further limits participation and progression.

To fully support these students, creative solutions are needed, including short-term courses, career education pathways, and advocacy for HyFlex or fully online instruction where feasible. Additionally, training and recruiting faculty prepared to teach in these specialized settings is critical. Moreover, given the already stretched Director, Counselor/Coordinator, we believe giving a current faculty release time or funding a faculty coordinator to fully support establishing reachable academic pathways for in custody youth and adults, and assist in coordinating with Dual enrollment for youth at alternative schools.

Addressing these barriers will require additional funding and flexibility from the district, including the ability to run in-custody classes even if enrollment falls below typical targets. These measures will enhance access, engagement, and completion while promoting equity and continuity for justice-impacted students.

XIII - NEW GOALS

The PIPR/RAP committee will rank each goal according to a [rubric](#) based on two main criteria: the alignment of the goal with the college's [mission statement](#), [strategic plan](#), and

student learning outcomes (SLOs) or service area outcomes (SAOs). If resources are requested, complete the Resource Request section.

Goals are designed to be **Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, and Time-bound** for each functional area. See example below;

- **Instructional Program Goal:**

Reduce the equity gap in successful course completion (grade of 'C' or better) between Historically Underserved Student Subgroups and the overall student population in all required gateway transfer-level Math and English courses by **5 percentage points** compared to the 2024-2025 baseline, by the **end of the Spring 2027 semester**.

- **Student Services Goal:**

Increase the percentage of first-time, full-time students who successfully complete both a comprehensive Student Educational Plan (SEP) and a financial aid application (FAFSA or Dream Act) from the current baseline of 68% to **80%**, to be achieved by the **Census Date of the Fall 2026 semester**.

- **Business Services Goal:**

Reduce the average processing time for standard purchase requisitions (PRs), from internal department submission to final approval, by 50%—moving from a baseline average of 14 business days to **7 business days**—by **December 31, 2026**, through the optimization of the electronic workflow system.

Copy and paste to Enter more than one Goal

Goal (*One Sentence Limit*): Goal #1

Increase fall-to-spring persistence for Higher Aspirations students by 5 percentage points and degree/certificate completion by 5 percentage points over 2024–2025 baselines by the end of Spring 2027.

- Alignment to Strategic Goal **Goal 1: Student Success, Completion, and Transfer - To provide a structured and supportive pathway for students to successfully complete their academic and career goals.**
- Alignment to SLO or SAO (*Enter Department SLO or SAO that aligns to this goal*):
SAO – Students will persist term-to-term and complete their identified educational goal (degree, certificate, or transfer).
- Describe the connection of Goal to Mission Statement, Strategic Plan and SLO/SAO Results:

This goal directly supports student success and completion priorities by reducing equity gaps in persistence and completion for justice-impacted students, who face disproportionate barriers to staying enrolled.

- Proposed Activity to Achieve Goal:

Implement required mid-term check-ins with Higher Aspirations staff for all active

students. Embed degree/SEP progress reviews each term and proactive referrals to tutoring, counseling, basic needs, reentry, and mental health services. Offer at least one completion-focused workshop per term (e.g., petition to graduate, transfer applications, career planning).

- Responsible Party (One Sentence limit):

Higher Aspirations Coordinators and Peer Mentors, in collaboration with Counseling and Tutoring Services.

- Timeline to Completion: Semester/Year: Spring 2028
- How Will You Evaluate Whether You Achieved Your Goal (Two sentence Limit):

Use institutional data to compare fall-to-spring persistence and annual completions for Higher Aspirations students to 2024–2025 baselines. Achievement will be defined as meeting or exceeding the targeted percentage increases for at least two consecutive years.

- **Goal (One Sentence Limit): Goal #2**

Increase the percentage of Higher Aspirations students who receive a documented basic needs assessment and at least one support (food, transportation, housing, or technology) from an estimated 50% baseline to 75% by the end of Spring 2027.

- Alignment to Strategic Goal **Goal 2: Equity, Access, and Inclusion - With equity at the forefront, build inclusive spaces and curriculum that honor, support, and respect diverse student populations.**
- Alignment to SLO or SAO (*Enter Department SLO or SAO that aligns to this goal*):
SAO – Students will identify and access basic needs resources that reduce non-academic barriers to success.
- Describe the connection of Goal to Mission Statement, Strategic Plan and SLO/SAO Results:

Addressing housing, food, and transportation insecurity for justice-impacted students supports the mission's emphasis on holistic student support and is essential for equitable learning outcomes.

- Proposed Activity to Achieve Goal:

Integrate a brief basic needs screening into Higher Aspirations intake and each term's required check-in. Establish a warm-hand-off procedure to Basic Needs Center, Financial Aid, and community partners for students with identified needs. Track distribution of supports such as meal vouchers, gas cards, rental assistance, and technology loans.

- Responsible Party (One Sentence limit): Higher Aspirations Coordinators in partnership with Basic Needs staff and community agencies.
- Timeline to Completion: Semester/Year: Spring 2027.
- How Will You Evaluate Whether You Achieved Your Goal (Two sentence Limit):
Use a program tracking log to calculate the percentage of active Higher Aspirations students with a completed basic needs assessment and at least one support

received each term. Success will be defined as reaching 75% participation and maintaining it for two consecutive terms.

▪ **Goal (*One Sentence Limit*): Goal #3**

Increase the number of actively enrolled Higher Aspirations students that are recently released from custody by 15% over the 2024–2025 baseline by the end of Spring 2027 through expanded in-reach and community outreach to justice-impacted individuals.

- Alignment to Strategic Goal **Goal 2: Equity, Access, and Inclusion - With equity at the forefront, build inclusive spaces and curriculum that honor, support, and respect diverse student populations.**
- Alignment to SLO or SAO (*Enter Department SLO or SAO that aligns to this goal*): **Justice-impacted students will gain increased access to tailored onboarding and support services that promote successful enrollment.**
- Describe the connection of Goal to Mission Statement, Strategic Plan and SLO/SAO Results:

This goal advances the college mission to provide open access and equitable educational opportunities by intentionally reaching justice-impacted community members, an identified disproportionately impacted population in regional and college data.

▪ Proposed Activity to Achieve Goal:

Formalize referral pipelines with local jails, probation, and reentry organizations. Conduct at least two outreach presentations per term in custody and in the community. Implement an intake and follow-up process for all referred students

▪ Responsible Party (*One Sentence limit*):

Higher Aspirations Coordinators, in collaboration with Counseling, Financial Aid, and Basic Needs staff.

▪ Timeline to Completion: Semester/Year: Spring 2027

▪ How Will You Evaluate Whether You Achieved Your Goal (*Two sentence Limit*):

Compare term-to-term unduplicated headcount of Higher Aspirations students to the 2024–2025 baseline and monitor demographic data for justice-impacted subgroups. Success will be defined as at least a 15% increase in active enrollment sustained across two consecutive primary terms.

XIV - RESOURCE REQUESTS

Copy and paste to add more than 1 requests

1. Request Name (short title): In Custody Faculty Instruction
2. Request amount: \$150,000
3. Type of Request: Personnel
4. Alignment to Goal(s) in section XIII (*enter goal from above*)

Goal #1 Increase fall-to-spring persistence for Higher Aspirations students by 5 percentage points and degree/certificate completion by 5 percentage points over 2024–2025 baselines by the end of Spring 2027.

Goal #3 Increase the number of actively enrolled Higher Aspirations students that are recently released from custody by 15% over the 2024–2025 baseline by the end of Spring 2027 through expanded in-reach and community outreach to justice-impacted individuals.

5. Is this a one-time or ongoing expense? Ongoing

6. Category of Request

Funding to support developing pathways for in custody students, cover the cost of courses in custody which do not meet enrollment requirements, and support increasing the PT Program Specialist to FT Program Specialist as the program grows additional coordination and administrative support is needed to ensure we are meeting the needs of internal and external constituents.

If Personnel is Selected in question 3, select from the following all that applies

- Full-Time Faculty ☐
- Part-Time Faculty ☒
- Faculty Special Assignment or Reassigned Time ☒
- Full-Time Classified Professional ☒
- Part-Time Classified Professional or Student Worker ☐
- Full-Time Manager, Supervisor, Confidential ☐
- Part-Time Manager, Supervisor, Confidential ☐
- Professional Experts ☒

If Non-Personnel is Selected in question 3 select from the following all that applies;

- Instructional Equipment ☐
- Instructional Software ☐
- Instructional Supplies, Materials and Textbooks ☐
- Non-Instructional Equipment ☐
- Non-Instructional Software ☐
- Non-Instructional Supplies and Materials ☐
- Professional Development ☐
- Travel and Conference ☐
- Professional or Contracted Services ☐
- Repairs and Maintenance ☐
- Other ☐

7. *The committee will separate goals with resource requests. Requests will be categorized into two groups: those to be ranked and those not ranked. The requests not ranked include Safety, Compliance, Personnel, and Position.*

Which of the following best describes your requests?

Personnel and Position: Requests that involve hiring, staffing, or reclassifying full-time or part-time faculty or staff. These requests are reviewed and approved through a separate process by the Faculty Staffing Committee or the Executive and Leadership

8. Provide a complete description, justification, or rationale for the requested amount. Describe how it aligns to the selected goal(s) and your responses to the above questions. (300 words)

To support Goal #1, funding will allow in-custody classes to operate below traditional enrollment thresholds, ensuring students maintain continuous access to required and milestone courses. Justice-impacted students often face limited course availability, and interruptions in instruction can delay progress toward certificates, degrees, or transfer. By maintaining consistent course offerings, students are more likely to persist from fall to spring and complete educational milestones on time.

Transitioning the current part-time Program Specialist to a full-time position will significantly enhance coordinated student support. A full-time Program Specialist will provide sustained academic navigation, enrollment assistance, data tracking, and transition planning, all of which are critical to improving persistence and completion outcomes. In addition, faculty-led pathway identification and implementation will align in-custody coursework with defined certificates, degrees, and transfer pathways. This intentional design will reduce excess units, remove course sequencing barriers, and accelerate student progress. Together, these strategies support a five percentage point increase in fall-to-spring persistence and degree or certificate completion over the 2024–2025 baseline by the end of Spring 2027.

To support Goal #3, expanded staffing capacity will strengthen in-reach, pre-release planning, and post-release follow-up for students transitioning from custody to the community. The full-time Program Specialist will coordinate outreach with faculty, campus partners, and community-based organizations to ensure students remain connected to Higher Aspirations and are supported through re-enrollment processes.

XV - ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS

Please consider providing answers to the following questions. While these are optional, they provide crucial information about your equity efforts, training, classified professional support, and recruitment.

1. Does your division (or program) provide any training/mentoring for faculty and/ or classified professionals regarding professional development?

Yes, we have offered a variety of professional development sessions for faculty and classified staff to learn about the Higher Aspirations program and the specific needs of justice-impacted students. There are also trainings provided through the Rising Scholars program as well as resources available from the California Community Colleges system, ensuring staff and faculty gain a comprehensive understanding of student challenges, and effective practices to foster engagement, persistence, and equitable outcomes. Additionally, we have brought in outside experts to provide specialized training in carceral education, including Teaching Behind the Walls: Bridging Education, Healing, and Restoration – exploring trauma-informed and restorative pedagogy to create healing-centered classrooms for justice-involved learners. Breaking Barriers: Teaching, Transformation, and Restoration Behind the Walls – highlighting strategies to overcome institutional resistance and build sustainable educational programs within carceral settings. Restoring Pathways: A Restorative Justice Approach to Gender-Responsive and Evidence-Based Practices, engaging participants in trauma-informed, gender-responsive frameworks to reduce recidivism and support successful reentry. Healing Justice: Trauma-Informed and Evidence-Based Approaches for Rehabilitation and Reentry – providing practical tools for integrating trauma-informed care into daily practice to promote recovery, resilience, and empowerment. These trainings equip faculty and staff with the knowledge, skills, and strategies needed to foster equitable, rehabilitative, and transformative educational experiences for justice-impacted students.

2. If there is a need for more faculty and/ or classified professional support in your area, please provide data to justify request. Indicate how it would support the college mission and college goals for success and completion. Since its launch in 2022, the Rising Scholars program has experienced steady and significant growth, currently serving more than 180 justice-impacted students on campus and over 50 incarcerated students. This growth has been driven by expanded referral partnerships with the County Probation Department, the District Attorney's Office, and local reentry organizations, which now serve as consistent points of referral for prospective students seeking access to higher education. As referrals have increased, so have the volume and complexity of student needs. Justice-impacted students often face multiple barriers related to enrollment, financial aid, academic planning, basic needs, and reentry requirements. Many require intensive, individualized, and ongoing support to persist and complete their educational goals. The current staffing model is no longer sufficient to meet demand while maintaining timely and effective service delivery. Additional faculty and/or classified professional support is necessary to manage caseloads responsibly, strengthen coordination with referral partners, and provide proactive, high-touch support from entry through completion. Increased staffing will directly improve retention, persistence, and completion outcomes for a

disproportionately impacted student population. This request aligns with Gavilan College's mission to promote equitable access and student success, and supports institutional goals focused on equity, retention, completion, and strong community partnerships. Investing additional staffing ensures the Rising Scholars program can sustainably respond to community referrals and support justice-impacted students in achieving certificates, degrees, and successful transitions beyond Gavilan College.

3. What, if anything, is your program doing to assist the District in attracting and retaining faculty and classified professionals who are sensitive to, and knowledgeable of, the needs of our continually changing constituencies, and reflect the make-up of our student body? The program actively supports the District's efforts to attract and retain professionals who are responsive to the needs of Gavilan College's diverse and evolving student populations. In alignment with Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) principles, the program contributes to inclusive hiring practices that prioritize cultural competency, equity-mindedness, and demonstrated experience working with disproportionately impacted students. The program supports the development of customized ideal candidate statements that explicitly value trauma-informed approaches, community engagement, and an understanding of the lived experiences of justice-impacted, low-income, first-generation, and parenting students. Job postings emphasize student-centered service, collaboration, and flexibility to ensure alignment with institutional equity goals. Additionally, the program supports the acceptance and valuing of candidates with relevant lived experience as a form of expertise. Recognizing lived experience enhances trust, representation, and effectiveness in serving students, while also contributing to employee retention by fostering a sense of belonging and purpose. These efforts support the District in building a workforce that reflects the student body and advances equity, access, and student success.
4. Are there program accomplishments/ milestones that have not been mentioned that you would like to highlight? **Click or tap here to enter text.**
5. Please share any recommendations for improvements in the Program Integrated Plan and Review process, analysis, and questions. Your comments will be helpful to the PIPR Committee and will become part of the permanent review record. **Click or tap here to enter text.**

XVI - EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Please provide a brief executive summary regarding program trends and highlights that surfaced in the writing of this report. Summarize, using narrative, your program goals for your next three years. Your audience will be your Peer Review Team, the program review Committee, President's Cabinet, Dean's Council, ASGC, Academic Senate, Budget

Committee and Board of Trustees (300 words or less).

Gavilan College's Higher Aspirations program provides comprehensive support to incarcerated and formerly incarcerated students pursuing higher education. Since 2022, the program has expanded rapidly, growing from a small initiative serving seven on-campus students to supporting over 180 unduplicated students in 2024–25 across multiple facilities, including jails, juvenile hall, James Ranch, and alternative schools. This growth reflects strategic investments in staffing, infrastructure, and holistic student support, including academic advising, counseling, peer mentorship, career exploration, and basic needs assistance.

The program emphasizes equity and completion, aiming for 100% of students to have a completed education plan by the end of their first semester and to complete milestone courses, including the "Golden 4," in their first academic year. Higher Aspirations leverages structured intake, milestone monitoring, and campus-wide collaboration, including partnerships with EOPS, CalWORKs, Fresh Success, and community organizations, to address barriers such as housing instability, food insecurity, and legal challenges.

Professional development is a key component. Faculty and staff receive training on trauma-informed, gender-responsive, and in-custody instruction, with workshops led by experts including Drs. Patrick Marshall and Isabel Reichert on restorative pedagogy, healing-centered classrooms, and evidence-based, gender-responsive practices.

Looking ahead, additional staffing, including a full-time Program Specialist, adjunct counselor, and service navigators, is critical to maintain program quality and expand services. Additional funding and district flexibility to run in-custody courses below standard enrollment thresholds will further support persistence, course completion, and degree/certificate attainment, directly advancing the college's mission to promote equity, access, and student success.

XVII - ATTACH FILES

Optional: If there is any additional information regarding your program that you would like to have uploaded, please attach it here.