

### Community College Support

## Edinboro University Decision Adds Urgency to Community College Effort

[Edinboro University of Pennsylvania](#) is refocusing on its core mission of offering students the opportunity to earn baccalaureate and graduate level degrees.

As a result, the establishment of the Erie County Community College is more important than ever to make sure local students have a viable and affordable option to earn associate degrees, take classes that could bridge them to a four-year program, and acquire skills and training that meet the specific needs of local employers.

In recent years, Edinboro University offered community college-style classes at its [Porreco College](#) on West 38<sup>th</sup> Street in Millcreek Township. University President H. Fred Walker told a special panel of the state Board of Education at a recent public hearing that Edinboro began offering the classes to meet a need in Erie, where “there had not been a good opportunity in the past.”

### ‘A smooth transition’

However, as Edinboro University addresses its own enrollment and financial challenges, the decision was made to exit the community college market and concentrate on its core mission.

As such, Walker voiced support for establishing the Erie County Community College, and vowed Edinboro would “be the first to interact” with community colleges to form articulation agreements to make it a “more smooth transition.”



Effective in fall 2018, Edinboro will apply the full admissions standards of the university at the Porreco Center. Edinboro, as part of its transformation, is raising its admission standards to attract students who would be more likely to complete their degrees and graduate.

The university will change the focus of its Porreco College to night and weekend courses to help adult students complete four-year degrees. And in doing so, the university will no longer offer associate degree programs through its community college-style format.

Edinboro refers to the change as a series of two-year completer programs that will be custom made for adult students who have completed two-year programs at a community college.

### **Collaboration, not competition**

Walker, who has earned bachelor's, master's and doctorate degrees in public postsecondary schools, said he knows first-hand about the importance of community colleges. He said he was a community college student himself.

As for Edinboro, he said the university is "simply not equipped, staffed or funded to provide for the needs of these young men and women in our community."

With its singular focus, the Erie County Community College will be equipped to meet the needs of local students seeking an affordable and accessible community college education. The college will serve to complement and collaborate with four-year institutions, not compete with them.