

2018 COMMUNITY COLLEGE ISSUES

- **Secure full and stable community college funding for FY2019.**
The recent volatility of funding (and non-funding) makes it very difficult for the colleges to plan programs that are needed by their students and community. State funding for community colleges has fallen from \$310 million in FY2002 to \$249 million in FY2018. Predictable, stable and full funding will allow colleges to plan and meet the individual needs within each community college district.
- **Protect the ability of community colleges to be the first choice for dual credit courses in local high schools.**
Students are becoming more aware of the cost of higher education. Student education debt, job availability, and economic opportunity now weigh heavily in the student choice for higher education. Community colleges are a proven value leader in this area. Even more valuable have been dual credit courses that provide high school students with a head start on higher education. Now universities and out-of-state colleges want to invade the dual credit environment.
- **Allow community colleges to fill the current nursing shortage by authorizing community colleges to grant Bachelor of Science in Nursing degrees.**
Many areas of Illinois are experiencing severe nursing shortages at the same time that nurses are being asked to bring more knowledge and experience to the workplace. Many of those same nurses wish to obtain, and an increasing number of hospitals and employers require, bachelor degrees but are unable to do so because of a lack of opportunity in their areas. Community colleges have been the leader in educating nurses with associate degrees and wish to provide a path to the BSN in their region and on a schedule that will allow nurses to reach their potential.