

# **Achieving the Dream State Policy Meeting**

## **Orlando, January 31, 2006**

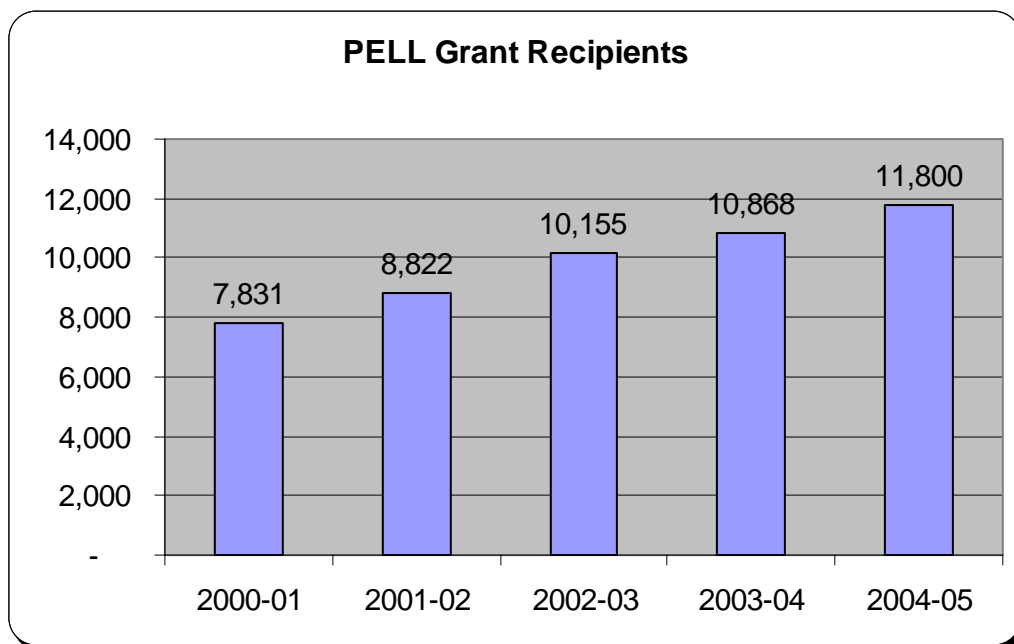
### **Policy Priority: Need-Based Financial Aid Connecticut Community Colleges**

Toward the end of the 1990's, the Connecticut Community Colleges and System Office launched an aggressive effort to increase the efficiency and effectiveness of the financial aid process. The key components of this effort have included the following:

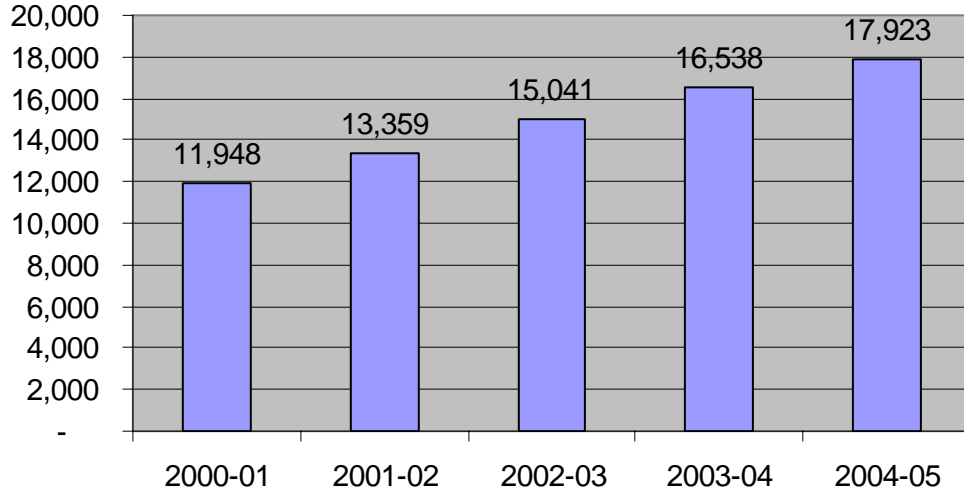
- Installation and intensive customization at the System Office of the SunGard SCT Banner Financial Aid Module for all colleges
- Integration of the online application process for federal, state and local college financial aid within the virtual Banner Student Self-Help internet-based functionality
- Centralization of financial aid automation at the System Office
- Participation by college financial aid staff on the system Financial Aid team
- Cross-functional System Office teams developed between financial aid, system analysts and programmers and finance
- Satisfactory progress towards degree policy for financial aid recipients harmonized at all colleges
- Satisfactory progress towards degree automated at System Office for use by all colleges
- Extensive, continuing training by System Financial Aid team for all College financial aid staff on policy, procedure, regulations and the technical interfaces
- System Financial Aid Council monthly meetings focusing on process integrity and proactive marketing to potential students
- Moving the Financial Aid team under Academic and Student Affairs at the System Office

The result of this initiative can be seen in the three graphs on the next two pages, which cover five years from 2000-2001 through 2004-2005. Pell Grant recipients as well as the total number of financial aid recipients have increased 50% during this period. When financial aid recipients are viewed as a percent of total head-count enrollment, the proportion of all students who received a Pell grant increased from 19% in 2000-2001 to 26% in 2004-2005. The proportion of all students who received federal, state or local college financial aid increased from 29% in 2000-2001 to 39% in 2004-2005.

During this same period, Pell awards in terms of dollars increased 90% from \$11.8 million to \$22.5 million. All financial aid awards in terms of dollars increased 57% from \$27.7 million to \$46.3 million. The increase in head-count and FTE during the same period was 12% and 24% respectively. Therefore, the increase in financial aid awards was several times the increase in enrollment, demonstrating that the intensive, systemic, collaborative and focused effort has contributed to a significant increase in the numbers of students successfully gaining access to and benefiting from the financial aid opportunities.



### Student Financial Aid Recipients



### Annual Growth

