



Public Policy Forum
The Road to Recovery: Business Leading the Way
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Aaron R. Fichtner, Ph.D.
President of the New Jersey County College Council

Aaron Fichtner, Ph.D. is the President of the New Jersey Council of County Colleges, a nonprofit organization, enshrined in state law, that supports and strengthens the state's 19 community colleges. Fichtner began his new role with the NJCCC on February 5, 2018. Fichtner succeeds Lawrence A. Nespoli, Ed.D., who retired after 27 years of service to the NJCCC and New Jersey's community colleges.

The New Jersey Council of County Colleges is the state association representing New Jersey's 19 community colleges. As an independent, trustee-headed organization that joins the leadership of trustees and presidents, the Council is the voice of the community college sector before the state legislature and other branches of government.

Prior to joining the NJCCC, Fichtner served as Commissioner of the New Jersey Department of Labor and Workforce Development, appointed to the position in September 2016. He served in leadership roles in the Department since 2010, first as Assistant Commissioner for Research and Information and then as Deputy Commissioner for four and half years. Under his leadership, the Department implemented new initiatives that expanded economic opportunity through innovative, data-driven partnerships with high schools, colleges, community-based organizations, libraries, industry associations, and employers. Fichtner served as the Chair of the National Association of State Liaisons for Workforce Development Partnerships, an affiliate of the National Governors Association, from February 2016 to January 2018.

Before joining the Department in 2010, Fichtner was the Director of Research and Evaluation at the Heldrich Center for Workforce Development at Rutgers University. In that role, he conducted extensive research on the workforce and skill needs of key industries, implemented a variety of workforce and education initiatives, and conducted evaluations of education and training programs. He has also worked in the field of economic development in Jersey City and Atlanta.

Fichtner earned a Ph.D. in Planning and Public Policy from Rutgers University, a master's degree in City Planning from the Georgia Institute of Technology and a bachelor's degree in History from Vassar College.