

STATE BOARD OF COMMUNITY COLLEGES
Legislative Report for Short Term Workforce Development Grant Program

Request: At the request of staff, the State Board of Community Colleges is asked to approve the Short-Term Workforce Development Grant Program Annual Report.

Background:

The General Assembly established evaluation criteria for the Short-Term Workforce Development Grant Program. The State Board is required to submit an annual report on the Program to the Joint Legislative Education Oversight Committee and the Fiscal Research Division by April 1, 2025. This report details the amount of grant funds disbursed and the number of eligible students supported, ensuring transparency and accountability in the program's implementation.

The State Board adopted rules for grant disbursement. Eligible programs were determined in collaboration with the Department of Commerce, aligning with high-demand occupations in the State. These programs include architecture, health sciences, information technology, electrical line worker training, and manufacturing, among others, addressing local workforce needs. Award amounts for the grants were set at up to seven hundred fifty dollars (\$750.00) to support students pursuing short-term, noncredit State and industry workforce credentials. The State Board established eligibility criteria, including residency qualifications, as outlined in G.S. 116-143.1.

Rationale:

Reviewing and evaluating the Short-Term Workforce Development Grant Program ensures continued program success. This year's report contains the amount of grant funds disbursed and the number of eligible students receiving funds for each academic year and by programs of study.

Contact(s):

Dr. Andrew Gardner
AVP, Workforce Strategies



SHORT-TERM WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT GRANT PROGRAM

FINAL REPORT *FISCAL YEAR 2024-25*

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Short-Term Workforce Development Grant Program

Background

Session Law 2021-180 Section 6.6.(a) established the Short-Term Workforce Development Grant Program and directed the State Board to collaborate with the Department of Commerce. The purpose was to determine the occupations in highest demand across the State and adopt rules for the disbursement of grants, linking the program to these occupations. Grants could be awarded for up to seven hundred fifty dollars (\$750) per course to students pursuing short-term, noncredit State and industry-recognized workforce credentials. The legislation stipulated that eligible students had to qualify as residents for tuition purposes under the criteria outlined in G.S. 116-143.1 and follow the centralized residency determination process administered by the State Education Assistance Authority.

This program and approach built upon the work of the N.C. Workforce Credentials and the State Board's strategic plan objectives. Eligible programs included courses and pathways leading to family-sustaining and in-demand credentials identified on the N.C. Workforce Credentials list. These pathways encompassed credentials across all sectors of the State's economy, including architecture and construction, health sciences, information technology, electrical line worker programs, manufacturing, and other programs addressing workforce needs. In 2023, the General Assembly allocated \$1,000,000 to the NC Community College System (NCCCS) for the Short-Term Workforce Development (STWD) Grant Program.

Administration:

Under this program, each college was eligible for an allocation determined by the college's Budget Full-Time Equivalency (BFTE) in Tiers 1A, 1B, and 2 (excluding Tier 3) as detailed in Appendix I. For program monitoring, funds were allocated and tracked through the college's monthly 112 financial reports using purpose code 554 and vocational code 80. Student awards were disbursed through the financial aid module of the colleges' student information system, Ellucian's Colleague, facilitating comprehensive data collection on awardees and program outcomes.

Reporting Plan:

The NCCCS was required to provide an annual report on the Short-Term Workforce Development Grant Program to the Joint Legislative Education Oversight Committee, the Senate Appropriations Committee on Education/Higher Education, the House Appropriations Committee on Education, and the Fiscal Research Division on the administration of the STWD Grant Program for the prior academic year by April 1, 2025.

Data collected for this report each academic year was to include, at minimum, the amount of grant funds disbursed and the number of eligible students receiving funds by each program.

Outcomes:

Data collected for this report each academic year includes the amount of grant funds disbursed and the number of eligible students receiving funds by each program.

Table 1: Disbursement and Student Awards

| | FY23-24 | FY24-25* | Total |
|--|--------------|--------------|----------------|
| Grant Funds Dispersed | \$950,629.33 | \$467,808.50 | \$1,418,437.83 |
| Total Students Awarded | 2,052 | 949 | 3,001 |
| Awards by Program of Study | | | |
| | FY23-24 | FY24-25 | Total |
| Agriculture & Natural Resources | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Biotechnology & Life Sciences | 34 | 19 | 53 |
| Business, Finance & Retail Operations | 4 | 0 | 4 |
| Construction and Skills Trade | 231 | 98 | 329 |
| Cosmetic Arts & Barbering | 305 | 106 | 411 |
| Criminal Justice | 29 | 13 | 42 |
| Distribution & Logistics | 9 | 0 | 9 |
| Emergency Medical Services | 179 | 145 | 324 |
| Fire & Rescue Services | 62 | 11 | 73 |
| Health Occupations / Medical Office | 876 | 400 | 1,276 |
| Hospitality & Tourism | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| IT Certifications | 25 | 22 | 47 |
| Manufacturing | 101 | 58 | 159 |
| Real Estate, Insurance & Appraisal | 28 | 0 | 28 |
| Truck Driver Program | 169 | 77 | 246 |

*Data reflects enrollment and expenses as of January 31, 2025.

Program Evaluation:

The Short-Term Workforce Development Grant Program positively impacted community colleges in North Carolina. The program expanded access to educational and employment opportunities. Students who might not otherwise have afforded educational and training programs were offered financial assistance for the first time. Beyond access, more students were given a valuable opportunity to gain new skills, improve their earning potential, and gain access to better career opportunities. Since workforce continuing education programs are accelerated in nature, students were able to enter the workforce with essential skills in a short period of time.

The program was particularly beneficial for non-traditional students, such as adult learners or students with families and work responsibilities. Generally, these students may not have been able to commit to longer degree programs, but benefited from the shorter, targeted training programs that led to industry-recognized credentials. Lastly, by completing a program that led to an industry-recognized credential, students improved their earning potential and gained access to better job opportunities.

FY 23/24 Program highlights are listed below:

- \$950,629.33 million dollars allocated to students in FY 23/24
- 2,052 students received funding from the program in FY23/24
- Over 1,000 credentials were awarded in FY23/24.
- Contributed to an overall increase in enrollment.

Table 2: Workforce Continuing Education Instructional FTE

| Spring 2023 | Spring 2024 | Change in Percentage |
|-------------|-------------|----------------------|
| 15,022 | 15,827 | 5% Increase |
| Summer 2023 | Summer 2024 | |
| 10,589 | 10,790 | 2% Increase |
| Fall 2023 | Fall 2024 | |
| 17,784 | 17,951 | 1% Increase |

Appendix I: State Board Action

STATE BOARD OF COMMUNITY COLLEGES
Allocation for Short-Term Workforce Development Grant Program
July 1, 2024 – June 30, 2025

Request:

The State Board of Community Colleges is requested to approve the allocation of \$1,000,000 in State funds to continue the Short-Term Workforce Development Grant Program. The program will provide financial assistance of up to \$750 per course for resident students who enroll in noncredit, short-term workforce training programs that lead to an industry-recognized credential in fields with employer demand and competitive wages.

Strategic Plan References:

Goal 4: Economic and Workforce Development Provide education, training, and credentials to develop the most competitive workforce in the nation.

Strategy: 4.3.1

Background:

Session Law 2021-180 Section 6.6.(a) established the Short-Term Workforce Development Grant Program and directed the State Board to collaborate with the Department of Commerce to determine the occupations in highest demand across the State and adopt rules for the disbursement of grants linking the program to these occupations. Grants may be for up to seven hundred fifty dollars (\$750) per course to students pursuing short-term, noncredit State and industry-recognized workforce credentials. At a minimum, the legislation requires eligible students to qualify as residents for tuition purposes under the criteria outlined in G.S. 116-143.1 and following the centralized residency determination process administered by the State Education Assistance Authority. This program and approach build on the work of the N.C. Workforce Credentials and the State Board's strategic plan objectives. Eligible programs will include courses and pathways leading to family-sustaining and in-demand credentials identified on the N.C. Workforce Credentials list. Identified pathways include credentials across all sectors in the State economy, including architecture and construction, health sciences, information technology, electrical line worker, manufacturing programs, and other programs that meet workforce needs.

Rationale:

North Carolina must have a well-trained workforce in critical high-demand fields to recover from the COVID-19 pandemic and continue to grow our economy. Additionally, data shows many North Carolinians are seeking more stable, better-paying careers, and recent polling data from the Strada Center for Consumer Insights noted that 59% of adults considering enrolling in an education or training program prefer non-degree programs. Community colleges are essential to North Carolina's continued economic recovery as we upskill, reskill, and graduate our workforce. However, unlike traditional academic programs of study, federal financial aid is unavailable for these programs. The Short-Term Workforce Development Grant Program addresses this unmet need for the NCCCS and the State of North Carolina.

For the 2021-23 biennium, the General Assembly allocated \$3,000,000 (\$1,000,000 recurring and \$2,000,000 nonrecurring) each year to the NC Community College System (NCCCS) to establish the Short-Term Workforce Development (STWD) Grant Program. The program aimed to serve eligible community college students pursuing high-demand workforce training programs within workforce pathways identified in collaboration with the Department of Commerce, leading to a State or industry-recognized credential. These funds are intended to remove access barriers to high-quality, in-demand, sustaining wage careers for North Carolinians. Each college will determine grant award amounts based on student needs, local industry needs, number of eligible students, and cost of the course/pathway, up to a maximum award of \$750 per course. The grants will help cover the cost of tuition, fees, books, supplies, credentialing tests, transportation, childcare, and any other components of the total cost of attendance. At a minimum, eligible students applying for this scholarship must:

- 1) Resident of North Carolina
 - a) As required by Session Law 2021-180, eligible students must establish residency under the criteria outlined in G.S. 116-143.1 following the coordinated and centralized residency determination process administered by the State Education Assistance Authority.
- 2) Students enrolling in Workforce Continuing Education (WCE) pathways/courses leading to a N.C. Workforce Credential identified as either Essential or Career level. These pathways may consist of a single WCE course or a series of courses.

The System Office developed a funding process which requires colleges to submit a request for funding that acknowledges agreement to meet program rules, reporting requirements, and student coding requirements. Each college is eligible for an allocation determined by the college's Budget Full-Time Equivalency (BFTE) in Tiers 1A, 1B, and 2 (excluding Tier 3) as presented in Table 1. The System President will have the authority to reallocate funds as needed during the program year to ensure full utilization of funds through a process developed by the System Office.

Table 1: College Allocation Eligibility

| College | Continuing Education 2024-25 BFTE Tiers 1 and 2 | Allocation Percentage | Allocation Amount |
|--------------------------|---|--------------------------|----------------------|
| Alamance CC | 398.1 | 1.54% | \$15,450 |
| Asheville-Buncombe TCC | 363.3 | 1.41% | 14,098 |
| Beaufort County CC | 401.7 | 1.56% | 15,588 |
| Bladen CC | 138.0 | 0.54% | 5,355 |
| Blue Ridge CC | 312.3 | 1.21% | 12,119 |
| Brunswick CC | 311.3 | 1.21% | 12,080 |
| Caldwell CC and TI | 662.1 | 2.57% | 25,693 |
| Cape Fear CC | 961.5 | 3.73% | 37,311 |
| Carteret CC | 238.4 | 0.93% | 9,251 |
| Catawba Valley CC | 654.3 | 2.54% | 25,390 |
| Central Carolina CC | 395.5 | 1.53% | 15,348 |
| Central Piedmont CC | 479.0 | 1.86% | 18,588 |
| Cleveland CC | 577.3 | 2.24% | 22,402 |
| Coastal Carolina CC | 419.1 | 1.63% | 16,263 |
| College of The Albemarle | 269.3 | 1.05% | 10,450 |
| Craven CC | 490.5 | 1.90% | 19,034 |
| Davidson Davie CC | 288.8 | 1.12% | 11,207 |
| Durham TCC | 583.3 | 2.26% | 22,635 |
| Edgecombe CC | 279.7 | 1.09% | 10,854 |
| Fayetteville TCC | 2,538.5 | 9.85% | 98,508 |
| Forsyth TCC | 497.1 | 1.93% | 19,290 |
| Gaston College | 191.6 | 0.74% | 7,435 |
| Guilford TCC | 876.8 | 3.40% | 34,025 |
| Halifax CC | 61.6 | 0.24% | 2,390 |
| Haywood CC | 188.4 | 0.73% | 7,311 |
| Isothermal CC | 158.2 | 0.61% | 6,139 |
| James Sprunt CC | 572.4 | 2.22% | 22,212 |
| Johnston CC | 516.2 | 2.00% | 20,031 |
| Lenoir CC | 1,156.5 | 4.49% | 44,878 |
| Martin CC | 151.5 | 0.59% | 5,879 |
| Mayland CC | 139.0 | 0.54% | 5,417 |
| McDowell TCC | 207.8 | 0.81% | 8,064 |
| Mitchell CC | 316.5 | 1.23% | 12,282 |
| Montgomery CC | 76.5 | 0.30% | 2,969 |

| | | | |
|---------------------|-----------------|-------------|---------------------|
| Nash CC | 289.7 | 1.12% | 11,242 |
| Pamlico CC | 38.0 | 0.15% | 1,475 |
| Piedmont CC | 436.5 | 1.69% | 16,939 |
| Pitt CC | 330.5 | 1.28% | 12,825 |
| Randolph CC | 230.8 | .90% | 8,956 |
| Richmond CC | 611.4 | 2.37% | 23,726 |
| Roanoke Chowan CC | 190.3 | 0.74% | 7,385 |
| Robeson CC | 871.7 | 3.38% | 33,827 |
| Rockingham CC | 186.5 | 0.72% | 7,237 |
| Rowan-Cabarrus CC | 739.0 | 2.87% | 28,677 |
| Sampson CC | 360.6 | 1.40% | 13,993 |
| Sandhills CC | 442.3 | 1.72% | 17,164 |
| South Piedmont CC | 456.8 | 1.77% | 17,726 |
| Southeastern CC | 244.7 | 0.95% | 9,496 |
| Southwestern CC | 348.5 | 1.35% | 13,524 |
| Stanly CC | 435.3 | 1.69% | 16,892 |
| Surry CC | 320.1 | 1.24% | 12,422 |
| Tri-County CC | 135.2 | 0.52% | 5,246 |
| Vance-Granville CC | 311.3 | 1.21% | 12,080 |
| Wake TCC | 1,859.9 | 7.22% | 72,174 |
| Wayne CC | 320.8 | 1.24% | 12,449 |
| Western Piedmont CC | 122.1 | 0.47% | 4,738 |
| Wilkes CC | 454.4 | 1.76% | 17,633 |
| Wilson CC | 160.5 | 0.62% | 6,228 |
| Total FTE | 22,100.5 | 100% | \$ 1,000,000 |

Appendix II: Allocation Memo

L. SHORT-TERM WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

Purpose: The purpose of the funding is to provide financial assistance for resident students who enroll in noncredit, short-term workforce training programs that lead to an industry-recognized credential in fields with employer demand and competitive wages.

Please see the table on the following page for allocation detail by college.

Allocation Authority: Funding is available from the FY 2024-25 State General Fund appropriations as authorized by Session Law 2023-134, Section 6.5.

Allocation Period: July 1, 2024 – June 30, 2025

Required Budget Code(s): 1) Voc code: 80 2) Purpose code: 554

Budget Posting Instructions: Please post this allocation to your college's budget prior to transmitting the September 2024 electronic files.

Approval: Approved by the North Carolina State Board of Community Colleges (SBCC) on July 19, 2024 (FC 06). Please see the aforementioned attachment(s) for additional details regarding this allocation.

Other: Colleges will process funding through Financial Aid. After Financial Aid has awarded the student funding, they will notify the college Business Office, and the business office will cut a check from the state disbursing account using state purpose code 554 and vocational code 80 made payable to the college. The check should then be receipted into the colleges applicable institutional fund account to cover student awards. It is the responsibility of the college business office to make sure all expense reporting requirements are met.

NORTH CAROLINA COMMUNITY COLLEGE SYSTEM
SHORT-TERM WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM
FY 2024-25
PURPOSE CODE: 554
VOC CODE: 80

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