

NUMBERED MEMO CC25-050

TO: Members of the State Board of Community Colleges, Chairs of the Community College Boards of Trustees, Community College Presidents, Chief Academic Officers, Chief Admissions Officers, Basic Skills Directors, Business Officers, Continuing Education Officers, Customized Training Directors, Chief Financial Officers, Distance Learning, Financial Aid Officers, Personnel Officers, Student Development Administrators, Public Information Officers, Registrars, & Other Interested Parties

FROM: Jonnell Carpenter, *NCCCS General Counsel*

SUBJECT: Waiver of 1D SBCCC 400.11 – Education Services Through Career and College Promise (Curriculum)

DATE: May 20, 2025

On May 16, 2025, the State Board of Community Colleges (SBCC) approved the Waiver of **1D SBCCC 400.11 – Education Services Through Career and College Promise (Curriculum)**. The proposed waiver would allow implementation of a pilot program expanding eligibility criteria for 9th and 10th grade students in Career and Technical Education (CTE) pathways.

This State Board action has been published on the NC Community College System's website, [Numbered Memos - NCCCS \(ncccommunitycolleges.edu\)](https://ncccommunitycolleges.edu). For your convenience, the numbered memo detailing this change is attached above.

CC25-050

Email Copy
Attachment

STATE BOARD OF COMMUNITY COLLEGES
Waiver of 1D SBCCC 400.11(o)(3)(A-F)

Request: The State Board of Community Colleges (SBCC) is requested to approve a waiver of the rule 1D SBCCC 400.11(o)(3)(A-F) Education Services through Career and College Promise (CCP) (Curriculum) to implement a pilot program expanding eligibility criteria for 9th and 10th grade students in Career and Technical Education (CTE) pathways.

Authority: The State Board has the authority to waive any existing rule or portion of a rule in the SBCC Code to launch a pilot program. (1A SBCCC 200.3).

Duration of the Waiver: The waiver will remain in effect through August 15, 2026, for the selected pilot colleges.

Background: The Appropriations Act of 2013, S.B. 402, amended NC General Statutes 115D-20(4) to allow for “academic transition pathways for qualified freshmen and sophomore high school students that lead to a career technical education certificate or diploma in Industrial and Engineering Technologies, Agriculture and Natural Resources, Transportation Systems, Construction or Business technologies.” While legislative changes determine permissible programmatic offerings, eligibility criteria are determined by the State Board of Community Colleges. The current eligibility requirements are outlined in Section 14 of the Curriculum Procedures Reference Manual.

Proposal Overview: The proposed waiver will adjust the eligibility criteria for CTE Career and College Promise (CCP) enrollment, allowing participation from 9th and 10th grade students for a limited period under the pilot. Under the pilot, colleges will assess the outcomes, benefits, and challenges associated with expanding CCP enrollment access to earlier grades, specifically in CTE pathways. Colleges not participating in the pilot program will continue to follow existing eligibility criteria for CCP.

Scope of the Pilot Program: Participating colleges will work with local school districts to implement and study innovative measures to assess college readiness and student success. The study will evaluate the pilot outcomes, enrollment trends, and pathway completion. The proposed pilot will be specific to the following criteria for participating colleges:

- Colleges located in a Tier 1 or Tier 2 county or colleges serving high schools that could benefit from serving student populations with CTE pathways
- Submission of a pilot program application
- Identified support services tailored to younger students, e.g., progress monitoring, academic advising, and mentorships
- Identified support from the college's partner school district(s)

In accordance with NC General Statutes 115D-20(4), the proposed pilot will focus on the following curriculum program areas:

- Industrial and Engineering Technologies
- Agriculture and Natural Resources
- Transportation Systems
- Construction
- Business Technologies

Allocated State Board Reserve Funds will be available for pilot colleges to cover costs such as:

- Transportation and textbooks
- Instructional materials and supplies to implement CTE coursework for students
- Instructional fees
- Data collection and evaluation
- Student support, onboarding, and internship opportunities

Participating colleges will be expected to submit an initial report by December 15, 2025, and a follow up report by April 15, 2026, that includes:

- Initial student outcomes, including enrollment, persistence/completion rates, and career placement metrics for students in the CTE pathways.
- A recommendation for a new eligibility option that will allow 9th and 10th grade students to enroll in CTE pathways, addressing how this change will improve access to Career and College Promise (CCP).
- An analysis of the potential impact on program enrollment and outcomes for both 9th/10th graders and upper-grade students.
- A strategy for implementing this eligibility option, including any necessary adjustments to academic policies, partnerships with local education agencies (LEAs), and coordination with state regulations.

Potential Pilot Outcomes: Results from the pilot will be used to assess the feasibility of expanding Career and College Promise (CCP) eligibility for 9th and 10th grade CTE students. Extensions or adjustments to the waiver may be requested based on the findings of the study. Potential deliverable may include:

- **Expanded Opportunities for Younger Students:** The pilot could increase access to CTE pathways for underserved or underrepresented students by extending CCP enrollment to 9th and 10th graders beyond what is already available.
- **Higher Participation Rates:** Younger students may demonstrate greater interest in exploring CTE programs, leading to increased overall enrollment in CTE programs.
- **Early Skill Development:** Early access to CTE programs may help students gain industry-recognized credentials and technical skills, enhancing their readiness for post-graduation employment or further education.

- **Increased Workforce Engagement:** Exposure to CTE programs earlier in their academic careers may help students better understand career opportunities, leading to more motivated students pursuing careers in high-demand fields.
- **Retention and Graduation Rates:** The study will assess whether younger students in CTE CCP enrollment programs experience similar success in terms of retention, course completion, and graduation rates as their older peers.
- **Smoother Transition to Postsecondary Education:** The pilot could reveal whether a new CCP enrollment option for younger students eases their transition to postsecondary education by providing early exposure to college-level coursework and expectations.

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State Board of Community Colleges Code
TITLE 1. COMMUNITY COLLEGES



CHAPTER D. EDUCATION PROGRAMS

SUBCHAPTER 400. CURRICULUM

**1D SBCCC 400.11 Education Services through Career and College Promise
(Curriculum)**

The purpose of Career and College Promise is to offer structured opportunities for qualified high school students to dually enroll in community college courses that provide pathways that lead to a certificate, diploma, or degree as well as provide entry-level jobs skills. Academic credits earned through Career and College Promise shall enable students who continue into postsecondary education after graduating from high school to complete a postsecondary credential in less time than would normally be required. All previous high school transition programs, including Huskins, Concurrent Enrollment, Cooperative and Innovative High Schools, Learn and Earn, and Learn and Earn Online were consolidated and replaced by Career and College Promise.

- (a) The major purpose of community colleges is to serve students who have graduated from high school or are beyond the compulsory age limit of the public school and have left public school. However, a minor may seek admission to a community college subject to the conditions in this Section.
- (b) Career and College Promise is a dual enrollment program for eligible North Carolina high school students. Community colleges may collaborate with local school administrative units to offer courses through the following Career and College Promise program pathways:
 - (1) A College Transfer Pathway approved by the State Board of Community Colleges including transfer courses in English and mathematics;
 - (2) A Career and Technical Education Pathway leading to a certificate, diploma or degree;

- (3) Career and Technical Education – Workforce Continuing Education leading to a State or industry recognized credential. Career and College Promise rules applicable to Workforce Continuing Education are provided in 1D SBCCC 300.4(c)(1)(D).
- (4) A Cooperative Innovative High School Pathway approved under Part 9 of Article 16 of Chapter 115D of the North Carolina General Statutes.
- (c) All non-self-supporting curriculum courses taken by high school students at community colleges in accordance with this Section are tuition-waived.
- (d) High school students may not audit courses offered under the Career and College Promise Program.
- (e) High school students enrolled in a College Transfer Pathway or a Career and Technical Education Pathway may not enroll in developmental education courses, but may enroll in supplemental courses. For the purposes of this section, the phrase “supplemental courses” shall have the same meaning as in 1D SBCCC 400.8(b)(1).
- (f) A college shall submit a program of study for each Career and College Promise program it plans to offer, to the North Carolina Community College System Office using program codes provided by the North Carolina Community College System Office.
 - (1) Career and Technical Education programs of study must be in compliance with the State Board approved curriculum standard and must include a minimum of twelve (12) semester hours of credit from core courses or consist of courses as listed in the college’s catalog as a local, traditional certificate. General education courses for career and technical education programs of study shall be directly related to student success in the selected major. All courses in the program of study must be required courses. Course options are prohibited.
 - (2) College Transfer Pathway programs of study shall be in compliance with the State Board approved Associate in Arts, Associate in Engineering, Associate in Science, Associate in Fine Arts in Music, Associate in Fine Arts in Theater, Associate in Fine Arts in Visual Arts or Associate Degree Nursing

Transfer Pathways approved by the State Board of Community Colleges.

- (3) Programs of study must be approved by the North Carolina Community College System Office assigned Academic Programs staff before students can be enrolled.
- (4) Within the Career and College Promise program of study, a college must verify its capacity to teach all courses in the program of study.
- (5) Career and College Promise Students may not be enrolled in the Associate in General Education or General Occupational Technology programs with the exception of the Associate in General Education in Nursing degree.
- (6) Students enrolled in Adult Basic Education or Adult Secondary Education are not eligible for Career and College Promise.
- (g) High school students shall complete a college application, provide a high school transcript which demonstrates eligibility to enroll in Career and College Promise as outlined in 1D SBCCC 400.11 (l), (n), or (o), and provide evidence of college readiness as outlined in 1D SBCCC 400.11(k)(1), (l)(1)-(5), (n)(1), or (o)(3) to be admitted into a Career and College Promise transfer pathway. The student shall provide a copy of the high school transcript or a copy of an assessment report from diagnostic assessment tests approved by the State Board of Community Colleges verifying that the eligibility requirements have been met. Colleges must verify eligibility prior to enrollment of the student in the Career and College Promise Program. Colleges shall maintain verification of student eligibility for a Career and College Promise Pathway.
- (h) Colleges shall assign student codes provided by the North Carolina Community College System Office and shall update the student code to reflect when the student transitions out of the Career and College Promise program and is no longer eligible to participate in the program and receive a tuition waiver.
- (i) Colleges must be in compliance with 1D SBCCC 400.96(a) regarding Level I Instructional Service Agreements when providing courses (on-line or traditional) or services to groups of Career and College Promise students outside of their service area.
- (j) High school graduation may not be delayed in order to continue a student's

eligibility for the Career and College Promise Program.

(k) College Transfer Pathway (Juniors and Seniors)

(1) To be eligible for enrollment, a high school student must meet the following requirements:

(A) Be a high school junior or senior; and

(i) Have an unweighted GPA of 2.8 on high school courses; or

(ii) Demonstrate college readiness in English, reading and mathematics by meeting benchmarks on diagnostic assessment tests which have been approved by the State Board of Community Colleges.

(l) College Transfer Pathway (Freshmen and Sophomores)

To be eligible for enrollment, a high school student must meet the following requirements:

(1) Be a high school freshman or sophomore; and

(A) Be identified as academically or intellectually gifted in English, reading and math as outlined in the local board of education's Academically and Intellectually Gifted (AIG) local plan (General Statute 115C-150.7.); or

(B) Be identified as academically or intellectually gifted in English, reading and math on an aptitude and achievement test as evidenced by a score in the range between the 92nd percentile and the 99th percentile on an aptitude and an achievement test included in the Mental Measurements Yearbook published by the Buros Institute of Mental Measurements; and

(2) Demonstrate college readiness in English, reading and mathematics by meeting benchmarks on diagnostic assessment tests which have been approved by the State Board of Community Colleges; and

(3) Have the maturity to justify admission to the community college, as demonstrated by obtaining all of the following:

(A) A recommendation from the student's principal or equivalent administrator explaining why they believe the student has the requisite maturity to enroll at the community college;

(B) A recommendation from the academically gifted coordinator, if one is employed by the high school or local school administrative unit,

explaining why they believe the student has the requisite maturity to enroll at the community college; and

(C) Approval to enroll by the community college president or their designee.

Prior to requesting approval by the community college president or their designee, the student must deliver the recommendations described in (A) and (B) to the community college president or their designee.

(4) Have the written consent of the student's parent or guardian granting permission for the student to participate in the program; and

(5) The student must participate in academic advising with representatives from the high school and community college prior to enrollment in the program.

This advising shall be focused on the implications of being admitted to college early.

(m) Maintaining Eligibility for Continued Enrollment, Changing Pathways, and Other Rules Applicable to College Transfer Pathways

(1) To maintain eligibility for continued enrollment in the pathway, a student must:

(A) Continue to make progress toward high school graduation as outlined in G.S. 115C-105.35 and

(B) Maintain a 2.0 GPA in college coursework after completing two courses.

(2) A student who falls below a 2.0 GPA after completing two college courses will be subject to the college's policy for satisfactory academic progress.

(3) A student may only enroll in one College Transfer Pathway program of study. Course substitutions may be approved by the chief academic officer for individual students. Course substitutions for individual students must be documented and maintained on file.

(4) A student may change the student's pathway major with approval of the high school principal or the high school principal's designee and the college's chief student development administrator or the college's chief academic officer. The college's chief student development administrator or the college's chief academic officer shall approve a change in pathway based on verification that the program change allows the student to meet their newly chosen career

path.

- (5) High school students in a College Transfer Pathways must complete the entire pathway before taking additional courses in the Associate degree with the exception of mathematics courses.
- (6) With approval of the high school principal or the high school principal's designee and the college's chief student development administrator or the college's chief academic officer, a student who completes a College Transfer Pathway, while still enrolled in high school, may continue to earn college transfer credits leading to the completion of the Associate in Arts, Associate in Science, Associate in Engineering, Associate in Fine Arts in Music, Associate in Fine Arts in Theater, Associate in Fine Arts in Visual Arts or Associate in General Education Nursing degree.
- (7) With approval of the high school principal or the high school principal's designee and the college's chief student development administrator or the college's chief academic officer, a student may enroll in both a College Transfer Pathway and a Career Technical Education Pathway.
- (8) A student may change the student's program of study major with approval of the high school principal or the high school principal's designee and the college's chief student development administrator or the college's chief academic officer. The college's chief student development administrator or the college's chief academic officer shall approve a change in pathway based on verification that the program change allows the student to meet their newly chosen career path.
- (9) The college may award the Associate in Arts, Associate in Science, Associate in Engineering, Associate in Fine Arts, or Associate in General Education – Nursing to the Career and College Promise student prior to high school graduation.
- (10) Students pursuing credits beyond the initial transfer associate degree must provide documentation of justification based upon career pathway needs or transfer program requirements (i.e. bachelor degree plan published by the university). The high school principal or the high school principal's designee

and the college's chief student development administrator or the college's chief academic officer must approve prior to enrollment in credits beyond the initial transfer program. Approval is contingent upon the student's documentation of justification based upon career pathway needs or transfer program requirements.

(n) Career Technical Education Pathway (Juniors and Seniors)

(1) To be eligible for enrollment, a high school student must:

(A) Be a high school junior or senior; and

(B) Have an unweighted GPA of 2.8 on high school courses; or

(C) Demonstrate college readiness in English, reading and mathematics by meeting benchmarks on diagnostic assessment tests which have been approved by the State Board of Community Colleges.

(D) Juniors or seniors who do not meet the eligibility requirements in 1D SBCCC 400.11(n)(1)(A) – (C) shall have the recommendation of the high school principal or the high school principal's designee and the college's chief student development administrator or the college's chief academic officer. A recommendation is only allowed for entry into Career and College Promise Career and Technical Education Pathway that does not include Universal General Education Transfer Component (UGETC) courses.

(2) College Career Technical Education courses may be used to provide partial or full fulfillment of a four-unit high school career cluster. The college will grant articulated credit to students based on the then-current local or state North Carolina High School to Community College articulation agreement.

(3) To maintain eligibility for continued enrollment, a student must:

(A) Continue to make progress toward high school graduation as outlined in G.S. 115C-105.35, and

(B) Maintain a 2.0 GPA in college coursework after completing two courses.

(4) A student who falls below a 2.0 GPA after completing two college courses will be subject to the college's policy for satisfactory academic progress.

(5) Course substitutions may be approved by the chief academic officer for

individual students. The college will document course substitutions for individual students and maintain those course substitutions in the student's file.

- (6) With approval of the high school principal or the high school principal's designee and the college's chief student development administrator or the college's chief academic officer, a Career Technical Education Junior or Senior may concurrently enroll in two Career and Technical Education Pathways or in one College Transfer Pathway and one Career Technical Education Pathway.
- (7) The student may change the student's pathway major with approval of the high school principal or the high school principal's designee and the college's chief student development administrator or the college's chief academic officer. The college's chief student development administrator or the college's chief academic officer shall approve a change in pathway based on verification that the program change allows the student to meet their newly chosen career path.
- (8) With approval of the high school principal or the high school principal's designee and the college's chief student development administrator or the college's chief academic officer, a student who completes the Career and Technical Education certificate or diploma may continue in the same traditional associate in applied science program as long as they are still eligible for the Career and College Promise program. The high school principal or the high school principal's designee and the college's chief student development administrator or the college's chief academic officer must approve prior to enrollment in credits beyond the initial Career and Technical Education program. Approval is contingent upon documentation that the credits beyond the initial program allow the student to support the student's chosen career path (i.e. a career pathway plan).
- (9) The college may award the certificate, diploma, or degree to the Career and College Promise student prior to high school graduation.
- (o) Career Technical Education Pathway (Freshmen and Sophomores)

- (1) Colleges may enroll eligible high school Freshmen and Sophomores only in industrial technologies (program code 50xxx), engineering technologies (program code 40xxx), agriculture and natural resources (program code 15xxx), and transportation (program code 60xxx), construction (program code 35xxx), and business technologies (program code 25xxx) certificate and diploma programs.
- (2) Freshmen and Sophomores may not enroll in Career and Technical Education Pathways that include Universal General Education Transfer Component (UGETC) courses.
- (3) To be eligible for enrollment, a high school student must be a high school Freshman or Sophomore. A Freshman or Sophomore must:
 - (A) Have passed Math I with a grade of “C” or better;
 - (B) Test college ready in mathematics as determined by the assessment given by the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction;
 - (C) Test college ready in English and reading as determined by the assessment given by the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction;
 - (D) Have received information outlining program requirements for completion of the certificate or diploma; and
 - (E) Have the recommendation of the high school principal or the principal’s designee and the college’s chief student development administrator or the college’s chief academic officer; or
 - (F) Demonstrate college readiness in English, reading and mathematics by meeting benchmarks on diagnostic assessment tests which have been approved by the State Board of Community Colleges and have the recommendation of the high school principal or the high school principal’s designee and the college’s chief student development administrator or the college’s chief academic officer.
- (4) College Career Technical Education courses may be used to provide partial or full fulfillment of a four-unit career cluster. The college will grant articulated credit to the students based on the then-current local or state North Carolina High School to Community College articulation agreement. To maintain

eligibility for continued enrollment, a student must:

- (A) Continue to make progress toward high school graduation, and
- (B) Maintain a 2.0 GPA in college coursework after completing two college courses. A student who falls below a 2.0 GPA after completing two college courses will be subject to the college's policy for satisfactory academic progress.

(5) A student must enroll in one pathway and may not substitute courses in one pathway for courses in another.

- (A) The student may change the student's pathway major to another eligible program of study with approval of the high school principal or the high school principal's designee and the college's chief student development administrator or the college's chief academic officer. The college's chief student development administrator or the college's chief academic officer shall approve a change in pathway based on verification that the program change allows the student to meet their newly chosen career path.

- (B) A student may concurrently enroll in two Career and Technical Education Pathways in allowable program areas provided the exception has been approved by the college's chief student development administrator or the college's chief academic officer. The college's chief student development administrator or the college's chief academic officer shall approve an exception if concurrent pathways are aligned to the student's career pathway interest and career goals.

(6) With approval of the high school principal or the high school principal's designee and the college's chief student development administrator or the college's chief academic officer, a student who completes a Career Technical Education Pathway, while still enrolled in high school may continue to earn college credits leading to the completion of a higher level credential within the same program code. The college's chief student development administrator or the college's chief academic officer shall approve the continuation if the credential is in the same program code.

(7) With approval of the high school principal or the high school principal's

designee and the college's chief student development administrator or the college's chief academic officer, a student who completes the Career and Technical Education certificate or diploma may continue in the same traditional associate in applied science program as long as they are still eligible for the Career and College Promise program.

- (8) The college may award the certificate, diploma, or degree to the Career and College Promise student prior to high school graduation.
- (9) The high school principal or the high school principal's designee and the college's chief student development administrator or the college's chief academic officer must approve prior to enrollment in credits beyond the initial Career and Technical Education program. Approval is contingent upon documentation that the credits beyond the initial program allow the student to support the student's chosen career path (i.e. a career pathway plan).

(p) Cooperative Innovative High School Programs (CIHSP)

- (1) Cooperative Innovative High School Programs are jointly established by local boards of education and local boards of trustees.
- (2) CIHSP enroll 100 or fewer students per grade level.
- (3) Students enrolled in CIHSP have the opportunity to complete an associate degree program, diploma, certificate, or earn up to two years of college credit while completing a high school diploma within five years.
- (4) Cooperative Innovative High School (CIHS) student may enroll in
 - (A) One College Transfer program of study;
 - (B) One College Transfer program of study and one Career and Technical Education program of study; or
 - (C) Two Career and Technical Education programs of study.
- (5) Students pursuing credits beyond the initial transfer associate degree must provide documentation of justification based upon career pathway needs or transfer program requirements (i.e. bachelor degree plan published by the University of North Carolina). The high school principal or the high school principal's designee and the college's chief student development administrator or the college's chief academic officer must approve prior to

- enrollment in credits beyond the initial transfer program of study. Approval is contingent upon documentation of justification based upon career pathway needs or transfer program requirements (i.e. bachelor degree plan published by the University of North Carolina).
- (6) CIHSP are located on college campuses. A school shall obtain approval from the State Board of Community Colleges for exceptions to this requirement. Exceptions are based on local needs as outlined in the location waiver request. The approved waiver shall be maintained locally for documentation. The State Board of Community Colleges shall use the following factors to determine whether to approve location waivers:
 - (A) Space availability;
 - (B) School capacity;
 - (C) Proximity to the student population;
 - (D) Suitable, available space with equipment specific to the curriculum; or
 - (E) Articulate, imminent, and significant health or safety concerns.
 - (7) Student eligibility requirements for CIHSP are determined locally.
 - (8) CIHS students may not audit courses.
 - (9) CIHS students may not enroll in developmental education courses but may enroll in supplemental courses.
 - (10) CIHS students may not be enrolled in the Associate in General Education or General Occupational Technology programs with the exception of the Associate in General Education in Nursing degree.
 - (11) Colleges may award the certificate, diploma, or degree prior to high school graduation.

History Note: Authority G.S. 115D-20(4);

Eff. [November 1, 2017](#).

Amended Eff. [June 1, 2019](#).

Temporary Amendment Eff. [August 20, 2019](#).

Amended Eff. [December 1, 2019](#).

Amended Eff. [February 1, 2020](#).