STATE BOARD OF COMMUNITY COLLEGES
IDD Training Program
FY 2025-26

Request: The State Board of Community Colleges (SBCC) is requested to approve the allocation of $2,910,000 to fifteen colleges for the Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (IDD) Training Program (Access to Achievement).

Strategic Plan Reference: Goal 4: Economic and Workforce Development
Provide education, training, and credentials to develop the most competitive workforce in the nation.
Strategies: 4.1.1

Background: In 2021, a two-year pilot project began to provide opportunities for students with IDD in the community college system to earn credentials leading to increased employment outcomes.

Following a successful pilot project at two community colleges, Catawba Valley Community College and Brunswick Community College, in 2022-23 Section 6.9.(a) Article 3 of Chapter 115D of the General Statutes was amended to establish a community college training program, based on the pilot project strategies and outcomes, for students with IDD. In the 2023-2025 session, this new IDD Student Workforce Training Program was awarded $3,963,094 in recurring funds for up to 15 community colleges.

Rationale: In compliance with Section 6.9 of Session Law 2023-134, the program exists to (a) provide opportunities for credentials and (b) increase employment outcomes for students with IDD by supporting participating colleges to create or improve educational components which include (a) employability skills, and (b) work-based learning (e.g., practicums, apprenticeships, etc.)   A maximum of 10% of the allocation may be spent on programs and classes in which 100% of the students enrolled have disabilities.

The goals of the program are to present to the colleges' effective strategies to support both student learning and student supports including at least:

1. Establishing best practices for providing vocational training,
2. Providing financial and benefits counseling,
3. Developing strategies integrating assistive technology,
4. Maximizing access with support to credentials and degrees,
5. Identifying methods to integrate students into the campus community,
6. Determining needs assessment, marketing, and evaluation.

Community College System Office staff members (three full-time and one part-time), funded by this allocation, lead the program and are responsible for program support, professional development (e.g., career pathway exploration, mapping credentials to living-wage careers, identifying funding sources for program sustainability, etc.). Therefore, the System Office will retain $1,053,094 to fund these positions, conduct program evaluations, develop instructional resources, create marketing and outreach activities, and carry out other program activities.

In 2023, Community College System Office staff, working with the pilot colleges, developed a process to allocate these funds. On November 14th, a Letter of Intent (LOI) was sent to all community colleges asking them to submit these by December 15th. Thirty colleges submitted them. A review team comprised of the IDD System Office Project Director and the project directors from Catawba Valley Community College and Brunswick Community College scored each college's responses. Subsequently, colleges were invited to participate in a virtual interview (January 10-12, 2024) to discuss potential participation in the program's expansion. These virtual interviews were scored and added to the points awarded from the LOI reviews.

As a result of this process, the colleges in Table 1 were recommended for recurring funding. Funding is allocated to employ a full-time Access to Achievement Coordinator, purchase assistive and other instructional technology, provide professional development opportunities, as well as purchase necessary supplies, materials, and student supports such as transportation.

Impact: In the first year of implementation, Access to Achievement has documented a significant success for students with IDD across the 15 funded colleges. A total of 809 students have been served, 316 of which had intensive services through an individualized Person-Centered Plan. Among those 316 students, 121 outcomes were documented, equating to roughly 38% of Access to Achievement students earning a credential, degree, certificate, or diploma within the first year of implementation. Additionally, 40 students, or approximately 33%, have been enrolled in a work-based learning experience, many of which are paid internships.

Significant outcomes can also be documented for college staff and faculty. Access to Achievement coordinators have provided 128 professional development opportunities across the 15 colleges in the past year, and 525 technical assistance encounters with faculty and staff. These numbers are a testament to the reach of Access to Achievement as it strengthens services using the one college model.

Funding Allocation: Table 1

College	Allocation
Brunswick CC	$194,000
Catawba Valey CC	$194,000
Alamance CC	$194,000
Asheville-Buncombe TCC	$194,000
College of The Albemarle	$194,000
Guilford TCC	$194,000
James Sprunt CC	$194,000
Johnston CC	$194,000
McDowell TCC	$194,000
Richmond CC	$194,000
Robeson CC	$194,000
Sandhills CC	$194,000
South Piedmont CC	$194,000
Stanly CC	$194,000
Wilkes CC	$194,000
	$2,910,000
System Office	$1,053,094
Total Allocation	$3,963,094

Fund Source and Availability: Funding is available from State General Fund appropriation from July 1, 2025, through June 30, 2026.

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