

MINUTES
State Board of Community Colleges
PROGRAMS & STUDENT SUCCESS COMMITTEE
Dr. W. Dallas Herring State Board Room
Thursday, July 17, 2025

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Sarah West, Chair
Lisa Estep
Lt. Gov. Rachel Hunt
Geoffrey Lang
Tom Looney
Bill McBrayer
Hon. David Price

NCACCP LIAISONS:

Amanda Lee, President, Bladen Community College

SYSTEM OFFICE STAFF AND OTHERS:

Brian S. Merritt	Jamal Njai	Daniel Loge
Lisa Eads	Natalie Fogg	Leigh Davidson
Ashley Croom	Tiffany Skouby	Michael Tildsley
Jeff Cox	Rob Van Dyke	Zack Barricklow
Kimberly Gold	Nicole Ditillo	Arbony Cooper*
Melissa Smith	Matthew Brown	Dalonda Bond*
Hilmi Lahoud	Brandy Brown	Darice McDougald
Amy Mast	Seth Kamen	John Loyack
Andrew Gardner	Sabrina Terry*	Torry Reynolds
Delany Davis	Tara Williams*	Shah Ardalan*
Jonnell Carpenter	Alex Fagg	President Randolph CC
Bill Schneider	Michael Tilley	David Heatherly
Michelle Lair	Carla Parnell	President Coastal Carolina CC
Ashley Parrott	Jenifer Bean	

*Attended via phone or Zoom technology.

WELCOME AND ETHICS STATEMENT: Chair West called the virtual meeting to order at 4:15 p.m. Roll was taken and there was a quorum. Ms. Croom read the Ethics Awareness and Conflict of Interest Statement and asked if there were any known conflicts. None were noted.

APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA: Chair West requested a motion to approve the July 17, 2025, agenda. Mr. Lang made the motion, seconded by Lt. Gov. Hunt. The agenda was approved via voice vote by the committee.

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES: Chair West requested a motion to approve the May 15, 2025, minutes. Hon. Price made the motion, seconded by Mr. Lang. The minutes were approved via voice vote by the committee.

Dr. Van Dyke took a moment to both celebrate achievements and raise concerns regarding adult education and literacy programs in North Carolina. These programs, administered through the College and Career Readiness division, are federally funded under Title II of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA). They serve adults across the state who need foundational education and skills to succeed in college, careers, and civic life. Services include adult high school diploma programs, high school equivalency (GED or HiSET), basic literacy and

numeracy instruction, English as a Second Language (ESL), and integrated education and training programs that combine workforce training with academic instruction.

Dr. Van Dyke emphasized the importance of these programs in helping adults re-engage with education, earn credentials, improve employability, and participate actively in their communities. North Carolina has approximately 637,000 working-age adults without a high school diploma, placing it among the highest in the nation. The speaker introduced Arbony Cooper as the new State Director for WIOA Title II and the College and Career Readiness division, following Sandra Thompson's retirement. Arbony brings extensive experience in adult education and workforce development, and her leadership is expected to guide the division through upcoming opportunities and challenges.

Dr. Van Dyke then shared positive outcomes from the past year. In 2024–2025, nearly 65,000 adult learners were served statewide, a significant increase from 45,000 the previous year. The programs exceeded the state's measurable skill gains target by nearly six percentage points, indicating improvements in reading, math, English, and career readiness. Additionally, the number of students completing short-term workforce training for in-demand jobs doubled, and there was a strong increase in students successfully transitioning to college-level programs and career pathways.

Dr. Van Dyke addressed a pressing issue regarding the delay in the release of federal funds for adult education and literacy programs in North Carolina. Although the funds were expected to be available on July 1, 2025, notification of a delay was received at the last moment on June 30, with no timeline provided for resolution. As a result, North Carolina, along with 24 other states, is now pursuing legal action to secure these already appropriated funds. The absence of funding threatens the stability of these programs, potentially forcing colleges and providers to scale back offerings and lay off a portion of the approximately 2,500 staff members currently employed.

To mitigate the immediate impact, the Finance Committee requested Board approval to reallocate unspent carry-forward funds from the 2024–2025 fiscal year. This temporary measure aims to sustain programs through a portion of the fall semester while awaiting further clarification. The carry-forward funds are not sufficient to support institutions beyond that period, and college presidents and leadership teams may be forced to make difficult decisions during the academic year if the funding hold is not lifted. Dr. Van Dyke concluded by thanking the Board for its continued support of programs that help tens of thousands of North Carolinians gain the skills and credentials necessary for lifelong success in college, careers, and life.

Hon. Price raised questions regarding the source of the funding freeze, specifically asking whether the delay in releasing WIOA Title II funds was initiated by the Department of Government Efficiency (DOGE). Dr. Van Dyke clarified that the freeze was initiated by the Executive Branch. Additionally, there were inquiries about the staffing impact of the funding delay, including whether employees responsible for administering adult education programs had been laid off and how many staff members remain at the Education Department to continue operating these programs.

It was confirmed that while some staff were affected, the System Office was able to hire Dr. Michael Tilley, formerly with the U.S. Department of Education, to support their efforts. A concern was raised about the sudden termination of the Education Department's component of the Fulbright Scholarship program. Clarification was provided that this is not currently the case for the adult education programs. However, it was noted that, due to a recent Supreme Court decision, a reduction in force is proceeding. Staff who were impacted earlier in the year will continue to lose their positions, and oversight of these programs is expected to shift to the Department of Labor through a joint agreement.

Hon. Price asked for clarification on the status of the frozen funds, confirming that the delay affects fiscal year 2025, which began on July 1. Questions were raised about the future of these programs under the President's proposed budget for fiscal year 2026. It was explained that while the programs are still technically included under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), they are not funded at previous levels and are not directly mentioned in the budget. As a result, much of the current understanding is based on interpretation, and the team is awaiting formal guidance on future appropriations and program continuity.

Dr. Van Dyke was asked to share potential mitigation strategies in response to the funding delay. He explained that there are unspent carryover funds from fiscal year 2024–2025, which can be used over a 24-month period. While the final amount is still being confirmed by the finance department, these funds are expected to sustain internal operations through June 30, 2026.

A question was raised about the possibility of accessing state-level reserve funds for additional support. Dr. Cox responded, noting that while the state does have reserve funds, such as the Rainy Day Fund, allocating them would require legislative action. He emphasized that this would be a difficult conversation given the scale of federal cuts and the current lack of agreement on the state budget. The feasibility of supplementing federal reductions remains uncertain.

Chair Looney and other members discussed the need to assess not only workforce-related risks but also potential impacts on academic programs. Chair Looney emphasized the significance of the recent approval of short-term Pell grants, noting it as a major achievement after two decades of advocacy. Despite this progress, there has been limited discussion on how to capitalize on the opportunity. Chair Looney urged the group to develop a proactive plan to implement and benefit from short-term Pell.

Hon. Price also stressed that for the short-term Pell program to be effective, it must be included in the fiscal year 2026 appropriations bill. Concerns were raised that if overall Pell funding is reduced, the benefits of short-term Pell could be undermined.

Alex Fagg, Vice President of Government and External Relations, expressed appreciation for the support received and acknowledged the complexity of navigating federal-level changes, especially given the short timelines and the number of individuals whose jobs are affected. He noted that the status of short-term Pell funding in the fiscal year 2026 proposal remains unclear. While questions have been raised about additional appropriations for short-term Pell, no definitive answers have been provided, as discussions are still ongoing within the appropriations process.

Alex emphasized the long-standing advocacy efforts behind short-term Pell, including work by community colleges and his predecessor, and assured the board that communication continues with all 14 Congressional representatives, both U.S. Senators, the Department of Education, and the Office of Management and Budget. He reaffirmed the commitment to supporting students, employees, and colleges through these challenges.

Chair Looney asked whether the bill authorizing short-term Pell included funding provisions and how those funds would be distributed. Hon. Price clarified that the workforce Pell provisions were part of the Reconciliation Bill, which was an authorization bill—not an appropriations bill. As a result, while short-term Pell is now authorized and its scope expanded, it remains subject to annual appropriations. It was further noted that current appropriations are influenced by decisions made by the executive branch, which has already clawed back Education Department funds in the current fiscal year. Therefore, despite the authorization, funding for short-term Pell is not guaranteed and depends on future appropriations.

FOR ACTION:**ApprenticeshipNC Council Appointments (Attachment PROG 01)**

Mr. Loyack informed the board that five members of the Apprenticeship Council have recently left their positions due to job changes, relocation, or other reasons. As a result, five new individuals have been nominated to fill those vacancies. To ensure proper governance and continuity, the full council membership was presented again for board approval.

The committee had no questions or concerns.

2025 Performance Measure Report (Attachment PROG 02)

Dr. Merritt provided introductory remarks ahead of the presentation of the 2025 Performance Measures Report, noting that Chair West had requested additional context for new board members. He described the report as the system's premier accountability document, widely used across roles—from college presidents to academic officers—to assess institutional performance. Dr. Merritt emphasized the value of the report's statewide metrics in promoting data-informed decision-making, tracking progress, and aligning institutional strategies with system priorities. He shared examples from his own experience, including embedding six of the eight metrics into strategic planning and using them in performance evaluations for campus leadership. He also noted the utility of the data in grant writing, citing its role in demonstrating need and securing funding. Dr. Merritt concluded by highlighting the importance of leveraging the report's insights to drive student success and introduced Dr. Schneider, who would lead a deeper dive into the data.

Dr. Schneider presented an overview of the 2025 Performance Measures Report, highlighting that approximately \$24 million in state funding is tied to performance-based metrics, which account for about 1.5% of total college allocations. He explained that a committee reviews these measures every three years to assess methodology and recommend revisions. The report includes seven key metrics: measurable skills gains for basic skills students, gateway course success in English and math, first-year progression, curriculum student completion over six years, first-time licensure and certification pass rates, and college transfer performance.

Dr. Schneider noted that colleges are evaluated against each other using statistically derived index scores, with performance categorized into five levels ranging from below baseline to platinum (excellence). A visual summary of performance across colleges helps identify areas of strength and improvement statewide. He also shared a list of the top-performing colleges based on average scores across all measures.

During the presentation, President Lee of Bladen Community College shared practical examples of how performance data has been used to improve student outcomes. In one case, low transfer success rates prompted faculty to revise course rigor, resulting in improved performance. Another example involved using licensure pass rate data to initiate discussions with testing agencies, demonstrating how the metrics can drive meaningful institutional change.

President Lee shared additional reflections on the use of performance measures, emphasizing that while the data may not always lead to changes in external rules, it has helped institutions better understand existing policies and make more informed decisions. She noted that while intuition and experimentation are common approaches at her college, the ability to support decisions with data has proven far more effective. The performance measures provide a valuable framework for validating strategies and guiding improvements, reinforcing the importance of data-informed decision-making across the system.

Dr. Schneider began a deeper dive into the curriculum completion rate metric. Mr. Lang asked whether the data had been analyzed to identify what the bottom 25% of colleges are doing differently from the top 25%, and whether those insights are being used to help lower-performing institutions improve. Dr. Schneider responded

that while past initiatives like the Performance Partnership Program had addressed this, the program was discontinued during the COVID-19 pandemic. However, there have been recent discussions about reviving similar efforts, such as hosting webinars to share best practices from high-performing colleges.

Dr. Merritt added that the public accessibility of the performance report itself promotes transparency and accountability. He noted that colleges naturally use the data to reach out and collaborate with others, forming peer learning groups to improve outcomes. The report has been in its current form for approximately 15 years.

Dr. Schneider continued his presentation with a deeper dive into curriculum completion rates, noting that colleges performing well in English success often show strong outcomes in this area. Mr. Ottman wanted to confirm the performance-based funding amount, which was verified as \$24 million. Mr. Ottman expressed concern that this figure—less than 2% of total allocations—may not reflect the importance of performance metrics. Dr. Merritt and Dr. Cox responded, explaining that the amount is determined by legislative funding and varies widely across states. While some states base up to 100% of funding on performance, North Carolina currently allocates 1.5%.

Dr. Cox added that college presidents tend to focus more on how their performance compares to peers than on the funding itself. Dr. McInnis emphasized that the performance measures are more than just comparative data; they represent real students and the human impact of educational outcomes. Dr. McInnis further noted that while comparisons to other institutions are useful, the true value lies in how the data reflects the experiences and progress of individuals within each college. At the campus level, the metrics are viewed as personal and meaningful tools for improving student success, rather than simply as a scorecard.

Chair Looney asked about comparing North Carolina's performance to other states, such as Texas, which allocates 90% of funding based on performance. It was noted that comparative data may be available in upcoming slides and is also a focus of the strategic planning office.

Chairman Looney emphasized the importance of comparing North Carolina's performance measures not only internally but also nationally. Dr. Schneider responded by presenting a deeper analysis of curriculum completion rates, noting that while statewide success rates appear to be improving, much of the growth is driven by dual enrollment students, who have significantly higher success rates than non-dual enrolled students. For example, 72% of dual enrollment students were successful compared to 45% of non-dual enrolled students.

Dr. Schneider explained that while trends for non-dual enrolled students are improving, the growth is modest. Predictive data suggests that completion rates will remain steady over the next two years. He then shared comparative data from the National Student Clearinghouse, showing North Carolina's 6-year completion rate for non-dual enrolled students at 46%, above the national average of 40%. However, neighboring states such as Georgia, Virginia, and Kentucky currently outperform North Carolina. This regional comparison highlights opportunities to learn from other states and improve outcomes.

The Hon. Price discussed the definition of completion rate used in national comparisons, which includes students who either earn an associate degree at a two-year institution or transfer and graduate from a four-year institution within six years. This broader metric allows for tracking long-term student success beyond the community college system. Dr. Schneider confirmed that while this national metric differs from internal state measures, it is one of the closest available for cross-state comparisons.

Chair Looney asked for data comparing North Carolina to other states. Dr. Schneider presented a regional breakdown, showing that North Carolina's completion rate of 46% exceeds the national average of 40%. However, neighboring states such as Georgia, Virginia, and Kentucky outperform North Carolina. He also noted that lower-performing states tend to be concentrated on the West Coast and in parts of the Northeast. Some

states, including Florida, Nevada, Utah, Indiana, and Vermont, were excluded from the dataset due to changes in how they classify community colleges, with some transitioning to four-year models.

Chair Looney asked about Georgia's success in completion rates, prompting a response from Amy, who attributed it to a long-term, comprehensive focus on student completion. Dr. Schneider then concluded his presentation by highlighting the availability of performance data dashboards on the public-facing website. These dashboards allow users to explore state performance measures by student characteristics and compare institutions across peer groups. He encouraged board members to utilize these tools for deeper insights and offered to answer any additional questions.

Chair West requested a motion to approve PROG 01 and PROG 02 for the For Action agenda. On a motion made by Lt. Gov. Hunt, seconded by Mr. Lang PROG 01 and PROG 02 were approved for the For Action agenda. Motion was approved via voice vote.

FOR CONSENT AGENDA:

Curriculum Program Applications – Fast Track for Action (Attachment PROG 03)

- Rowan-Cabarrus Community College
 - Health Sciences (A45230)
- Tri-County Community College
 - Cardiovascular Sonography (A45160)
- Wake Technical Community College
 - Cardiovascular Sonography (A45160)

Dr. Wendy Barnhart and Dr. Amy Mahle from Rowan-Cabarrus Community College were welcomed and recognized for their leadership, along with other health sciences deans who contributed to the development of a new degree program. This proposal was being presented to the Board for the third time, which is standard practice for new-to-system degrees to ensure thorough vetting.

Melissa Smith, Senior State Director of Health Sciences, conducted a statewide survey among chief academic officers and instructional leaders. The results showed strong support, with 80% of respondents indicating alignment with institutional workforce development goals. Key highlights included the program's stackable credentials, its support for existing pathways, and its ability to address gaps for students not yet admitted to health sciences programs.

The proposal was seen as innovative and relevant to workforce needs, and there was broad interest in adopting the curriculum. Representatives from Rowan-Cabarrus and Melissa Smith were present to answer any questions from the Board.

The committee had no questions or concerns.

Combined Course Library – Workforce Continuing Education and College & Career Readiness (Attachment PROG 04)

- New Course Approvals, Modifications, and Tier Designations
 - New Course Approval – NCCCS & NC Office of Emergency Medical Services (NCOEMS)
 - AEMT Supplemental (EMS – 4304)
 - New Course Approval – NC Fire Rescue Commission/NC Office of State Fire Marshal
 - Fire Chief 101 – 2025 Edition (FRC – 1900)
 - Public Safety Propel Partner Courses – Catawba Valley Community College
 - Juvenile Justice (CJC-2113)

- Crime Scene Photography (CJC-2115)
- Law Enforcement Operations (CJC – 2121)
- Criminal Law (CJC – 2131)
- Court Procedures and Evidence (CJC – 2132)
- Crime Scene Processing (CJC – 2144)
- Trace Evidence (CJC – 2146)
- Introduction to Loss Prevention (CJC – 2151)
- Terrorism: Underlying Issues (CJC – 2160)
- Critical Incident Management Public Safety (CJC – 2170)
- Ethics & Community Relations (CJC – 2212)
- Organization and Administration (CJC – 2215)
- Criminalistics (CJC – 2222)
- Constitutional Law (CJC – 2231)
- Law Enforcement Mgmt. & Supervision (CJC – 2240)
- Friction Ridge Analysis (CJC – 2245)
- Advanced Friction Ridge Analysis (CJC – 2246)
- Forensic Biology I (CJC – 2250)
- Forensic Chemistry I (CJC – 2251)
- Sociology of Disaster (EPT – 2120)
- Introduction to Public Administration (EPT – 2151)
- Response & Recovery (EPT – 2210)
- Terrorism and Emergency Management (EPT – 2220)
- Public Policy Analysis (EPT – 2252)
- Business Continuity (EPT – 2260)
- Emergency Operations Center Management (EPT – 2275)
- Detection and Investigation (FIP – 2128)
- Fire Dynamics and Combustion (FIP – 2229)
- Hydraulics and Water Distribution (FIP – 2232)
- Fire Service Supervision (FIP – 2240)
- Fire Service Personnel Administration (FIP – 2248)
- Managing Fire Services (FIP – 2276)
- New Course Approval – Stanly Community College
 - Core Skills for Supporting Individuals with IDD (DDT – 3110)
 - Advanced Skills for DSPs (DDT – 3120)

The board was given a brief explanation of the course approval process. New or modified courses are routinely reviewed and approved for inclusion in the Combined Course Library. Once approved, any of the 58 community colleges in the state can access and offer these courses, making them eligible for state-funded full-time equivalent (FTE) credit.

Dr. Merritt confirmed that this process plays a critical role in program and student success by improving efficiency. Developing a curriculum requires significant effort, but once a course is built and approved, it becomes available system-wide. These proposals originate from faculty and administrators across the colleges and go through a multi-step approval process, including local review and two state-level committees composed of representatives from institutions across North Carolina, before reaching the State Board.

The committee had no questions or concerns.

Courses of Instruction to Captive Co-Opted Groups (Attachment PROG 05)

- Caldwell Community College and Technical Institute – Caldwell Correctional Center
 - Industrial Safety (Workplace Safety) (ISC - 3036)
- Cape Fear Community College – New Hanover Correctional Center
 - Heavy Equipment Operations (HEO - 3100)
- Catawba Valley Community College – Catawba Correctional Center
 - Furniture Technology (Frame Building) (FUR0 - 3300)
 - Work-based Learning (WBL – 3100)
- Davidson-Davie Community College – Davidson Correctional Center
 - Aquaculture Technology (AQU - 3100)
- Gaston College – Gaston Correctional Center
 - Work Zone Flagger (CST - 4000)
- Isothermal Community College – Rutherford Correctional Center
 - Blueprint Reading (BPR – 3011)
 - CPR/First Aid (SAF – 301)
 - OSHA Forklift Operator (OSH – 3012)
 - OSHA Construction Safety (OSH – 3013)
- South Piedmont Community College – Anson Correctional Institution
 - Computer Hardware Repair/Update (CompTIA A+ Certification) (CET – 3100)
 - IT Support Technician (CompTIA Tech+ Certification) (CTS – 3255)
 - Introduction to Networks (CompTIA Network+ Certification) (NET – 3125)
 - Sign Language (American Sign Language) (COM – 3709)
- South Piedmont Community College – Brown Creek Correctional Institution
 - Computer Hardware Repair/Update (CompTIA A+ Certification) (CET – 3100)
 - IT Support Technician (CompTIA Tech+ Certification) (CTS – 3255)
 - Introduction to Networks (CompTIA Network+ Certification) (NET – 3125)
- Vance-Granville Community College – Granville Correctional Institution
 - Distribution and Logistic Mgmt (LOG – 3400)
 - Heavy Equipment Safety Trng (HEO – 3002)
 - Work Zone Flagger (CST – 4000)
- Vance-Granville Community College – Warren Correctional Institution
 - Food Service Sanitation/Safety (CUL – 3072)
 - Heavy Equipment Safety Trng (HEO – 3002)
 - Work Zone Flagger (CST – 4000)

Chair West reviewed the item. The committee had no questions or concerns.

Chair West requested a motion to approve PROG 03, PROG 04, and PROG 05 for the For Consent agenda. On a motion made by Chair Looney, seconded by Mr. Lang PROG 03, PROG 04, and PROG 05 were approved for the For Consent agenda. Motion was approved via voice vote.

FOR INFORMATION:

Legislative Report for the Digital Credential Pilot Program (Attachment PROG 06)

The board received an update on the Digital Credential Pilot Program, which was launched following a \$1 million legislative allocation in December 2024. Two colleges were selected to participate, each partnering with a different vendor. Cape Fear Community College, represented by Senior Vice President of Student Services Sabrina Terry, partnered with Digicred to implement a mobile-based credentialing platform.

The pilot, titled *Apply Wilmington*, aimed to test the feasibility of issuing verifiable, student-controlled digital credentials across institutions. The project involved collaboration with UNC Wilmington, New Hanover County Schools, and Pender County Schools. A total of 2,014 students were onboarded, resulting in the issuance of over 2,500 digital transcripts and more than 2,100 student IDs. Participation rates were high across all groups, with 85–91% of students downloading the app.

Digicred provided extensive on-site support, assisting students with app setup, identity verification, and credential access. The pilot was structured in four phases—stakeholder coordination, system installation, student onboarding, and credential delivery—with funding tied to deliverables at each stage. The initiative empowered students by giving them secure, immediate access to their academic records, and was praised for its emphasis on access, agency, and student-centered innovation.

President Ardalan of Randolph Community College began by expressing appreciation for the opportunity to speak and acknowledged the support of the North Carolina General Assembly in funding their pilot project. He noted that although their funding was only a third of what others received, they proceeded directly to implementation due to the maturity of the technology involved.

The pilot was completed in just six weeks and quickly transitioned into a phased full implementation. Drawing on his 40 years of experience in higher education and IT, President Ardalan described the rollout as one of the fastest and smoothest he has ever seen. The goal was to evaluate the entire ecosystem, and thanks to strong leadership and guidance, the project proved highly successful.

The system now supports over 20 types of official student records, including transcripts, proof of enrollment, degrees, and certificates. These records are accessible in real time and can be securely shared with institutions, employers, and other organizations. The platform integrates seamlessly with their student information system (Colleague by Ellucian) using APIs, making it easy to implement and scale.

Students have lifelong access to their credentials at no cost and benefit from 24/7 support. The system is highly secure, compliant with SOC 2 Type 2 standards, and has received overwhelmingly positive feedback from users. Compared to alternatives like the National Student Clearinghouse, the new system has a significantly higher user satisfaction rating.

President Ardalan emphasized that this was not just a pilot but a full deployment, with tens of thousands of issuing and verifying partners already on board. The platform is used by over 50,000 organizations and verified by more than 100,000, including many in North Carolina. It is designed to give students full control over their records in a secure digital vault.

He concluded by highlighting Randolph Community College's recent rankings—number one in North Carolina and number two nationally—attributing their success to strong partnerships, efficient systems, and a commitment to improving student outcomes.

During the discussion, Chair Looney and others acknowledged the strengths of the Certree platform, noting its stability compared to the startup nature of Digicred. While Randolph Community College had limited time to scale and penetrate the market during the pilot, other institutions like UNC Wilmington had deeper engagement with Digicred and broader collaboration with the Department of Public Instruction.

The conversation shifted to future plans, with questions raised about the roadmap following the conclusion of the pilots and the exhaustion of funding. The response indicated that the next step involves the senior leadership team making a collective decision on which vendor to move forward with. This decision will also involve legislative stakeholders who are invested in the project. The goal is to strategically select one vendor for statewide deployment, but no final decision has been made yet.

Mr. Lang expressed skepticism about one of the platforms, noting that although it claims to have been around since 2018, it still feels like a startup in 2025. They questioned the validity of the platform's claim of having 50,000 users, suggesting that the number may be inflated by counting every small entity, such as individual school districts. The speaker acknowledged that both Certree and Digicred aim to enhance student ownership and security of records, using terms like "wallet" or "vault" to describe their systems.

They also referenced comparisons to other platforms like Parchment, which many community colleges use for transcript processing. While the security and student control features are appealing, the Mr. Lang remained cautious, suggesting that the platform's promises might be too good to be true. Despite understanding that one of the platforms is a startup, they admitted to struggling with fully trusting the other platform as well.

President Ardalan clarified that verifying the platform's user base is straightforward and that a list of participating entities can be provided.

Curriculum Program Applications as Approved by the System President (Attachment PROG 07)

- Asheville-Buncombe Technical Community College
 - Early Childhood Administration (Certificate) (C55850)

Chair West reviewed the item. The committee had no questions or concerns.

Curriculum Program Standard Revisions as Approved by the System President (Attachment PROG 08)

- Carteret Community College
 - Bakery and Pastry Arts (A55130)
 - Culinary Arts (A55150)
 - Hospitality Management (A25110)
- North Carolina Community College System
 - School-Age Education (A55440)
 - School-Age Care (Certificate) (C55450)
 - Health Care Technology (Certificate) (C45350)
 - Health Science: Therapeutic & Diagnostic Services/Nurse Aide (Diploma) (D45970)
 - Health Science: Therapeutic & Diagnostic Services/Phlebotomy (Diploma) (D45950)
 - Nurse Aide (Certificate) (C45840)
 - Phlebotomy (Certificate) (C45600)

Chair West reviewed the item. The committee had no questions or concerns.

Curriculum Program Terminations as Approved by the System President
(Attachment PROG 09)

- Asheville-Buncombe Technical Community College
 - Computer-Aided Drafting Technology (A50150)
- Central Piedmont Community College
 - Computer Engineering Technology (A40160)
 - Electrical Engineering Technology (A40180)
- Guilford Technical Community College
 - Basic Law Enforcement Training (Certificate) (C55120)
- Western Piedmont Community College
 - Dental Assisting (Diploma) (D45240)

Chair West reviewed the item. The committee had no questions or concerns.

NEW BUSINESS

Mr. Lang provided additional context about the company discussed earlier, noting that although it has been around for nearly seven years, its revenue is only \$11 million and it employs 55 people. Based on these metrics, the company was still considered a startup, despite comparisons to another newer platform in Wilmington.

The conversation shifted briefly to Credly, a credentialing platform owned by Pearson, one of the largest education firms. Although Credly was not part of the pilot, it was confirmed that the colleges do currently have access to it. Dr. Gardner explained that Credly focuses primarily on digital badges rather than transcript credentials. While some colleges use it for specific programs, such as bio network technician training, it is not widely adopted across the system. The consensus was that Credly may not be the right solution for the broader credentialing needs being discussed.

ADJOURN

On a motion made by Mr. Lang, seconded by Char Looney, the meeting was adjourned at 5:30 p.m.

Recording Secretary
Ashley Croom