

STATE BOARD OF COMMUNITY COLLEGES
2025 State Board Summit Takeaways & Action Items

Background: The inaugural State Board of Community Colleges (SBCC) Summit was held September 17–18, 2025, in Raleigh. It focused on why transformation is essential for North Carolina’s community colleges and the bold goal of becoming the nation’s #1 workforce system. Sessions featured legislative champions, leading economic developers, the Superintendent of Public Instruction, and a nationally renowned labor economist who offered perspectives on policy, education, and labor market trends. Discussions also centered on executing the Propel NC funding model, modernizing data and systems, and setting clear milestones to strengthen student experiences and statewide competitiveness.

Takeaways & Actions Synthesis: Enclosed with this cover sheet is a comprehensive synthesis of action items that emerged from sessions, panels, and strategic conversations at the 2025 State Board Summit.

Prioritized Actions: Below is a summary of *high-priority action items* from the 2025 State Board of Community Colleges Summit for implementation as part of 2025-26 Strategic Plan Tactics.

Action	System Office Responsible Party	SBCC Committee Owner	Notes	Priority Level
Execute System Office applications: CBAS, Data Warehouse, and CCL.	Chief Information Officer	Transformation	This area of action is carried forward from previous years’ Tactics and is critically urgent.	High Priority (Already Underway)
Align LMS systems between K12 and NCCCS to streamline student learning experience.	Chief Academic Officer	Transformation	Aligning LMS systems is a core component of fostering a seamless student experience across the educational continuum and across educational institutions in North Carolina.	High Priority (Already Underway)
Secure funding for Propel NC.	Director, Government Relations	Strategic Planning	This area of action is carried forward from previous	High Priority (Already Underway)

			years' Tactics and is critically urgent. This helps address funding disincentives for high-cost, high-demand programs discussed at the SB Summit.	
Move ahead with organizing programs by workforce sector as opposed to tiers and credit/non-credit.	Chief Academic Officer Vice President, System Effectiveness	Programs & Student Success	This action advances components of the Propel NC operational model that do not require funding.	High Priority (Already Underway)
Secure recurring funding for Apprenticeship NC operations.	Vice President, Economic Development Director, Government Relations	Programs & Student Success	- This action is critical to effectively serve industry and economic development partners. - Additional grant funding is being pursued. - Legislative request has been submitted.	High Priority (Already Underway)
Design and implement tracking and reporting for non-credit student data to support eligibility for Workforce Pell .	Vice President, System Effectiveness	Programs & Student Success	This action is critical for North Carolina to fully leverage Workforce Pell when it rolls out.	High Priority
Analyze and implement potential streamlining of	Chief Academic Officer	Programs & Student Success	This action also supports North Carolina's ability to fully leverage	High Priority

System Office approval processes for short-term workforce pathways to support Workforce Pell .			Workforce Pell when it rolls out.	
Identify use cases of statewide longitudinal data system and data linkages and verify whether use cases are supported by the currently planned data system.	Vice President, System Effectiveness	Transformation	- Articulate how NCCCS intends to integrate data into functions and processes that better serve students and track outcomes. - For instance, tracking long-term outcomes of students versus accessing student contact information for recruitment. These are two distinct use cases, which may require distinct data solutions.	High Priority
Simplify approval processes for short-term workforce pathways in public schools, leveraging the template already adopted by non-public schools.	Chief Academic Officer	Programs & Student Success	- This helps us collectively serve the ~40% of high school students with no plans for or post-graduation engagement with short-term credential pathways during high school. - Target is Fall 2026 rollout.	High Priority

Contact(s):

Dr. Zach Barricklow

Interim Vice President, Strategic Initiatives

barricklowz@nccommunitycolleges.edu

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Below is a synthesis of action items that emerged from sessions, panels, and strategic conversations at the 2025 State Board Summit. The tables below are organized by major theme. Each table includes actions, contextual notes, and identifies three ways that the action items may be operationalized:

- **25-26 Implementation Plan:** These action items will be executed in 2025-26 as part of Tactics linked to the current 2022-26 Strategic Plan.
- **26-29 Strategic Plan:** These action items will be considered for incorporation into Tactics linked to the new 2026-29 Strategic Plan.
- **Operational Actions:** These items represent operational actions that support strategic outcomes and will be addressed outside of SBCC reporting.

System Alignment, Governance, & Legislative Support

Action	25-26 Implementation Plan	26-29 Strategic Plan	Operational Actions	Contextual Notes
Execute System Office applications: CBAS, Data Warehouse, and CCL.	X			This action is carried forward from previous years' Tactics and is critically urgent.
Standardize IT systems (e.g., CRM, LMS, digital transcript) to enable collaboration and continuity across colleges to better serve students.		X		- The purpose of this is to foster a seamless student experience across the educational continuum and across educational institutions in NC. - Note: LMS system implementation will begin immediately but it is noted here because it is a critical component of seamless student experience that will eventually include several elements.
Align operational systems such as HR, IT, and Procurement across the system that allows for System Office support.		X		By aligning operational systems, the System Office can better support colleges, especially smaller institutions.
Evaluate and update governance structures to support systemwide approaches, where appropriate.		X		Legislators who spoke at the State Board Summit expressed that they would welcome input from the State Board.
Promote cross-college enrollment and shared infrastructure where and when it serves students and employers better.		X		This was encouraged by legislative speakers. It is made possible by standardized IT and data systems mentioned elsewhere in the document.

Prepare ROI analysis for Propel NC -- what is gained by funding Propel NC and what is risked by not funding Propel NC.			X	Example: How might the nursing shortage be exacerbated by lack of funding from Propel NC and how would it impact NC's healthcare ecosystem?
Develop a bold plan for legislators to support strengthening the system.		X		- Summarize near and long-term policy and funding changes (including Propel NC and items from this document) that would foster greater alignment, operational efficiency, and smoother student experiences. - Advocate for policy changes to align incentives between institutions, students, and employers.

Statewide Data Systems and Data Linkages

Action	25-26 Implementation Plan	26-29 Strategic Plan	Operational Actions	Contextual Notes
Identify use cases of statewide longitudinal data system and data linkages.	X			- Articulate how NCCCS intends to integrate data into functions and processes that better serve students and track outcomes. - For instance, tracking long-term outcomes of students versus accessing student contact information for recruitment. These are two distinct use cases, which may require distinct data solutions.
Solicit an update on NC Longitudinal Data System .			X	Confirm data sets included, agencies involved, status, and alignment with use cases identified (above).
Consider organizing a cross-agency and legislator delegation to study other state data systems.			X	- Based on use cases identified above and current status of NC Longitudinal Data System, determine benchmark states with strong data systems that would inform NC and NCCCS data systems design. - Note: Data Quality Campaign and SHEEO both identified Kentucky, Iowa, and Texas as strong examples of statewide longitudinal data systems that include employment outcomes.
Equip President Cox with a roadmap for action for NC Longitudinal Data System Governance Board .			X	- President Cox chairs this committee. - Map out where we need/lack data linkages across the education-to-workforce continuum.

K12 Collaboration

Action	25-26 Implementation Plan	26-29 Strategic Plan	Operational Actions	Contextual Notes
Engage legal and strategic counsel to navigate perceived FERPA barriers to data sharing between DPI/K12 and NCCCS.			X	Data Quality Campaign can provide examples and legal precedents for data sharing that has been held up in NC due to concerns about FERPA.
Explore “opt-out” approach to parental approval of student information sharing between DPI/K12 and NCCCS.			X	An “opt-out” approach helps NCCCS reach and serve the ~40% of high school students with no plans for or post-graduation engagement with community college credential pathways.
Strengthen DPI-NCCCS data-sharing agreements and implementation across LEAs and high schools statewide.			X	Data sharing from LEAs currently ranges from 5% to 90% of student information. The goal is to make it consistent and complete across all LEAs.
Align LMS systems between K12 and NCCCS to streamline student learning experience.	X			Aligning LMS systems is a core component of fostering a seamless student experience across the educational continuum and across educational institutions in North Carolina. It has been mandated by the legislature and Phase I is underway.
Expand dual enrollment in high schools via in-person and virtual course delivery options.		X		Explore approaches to expand virtual CCP offerings, mitigating student transportation barriers and faculty availability.
Simplify approval processes for short-term workforce pathways in public schools, leveraging the template already adopted by non-public schools.	X			This helps us collectively serve the ~40% of high school students with no plans for or post-graduation engagement with short-term credential pathways during high school.
Update CTE Course GPA weighting policy for parity with other college courses vis-à-vis NCCCS, DPI, UNC, SBCC, State Board of Education, and UNC Board of Governors.			X	The current policy disincentivizes high school students from taking dual enrollment. Updating it would help maximize enrollment in CCP, serving more students.
Develop collaborative strategies to expand and coordinate career exposure and career development planning with K12 students starting in middle school through high school.			X	Community colleges often have a more direct link to industry and can help K12 gain access for early career exposure of students, followed by career counseling that includes <i>all</i> post-secondary options.
Explore a policy of mandatory CTE planning between all high schools and local community colleges.		X		This would maximize alignment, minimize duplication, and mitigate perceived competition.

Align and link Teacher workforce needs with Propel NC and Apprenticeship NC policy and growth goals.			X	- Include this in updated Propel NC plans. - Aligns with Best NC, myFutureNC, and DPI requests.
Explore ways to scale Early College approach and successes across all high schools.			X	Analyze the new trades-focused Early College at Sandhills CC for lessons that might be scaled across more colleges and local high schools.
Crosswalk KPIs and Implementation Tactics between DPI Strategic Plan and NCCCS Strategic Plan.			X	This is a catch-all action item to ensure maximum alignment between the plans and agencies.

Propel NC & Workforce Pell

Action	25-26 Implementation Plan	26-29 Strategic Plan	Operational Actions	Contextual Notes
Secure funding for Propel NC.	X			- This area of action is carried forward from previous years' Tactics and is critically urgent. - This helps address funding disincentives for high-cost, high-demand programs discussed at the SB Summit.
Prepare ROI analysis for Propel NC -- what is gained by funding Propel NC and what is risked by not funding Propel NC.			X	Example: How would nursing shortage be exacerbated by lack of funding from Propel NC and how would that impact NC's healthcare system?
Design and implement tracking and reporting for non-credit student data to support eligibility for Workforce Pell.	X			This action is critical for North Carolina to fully leverage Workforce Pell when it rolls out in July 2026.
Promote and support policies and operations that move toward a "One College" model with stackable credentials and seamless transitions.		X		This action advances components of the Propel NC operational model that do not require funding.
Move ahead with organizing programs by workforce sector as opposed to tiers and credit/non-credit.	X			This action advances components of the Propel NC operational model that do not require funding.
Analyze and implement potential streamlining of System Office approval processes for short-term workforce pathways.	X			This action also supports North Carolina's ability to fully leverage Workforce Pell when it rolls out.
Align short-term programs with high-demand fields (e.g., healthcare, early childhood).			X	This action also supports North Carolina's ability to fully leverage Workforce Pell when it rolls out.

Attachment PLAN 01A

Develop tools and training for colleges to implement Workforce Pell.			X	This action also supports North Carolina's ability to fully leverage Workforce Pell when it rolls out.
Leverage Workforce Pell to recruit male and adult students into short-term credential programs.		X		This action addresses the need to better engage and equip these demographics with credentials that meet the state's workforce needs and lead to economic mobility.
Promote short-term programs as entry points for hesitant learners.			X	This is a promotional strategy that can be implemented via marketing efforts immediately.
Explore micro-credential pathways as component of stackable credentials.			X	This is underway through grants and partnerships linked to the Student Success Center and Workforce Strategies teams at the System Office.

Industry Engagement & Economic Development

Action	25-26 Implementation Plan	26-29 Strategic Plan	Operational Actions	Contextual Notes
Secure recurring funding for Apprenticeship NC operations.	X			- This action is critical to effectively serve industry and economic development partners. - Additional grant funding is being pursued. - Legislative request has been submitted.
Explore how to launch a concierge program to help businesses navigate apprenticeship opportunities.		X		This would especially benefit small businesses.
Collect and share success stories to promote adoption of apprenticeships in NC.			X	Prospective employer partners hearing from employer successes and prospective student apprentices hearing from student testimonials is the best method of promotion.
Expand apprenticeships in nontraditional sectors.		X		Further discussion will help elaborate on this action item.
Collaborate with economic developers to more clearly communicate workforce development assets to employers and prospective employers considering NC.		X		Further discussion will help elaborate on this action item.

System Transformation & Change Management

Action	25-26 Implementation Plan	26-29 Strategic Plan	Operational Actions	Contextual Notes
Define and communicate a shared vision for system transformation .			X	- This is the focus of the SBCC Transformation Committee. - The vision will be included in the System Presidential Profile.
Establish structures for input, feedback, and alignment with co-owners and partners of system goals, KPIs, and tactics for implementation.		X		Underway as we build the 2026-29 Strategic Plan.
Adopt guiding principles of change management .		X		- Prioritize a feasible volume of initiatives—avoid endless additions. - Identify and empower change agents across the system. - Ensure transformation is led by presidents and frontline staff—not just IT or central offices. - Use data to drive decisions and measure progress. - Promote cross-state collaboration and learn from successful models. - Embrace iterative innovation and continuous improvement. - Limit system customization to 20% (“golden image” model). - Leverage emerging technologies, such as AI. - Integrate people, process, and technology—tech is the enabler, not the solution. - Communicate milestones and celebrate wins to maintain momentum and morale.

Student Experience & Career Mobility

Action	25-26 Implementation Plan	26-29 Strategic Plan	Operational Actions	Contextual Notes
Use integrated systems (CRM, LMS, digital transcripts) to personalize student experience.		X		- This depends on integrated IT systems mentioned above. - Leverage student data to provide “pivot” coaching to adjacent careers and credentials.
Consider latest Guided (Economic) Pathways frameworks when updating policies, systems, and capacity-building investments across NCCCS.		X		- Integrate guidance on ethical, effective use of AI and emerging technologies across career pathways. - Promote lifelong learning mindset across educational stages.

Attachment PLAN 01A

				• Promote a focus on career advancement, not just job placement. • Align stackable credentials with career ladders.
Consider policies and support for rural educational access and outcomes that support community vitality.		X		• Labor economists, legislators, and economic developers who spoke at the State Board Summit all emphasized the importance of community colleges developing talent in every community across the state, including the nearly 80% of rural counties that rely more heavily on community colleges for workforce and economic development.