

STATE BOARD OF COMMUNITY COLLEGES
Annual Report North Carolina Child Care Grant Program (FY 2024–2025)

Request: For Information

Strategic Plan Reference: Goal 2 – Student Success

Background:

For the 2024–2025 fiscal year, the North Carolina General Assembly appropriated \$3,038,215 to support childcare services for student-parents enrolled in the state's community colleges. These funds are allocated across the 58 community colleges in North Carolina to assist student-parents in accessing reliable childcare while pursuing their education. Student parents have the flexibility to select their childcare providers, which may include a wide range of options such as:

- Licensed daycare centers
- Individual or unlicensed providers
- The student-parent's own parent or guardian
- Personal nannies
- Afterschool programs
- Summer childcare programs

This funding plays a vital role in supporting student retention and success by helping parents balance their academic and family responsibilities.

Statutory Requirement:

This report fulfills G.S. 115D-40.5, Section 6.4, and is submitted December 1 annually to the Joint Legislative Education Oversight Committee.

Contact(s):

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Dr. Monty Hickman, Executive Director of Strategic Enrollment Management



**North Carolina Child Care Grant Program for
Community College Students**

**Annual Report to the Joint Legislative Education
Oversight Committee**

**Submitted By the North Carolina State Board of
Community Colleges**

As Required by G.S. 115D-40.5, Section 6.4

December 1, 2025

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SUMMARY

Since 1993, the North Carolina General Assembly has provided an annual appropriation of need-based financial assistance to community college students through the North Carolina Community College Child Care Grant program. These funds are incorporated into the Community College System budget to support childcare needs of students enrolled at North Carolina's 58 community colleges.

The North Carolina Community College System (NCCCS) administers the NC Child Care Grant Program to assist student-parents in managing the financial costs of childcare services, enabling them to remain enrolled and achieve their educational goals.

At each college, childcare coordinators and financial aid officers collaborate to assess the need for childcare assistance and may coordinate with other agencies that provide childcare funding for eligible students to maximize resources. This partnership ensures that resources are effectively targeted to student-parents with the greatest financial need.

BACKGROUND

For the 2024–2025 fiscal year, the North Carolina General Assembly appropriated \$3,038,215 to support childcare services for student-parents enrolled in the state's community colleges. These funds are allocated across the 58 community colleges in North Carolina to assist student-parents in accessing reliable childcare while pursuing their education. Student parents have the flexibility to select their childcare providers, which may include a wide range of options such as:

- Licensed daycare centers
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This funding plays a vital role in supporting student retention and success by helping parents balance their academic and family responsibilities.

REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

Pursuant to G.S. 115D-40.5, Section 6.4, the North Carolina Community College System submits this report annually to the Senate Appropriations Committee on Education/Higher Education, the House Appropriations Committee on Education, the Fiscal Research Division, and the Joint Legislative Education Oversight Committee.

Each community college self-reports data on its administration of the Childcare Grant Program for the preceding fiscal year. The reported information includes, at a minimum:

- The number of applications received for grants;
- The total amount of grant funds requested;
- The number of applications approved;
- The total amount of grant funds awarded;
- The range of individual grant awards; and
- The types of childcare services utilized by students, including before-school and after-school services.

DATA SUMMARY AND ALLOCATION FORMULA

This report also includes detailed information regarding the allocation and utilization of Child Care Grant funds at each community college.

- Allocation of Authorized Funds – Each college receives funds based on the following formula:
\$20,000 base allocation + \$3.88 per curriculum budget full-time equivalent (FTE).
- Total Amount Awarded to Students – The total childcare grant funds distributed to eligible student-parents during the fiscal year.
- Unexpended Funds – The portion of allocated funds not awarded to students within the fiscal year.
- Number of Students Receiving Grants – The total number of student-parents receiving childcare grant assistance.
- Number of Students Not Awarded – The total number of student-parents who were not assisted with the grant.
- Average Amount Awarded – The average amount of childcare grant funding awarded per student at each institution.

The information below provides a comprehensive summary of how funds were distributed and utilized across the state's community colleges during the 2024–25 fiscal year.

- **Full Utilization of Allocations:**
Twenty (20) colleges – **Beaufort CCC, Bladen CC, Brunswick CC, Carteret CC, Edgecombe CC, Fayetteville TCC, Halifax CC, James Sprunt CC, Lenoir CC, McDowell TCC, Piedmont CC, Pitt CC, Robeson CC, Rockingham CC, Rowan-Cabarrus CC, Southeastern CC, Surry CC, Wake TCC, Wayne CC and Wilkes CC** expended 100% of their allocated funds.
- **Approved Reallocation:**
Through an approved reallocation process by which colleges that were unable to fully utilize their allocations, released funds to five (5) colleges — **Bladen CC, Edgecombe CC, McDowell TCC, Piedmont CC, and Wilkes CC** to further support student needs.
- **Supplemental Funding Sources:**
Eleven (11) colleges – **Alamance CC, Asheville-Buncombe TCC, Caldwell CC&TI, Carteret CC, Central Piedmont CC, Guilford TCC, Lenoir CC, Mitchell CC, Richmond CC, Robeson CC, and Rockingham CC**, leveraged additional resources, including Finish Line Grant funds, Foundation

Office contributions, Perkins funds, and Institutional funds, to assist students with childcare needs.

- **Community Partnerships:**

Funding from Ccampus, YMCA, and Public-School programs was utilized at **Carteret CC, Central Piedmont CC, Mitchell CC, and Wilkes CC** to enhance childcare and related student services.

- **Support for Student-Parents:**

Twenty-six (26) colleges — **Alamance, Asheville-Buncombe, Brunswick, Caldwell CC&TI, Cape Fear, Catawba, Central Piedmont, Cleveland, Davidson-Davie, Forsyth, Gaston, Guilford, Haywood, Lenoir, McDowell, Robeson, Rowan-Cabarrus, Sampson, Southeastern, Southwestern, Surry, Wake TCC, Wayne, Western Piedmont, and Wilkes** — provided before- and after-school care assistance for student-parents.

2024-25 NC Childcare Grant Expenditures by College (Self-reported)

Community	FY 2024-25	Total	Unexpended	# Students	# Students Not Awarded	Average	
		Colleges	Allocation	Awarded	Funds	Awarded	Awarded
Alamance CC		\$55,898	\$53,969.00	\$1,929.00	9	10	\$5,996.55
Asheville-Buncombe TCC		\$67,986	\$35,087.00	\$32,809.00	23	4	\$1,525.52
Beaufort CCC		\$35,013	\$35,013.00	\$0.00	6	0	\$5,835.50
Bladen CC		\$34,762	\$34,762.00	\$0.00	12	3	\$2,896.83
Blue Ridge CC		\$41,525	\$36,601.10	\$4,923.10	10	2	\$3,660.11
Brunswick CC		\$36,395	\$36,395.00	\$0.00	10	4	\$3,639.50
Caldwell CC and TI		\$51,896	\$51,896.00	\$0.00	29	6	\$1,789.52
Cape Fear CC		\$102,147	\$93,879.23	\$8,267.77	24	7	\$3,911.63
Carteret CC		\$34,566	\$34,566.00	\$0.00	12	4	\$2,880.50
Catawba Valley CC		\$57,564	\$14,359.50	\$43,204.50	5	1	\$2,871.90
Central Carolina CC		\$65,223	\$50,219.62	\$15,003.38	10	5	\$5,021.96
Central Piedmont CC		\$184,152	\$183,391.81	\$760.19	75	6	\$2,444.82
Cleveland CC		\$46,167	\$11,615.00	\$34,552.00	7	7	\$1,659.29
Coastal Carolina CC		\$52,810	\$26,513.68	\$26,296.32	11	14	\$2,410.33
College of the Albemarle		\$42,520	\$6,400.00	\$36,120.00	3	0	\$2,133.33
Craven CC		\$44,349	\$41,171.10	\$3,177.90	14	13	\$2,940.79
Davidson-Davie CC		\$54,385	\$45,458.15	\$8,926.85	14	17	\$3,247.01
Durham TCC		\$62,379	\$22,626.70	\$39,752.30	6	6	\$3,771.12
Edgecombe CC		\$39,944	\$39,944.00	\$0.00	15	7	\$2,663.07
Fayetteville TCC		\$119,741	\$119,741.00	\$0.00	14	15	\$8,552.93
Forsyth TCC		\$96,307	\$95,683.68	\$623.32	24	31	\$3,986.82
Gaston College		\$66,869	\$66,770.12	\$98.88	16	5	\$4,173.13
Guilford TCC		\$111,056	\$105,037.95	\$6,018.05	22	12	\$4,774.45
Halifax CC		\$28,675	\$28,675.00	\$0.00	5	3	\$5,735.00
Haywood CC		\$30,493	\$26,732.24	\$3,760.76	9	2	\$2,970.24
Isothermal CC		\$38,802	\$26,604.32	\$12,197.68	6	7	\$4,434.05
James Sprunt CC		\$32,393	\$32,393.00	\$0.00	10	0	\$3,239.30
Johnston CC		\$58,631	\$39,444.00	\$19,187.00	7	7	\$5,634.85
Lenoir CC		\$39,574	\$39,574.00	\$0.00	12	4	\$3,343.25
Martin CC		\$26,450	\$18,358.00	\$8,092.00	5	1	\$3,671.60

Mayland CC	\$26,907	\$23,675.00	\$3,232.00	7	1	\$3,382.14
McDowell TCC	\$34,690	\$34,690.00	\$0.00	9	9	\$3,793.74
Mitchell CC	\$46,512	\$16,292.25	\$30,219.75	5	0	\$3,258.55
Montgomery CC	\$29,020	\$27,157.43	\$1,862.57	12	0	\$2,263.12
Nash CC	\$41,027	\$33,565.53	\$7,461.47	10	4	\$3,356.55
Pamlico CC	\$17,976	\$8,206.29	\$9,769.71	3	2	\$2,735.43
Piedmont CC	\$31,666	\$31,666.00	\$0.00	9	19	\$3,518.44
Pitt CC	\$83,772	\$83,772.00	\$0.00	20	20	\$4,188.60
Randolph CC	\$42,195	\$39,262.25	\$2,932.75	16	18	\$2,453.89
Richmond CC	\$38,264	\$36,381.70	\$1,882.30	12	3	\$3,031.81
Roanoke-Chowan CC	\$25,140	\$24,804.00	\$336.00	5	0	\$4,960.80
Robeson CC	\$39,036	\$39,036.00	\$0.00	10	21	\$3,903.60
Rockingham CC	\$33,480	\$33,480.00	\$0.00	18	13	\$1,860.00
Rowan-Cabarrus CC	\$69,510	\$69,510.00	\$0.00	16	6	\$4,344.38
Sampson CC	\$35,806	\$32,730.40	\$3,075.60	16	14	\$2,045.65
Sandhills CC	\$52,404	\$23,445.80	\$28,958.20	7	3	\$3,349.40
South Piedmont CC	\$43,983	\$25,618.37	\$18,364.63	5	5	\$5,123.67
Southeastern CC	\$31,925	\$31,925.00	\$0.00	11	2	\$2,902.27
Southwestern CC	\$37,431	\$15,005.00	\$22,426.00	3	1	\$5,001.67
Stanly CC	\$38,660	\$38,632.00	\$28.00	4	1	\$9,658.00
Surry CC	\$23,525	\$23,525.00	\$0.00	5	0	\$4,705.00
Tri-County CC	\$29,427	\$27,520.89	\$1,901.11	9	0	\$3,058.43
Vance-Granville CC	\$42,977	\$37,346.00	\$5,631.00	10	3	\$3,734.60
Wake TCC	\$218,051	\$218,051.00	\$0.00	28	9	\$7,787.54
Wayne CC	\$47,071	\$47,071.00	\$0.00	13	6	\$3,620.85
Western Piedmont CC	\$35,999	\$14,370.91	\$21,628.09	5	1	\$2,874.18
Wilkes CC	\$43,538	\$43,538.00	\$0.00	21	7	\$1,987.52
Wilson CC	\$34,180	\$29,504.27	\$1,675.73	23	6	\$1,413.23
System Office Reserve	\$5,371					
Total	\$3,038,215	\$2,562,663.29	\$467,084.91	737	377	\$3,726.34

NC CHILDCARE GRANT FEEDBACK AND SUMMARY FROM COLLEGES

In January 2025, a survey was distributed to community colleges to gather feedback on the NC Childcare Grant Program. The responses provided valuable insights into the program's effectiveness and impact at the institutional level.

While the program continues to offer essential support for student-parents, participating colleges identified several challenges and opportunities for improvement to enhance program accessibility, efficiency, and overall student success. The NC Community College System Office works continuously with the colleges to eliminate barriers for student parents.

1. Reimbursement Model Challenges

- **Southeastern CC:** The current reimbursement model creates barriers for students who cannot pay childcare upfront, as most daycare providers require payment before services are rendered. This also increases administrative burden for financial aid offices.
- **Wayne CC & Lenoir CC:** Payments issued in arrears create difficulties for individual/private childcare providers who rely on timely payments. Delays between service and reimbursement (often 4–6 weeks) are challenging for both providers and students.

Suggested Improvement: Explore options for direct or upfront payments to childcare providers, particularly for summer programs or semester start periods.

2. Timing of Funding and Notifications

- **Southwestern CC, Alamance CC, Randolph CC, Wayne CC:** The August allocation notification is often too late to allow students to make informed childcare plans before the semester begins. Some students postpone enrollment or seek alternative solutions due to uncertainty about funding.
- **Randolph CC:** Monthly voucher requirements make the program administratively intensive and limit flexibility.

Suggested Improvement: Consider earlier allocation notifications and allow grant-style disbursements (e.g., lump-sum payments at the start of the term) to improve accessibility and ease administrative work.

3. Coordination with DSS and Eligibility Criteria

- **Mitchell CC:** Current guidelines require joint determination of need with local social services agencies. Referring students to DSS often results in their childcare being covered externally, limiting the college's ability to spend the allocated funds.
- **GTCC:** Students receiving DSS assistance are not eligible, which works in practice, but timing and coordination still complicate awards.

Suggested Improvement: Clarify the necessity of DSS referral in program guidelines and explore flexibility for colleges to independently determine eligibility when local DSS funding is unavailable or delayed.

4. Program Scope and Accessibility

- **Wayne CC & Lenoir CC:** CE students and military families are currently excluded, even if they have childcare needs.

- **All Colleges:** Many students stop submitting monthly vouchers, leading to gaps in funding utilization.

Suggested Improvement: Expand program eligibility to include CE students and military families, potentially via waivers, and consider streamlining reporting requirements to simplify administration.

5. Administrative and Operational Burdens

- Collecting monthly vouchers and managing reimbursement paperwork is time-consuming for financial aid offices (reported by Southeastern CC, Randolph CC, Alamance CC).
- Payment delays affect both students and childcare providers, complicating the use of funds within fiscal deadlines (reported by Lenoir CC, Southwestern CC).

Suggested Improvement: Treat childcare funds more like traditional grants with upfront disbursements or term-based payments, reducing administrative burden and increasing flexibility for students and providers.

6. Program Impact and Effectiveness

- Despite challenges, the grant is essential for student retention and success. Colleges report that the program significantly helps students remain in school (Wayne CC).
- Award amounts and timing adjustments, such as higher awards for students with multiple children, could enhance effectiveness and utilization.

The NC Childcare Grant Program is highly valued, but its full potential is hindered by timing, administrative requirements, and limitations on upfront funding. Suggested improvements include:

1. Allowing upfront or direct payments to providers.
2. Earlier allocation announcements.
3. Streamlining administrative requirements (e.g., voucher reporting).
4. Expanding eligibility to CE students and military families.
5. Clarifying DSS coordination requirements.

Implementing these changes would increase student access, reduce administrative burden, and improve utilization of allocated funds.

CONCLUSION

The North Carolina Community College Child Care Grant Program remains an essential component of the state's commitment to supporting student-parents in higher education. By mitigating the financial challenges associated with childcare, the program enables student-parents to maintain enrollment, persist toward degree completion, and achieve their educational and professional objectives.

This strategic investment yields benefits that extend well beyond the individual student. It reinforces family stability, strengthens the state's workforce pipeline, and contributes to the sustained economic growth and competitiveness of North Carolina. Continued support and prioritization of this program are therefore critical to advancing both educational equity and statewide prosperity.