

**STATE BOARD OF COMMUNITY COLLEGES**  
**Allocation for NC Career Coach Program**  
**FY 2025-26, 2026-27, 2027-28**

**Request:** The State Board of Community Colleges is requested to approve allocations of \$ 659,367 per year of state funds. These funds will be for a new concurrent cohort that will parallel the last three fiscal years of our current five-year grant cycle. The funds will be for salary, benefits, professional development, and advising support of Career Coaches recommended by the established NC Career Coach Advisory Committee.

**Strategic Plan Reference:**

Goal 2 Enrollment: Streamline and strengthen the pathways to community colleges and careers.

Strategy 2.3.2: Expand the use of Career Coaches to include the remaining North Carolina community colleges.

**Background:** The purpose of the NC Career Coach Program is to place community college career coaches in high schools to assist students with determining career goals and identifying community college programs that will enable students to achieve these goals.

The General Assembly appropriated funds to the NC Community College System for the implementation of the NC Career Coach program. The board of trustees of a community college and a local board of education of a local education agency (LEA) within the service area of the community college jointly apply for available funds for the NC Career Coach Program funding from the State Board of Community Colleges (See Table 1).

Effective July 1, 2019, Senate Bill 61 (Section 3.3) adjusted the matching formula (G.S. 115D- 21.5(c)(2)b) based on county tiers. Table 1 indicates the county tier ranking for each program based on the LEA county in which the coach will be serving.

Due to the success of the NC Career Coach program, some colleges have chosen to fund coaches through their local funds. These coaches are in addition to those represented through this funding allocation.

**Rationale:** G.S. 115D-21.5 requires an advisory committee, which shall include representatives from the NC Community College System, the Department of Public Instruction, the Department of Commerce, and at least three representatives of the business community, review applications and make recommendations for funding awards to the State Board of Community Colleges.

As the program staff assess the program to broaden the deployment of coaches across the state and maximize the use of funds, the following three improvements were

implemented.

- To adapt to local college hiring scales and professional development needs, colleges submitted a budget within set parameters instead of a standard allocation for each award.
- To increase the number of colleges with a grant-funded coach, the selection process was changed to (1) an allocated coach awarded to any college who chose to participate and (2) a competitively selected second coach for any college who wished to apply. (NOTE: Legislatively required matching was maintained: Tier 1 = 0%; Tier 2 = 50%; Tier 3 = 100%.)

System office staff reviewed the twelve colleges who requested an allocated coach to ensure application criteria were satisfactory. Technical consultations were provided to colleges who needed to improve their request to ensure quality programming.

The advisory committee reviewed and scored the competitive applications submitted by twelve college-LEA partnerships, ranked, and recommended the award of a new coach to four colleges and an additional coach to five colleges. There was insufficient funding to award the additional three colleges that applied for the program.

The following criteria were used for technical consultations and application reviews:

- Deployment plan for career coaches and strategy that supports effective outreach.
- Evaluation Plan focusing on the outcome of increased enrollment in, and completion of, career pathways leading to marketable job skills and/or further education.
- Economic Impact documented by local workforce needs, causes of unaddressed pipeline needs, and career coach model connection with potential pipeline with workforce needs.
- Professional Development plan including engagement between high schools, community colleges, and community workforce.
- Communication strategies, at a minimum, with high school students, high school and middle school faculty and staff, parents and guardians, and service area workforce partners.

**Table 1: Recommended Allocations**

<b>Community College</b>	<b>Region</b>	<b>Tier Ranking &amp; County</b>	<b># Coaches</b>	<b>FY 2025-2026; FY 2026-2027; FY 2027-2028</b>
Blue Ridge CC	Western	Tier 3 – Henderson	1	\$ 66,330
Guilford Technical CC	Central	Tier 2 – Guilford	1	\$ 54,079
Johnston CC	Central	Tier 3 – Johnston	1	\$ 39,075
Nash CC	Eastern	Tier 1 - Nash	1	\$ 78,758
Pitt CC	Eastern	Tier 2 - Pitt	1	\$ 57,625
Roanoke-Chowan CC	Eastern	Tier 1 - Hertford	1	\$ 78,500
Rockingham CC	Central	Tier 1 – Rockingham	1	\$ 95,000
South Piedmont CC	Central	Tier 1 – Anson	1	\$ 95,000
Wilkes CC	Western	Tier 1 - Wilkes	1	\$ 95,000
<b>9 Colleges</b>				<b>\$ 659,367</b>

**Fund Source and Availability:** March 1, 2026-June 30, 2026, FY 2026-27, and FY 2027-28 allocations are contingent upon the availability of State General Fund appropriation. Funding will be adjusted as appropriate to reflect legislative salary and benefit rate increases.

**Contact:**

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