

STATE BOARD OF COMMUNITY COLLEGES
Cooperative Innovative High School Applications

Request: The State Board of Community Colleges is asked to approve the applications for new Cooperative Innovative High Schools (CIHS) for the 2026-2027 school year. The list of CIHS applications seeking approval are indicated in the chart on the next page.

Background: During the 2011 legislative session, the General Assembly established the following criteria to define a cooperative innovative high school (G.S. 115C-238.50A):

- It has no more than 100 students per grade level.
- It partners with an institution of higher education to enable students to concurrently obtain a high school diploma and begin or complete an associate degree program, master a certificate or vocational program, or earn up to two years of college credit within five years.
- It is located on the campus of the institution of higher education, unless the governing Board specifically waives the requirement through adoption of a formal resolution.

Rationale: Cooperative Innovative High School (CIHS) applications are submitted to the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction and the State Board of Community Colleges. CIHS Applications are reviewed by the Joint Advisory Committee (JAC), which includes members from the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction, the North Carolina Community College System, the University of North Carolina General Administration, and the North Carolina Independent Colleges and Universities.

Once JAC members review each of the cooperative innovative high school applications, recommendations for application approvals are sent from the JAC to the State Board of Education. The following applications are current cooperative innovative high schools (CIHS) seeking approval for supplemental funding, which must be approved by the State Board of Education and the State Board of Community Colleges.

Contact(s):

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**JOINT ADVISORY COMMITTEE REVIEW SUMMARY 2025-2026
 COOPERATIVE INNOVATIVE HIGH SCHOOL (CIHS) APPLICATIONS**

Proposed Name of CIHS	LEA Partner	IHE Partner	Funding Request	Location Waiver Requested	JAC Recommendation
Durham Early College of Health Sciences (already open)	Durham Public Schools	Durham Technical Community College	Yes	Yes	Approve to operate with funding
The School of Inquiry and Life Sciences at Asheville (already open)	Asheville City Schools	Asheville-Buncombe Technical Community College	Yes	Yes	Approve to operate with funding

Approval process based on legislation: Section 2, Article 16 of Chapter 115C-238, Part 9

The Joint Advisory Committee recommends the two (2) Cooperative Innovative High School (CIHS) applications listed above to the State Board of Education and the State Board of Community Colleges for approval to open with funding for the 2026-2027 school year for Durham Early College of Health Sciences (DECHS) and The School of Inquiry and Life Science at Asheville (SILSA).

Note: All funding requests go to the General Assembly for allocation and final approval.