

STATE BOARD OF COMMUNITY COLLEGES

Mr. Thomas Looney, Chair

Mr. John Kane, Vice Chair

Friday, April 17, 2026

North Carolina Community College System

Dr. W. Dallas Herring State Board Room, Caswell Building

200 West Jones Street, Raleigh, North Carolina 27603

Friday, April 17, 2026

BOARD MEETING

1:00 pm

Dr. W. Dallas Herring State Board Room

- Call to Order
- Roll Call
- Ethics Awareness and Identification of Conflicts or Potential Conflicts of Interest
- Approval of the Minutes – March 20, 2026
- Approval of the Agenda

PRESIDENTIAL SEARCH COMMITTEE, Mr. Tom Looney, Chair

FOR ACTION

Presidential Profile (Attachment PSC 01)

NEW BUSINESS

BOARD MEMBER QUESTIONS/COMMENTS

DATE OF FUTURE MEETINGS

The next State Board Meeting is scheduled for Thursday, May 14, 2026, and Friday, May 15, 2026, in the Dr. W. Dallas Herring State Board Room located in the Caswell Building in Raleigh, NC. More information regarding these meetings will be communicated.

ADJOURNMENT

Questions relating to items on the Agenda should be addressed to the Office of State Board Affairs at (919) 807-6970 or by e-mail at stateboard@nccommunitycolleges.edu



NC COMMUNITY COLLEGES

CREATING SUCCESS

State Board of Community Colleges
Dr. W. Dallas Herring State Board Room, Caswell Building
200 West Jones Street, Raleigh, North Carolina
Friday, March 20, 2026, 9:00 a.m.
Meeting Minutes

CALL TO ORDER

Following proper public notification, the Chair, Mr. Tom Looney, called the State Board of Community Colleges (SBCC) Meeting to order at 9:00 a.m. He welcomed those on YouTube and thanked them for their interest in the community college system and encouraged them to join on a monthly basis.

The Board began with the monthly Military Engagement segment with

- Dr. Lisa Chapman President, Central Carolina Community College
- Retired Master Sergeant, Jamon Etchesen, Veteran Upward Bound Recruiter
- Ms. Meghan Reece Brown, VP of Advancement and Operations
- Mr. Kevin Pearson, Dean of College Access

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Retired Master Sergeant, Jamin Etchison.

MILITARY ENGAGEMENT UPDATE

Dr. Lisa Chapman provided a Military Engagement Update, expressing appreciation to the Board for dedicating time to highlight military engagement efforts. She noted the college's unique geographic position serving Chatham, Harnett, and Lee counties, located near Fort Bragg and the Research Triangle, which results in a significant population of military-affiliated families within the service area. Dr. Chapman emphasized the importance of recognizing the service and sacrifice of military members and their families, as well as their value as a critical talent pipeline for the state.

Dr. Chapman outlined that the college's military initiatives align with its three strategic pillars: *first-class opportunity*, *leading workforce partner*, and *employer of choice*. She then introduced Master Sergeant Jamin Etchison (Ret.), highlighting his extensive military background, including 20 years of service, global deployments, and numerous honors and awards. Dr. Chapman noted his transition to Central Carolina Community College, where he now supports veteran-focused programming.

Master Sergeant Etchison addressed the Board and elaborated on the college's efforts under the three strategic pillars:

- **First-Class Opportunity:** The college provides comprehensive academic and personal support to military-affiliated students through initiatives such as the Veterans Upward Bound program, a federally funded grant supporting the transition from military service to higher education. Services include academic planning, tutoring, mentoring, and wellness support. Additionally, the Military Affiliated Resource Center (MARC) serves as a centralized hub for veterans, active-duty service members, reservists, and their families.
- **Leading Workforce Partner:** Through partnerships, including collaboration with the North Carolina Biotechnology Center, the college offers workforce training programs such as the Military Outreach and Veterans Engagement (MOVE) program. These initiatives connect military-affiliated students to careers in life sciences and other high-demand fields, including advanced manufacturing, information technology, healthcare, skilled trades, and public safety.
- **Employer of Choice:** The college demonstrates its commitment to hiring and supporting veterans and military spouses by fostering a workplace culture that values leadership, service, and resilience. Policies such as flexible work arrangements are designed to address the unique needs of military families. The college also recognizes military-affiliated employees through events and programming, including Veterans Day celebrations.

In closing, Master Sergeant Etchison reaffirmed the college's commitment to supporting military-affiliated students and employees and ensuring their success through continued program development and institutional support.

Dr. Chapman concluded the presentation by emphasizing the importance of collaboration among community colleges in supporting military initiatives and acknowledged the leadership and contributions of staff involved in sustaining programs such as Veterans Upward Bound.

Board members expressed appreciation for the presentation and for the service of military personnel. Additional remarks highlighted the Board's ongoing commitment to supporting the armed forces through both policy and action, including participation in military-related events and recognition of community college students receiving honors for their service and achievements.

SPECIAL CONTRIBUTION PRESENTATION - Endowment for Student Experience and Innovation

The Board received a presentation regarding a special contribution to establish an Endowment for Student Experience and Innovation. Chair Looney announced the creation of the endowment, emphasizing a commitment to ensuring that the system's 58 colleges deliver a world-class, student-centered experience. He noted that his professional background in the technology sector reinforced the importance of a customer-driven approach and highlighted the need for higher education to meet students' expectations for fast, seamless, and personalized services in a digital-first environment.

Chair Looney stated that the endowment will support scalable technology initiatives designed to enhance the entire student journey, from recruitment through career placement. Priority areas for funding include personalized communications through customer relationship management (CRM) tools, seamless learning systems, unified data platforms, student engagement strategies, and innovation microgrants. He further noted that a key component of the initiative is the establishment of

a Student Experience Council to ensure that student voices inform funding priorities and decision-making. The Chair acknowledged the leadership and collaboration of partners who contributed to the development of the initiative and invited the System President to provide additional details.

President Cox expressed appreciation for the Chair and his family's \$100,000 leadership gift, describing it as a transformative investment and the beginning of a strengthened partnership between the System Office and the Foundation. He emphasized that the initiative reflects an ongoing shift toward a student-centered, technology-forward model of engagement and decision-making.

President Cox outlined that the System Office will facilitate the creation of the Student Experience Council, to be managed by the Associate Vice President of Student Services and the State Director of Student Life. The Council will collaborate with the System's transformation efforts to ensure that student perspectives inform programs, policies, and funding priorities. The Council will conduct research, gather student feedback, and present recommendations annually to the State Board.

The Board then heard remarks from the State Student Government Association President, Mr. Bannock Scott, who was joined by fellow student leaders. Mr. Bannock Scott emphasized that student success extends beyond the classroom and includes access to clear pathways, effective advising, and modern technology. He noted that the endowment represents a significant step toward improving the overall student experience and ensuring that students play an active role in shaping system-wide decisions. He highlighted the importance of the Student Experience Council as a mechanism for elevating student voices and fostering innovation that directly impacts the student journey.

The Foundation Executive Director, Ms. Katie Loovis, provided an overview of next steps, expressing appreciation for the Chair's leadership gift and describing it as a catalytic investment. She indicated that the Foundation will work collaboratively with the System Office to grow the endowment to \$1 million, ensuring long-term sustainability and positioning North Carolina as a national leader in student experience within higher education. She also noted that outreach efforts to Board and Foundation members would begin, including opportunities to participate in a broader campaign supporting the initiative.

In closing remarks, Chair Looney reiterated his vision for integrating student feedback into system decision-making and highlighted the potential for partnerships with industry to further enhance student engagement and career connections. He encouraged continued investment and participation in initiatives that support student success.

The Board expressed appreciation for the presentation, the generous contribution, and the focus on advancing a student-centered approach across the community college system.

ROLL CALL

Ms. Amy Mast called the roll, and the following members were present

| | | |
|--|---|----------------------|
| Mr. Tom Looney (Chair) | Farley (Mr. Chris Bullard, designee) | Dr. Dale McInnis |
| Mr. John Kane (Vice Chair) | Ms. Stacy Griffin* | Mr. Robert Moore |
| Hon. Chaz Beasley* | Lt. Gov. Rachel Hunt | Mr. Scott Ottman |
| State Treasurer Brad Briner (Mr. Eric Naisbitt, designee) | Mr. Geoffrey Lang | The Hon. David Price |
| Ms. Paula Benson | Dr. David Lowry | Mr. Bannock Scott |
| Ms. Lisa Estep | Mr. Chris Lumsden | Mr. Ray Trapp |
| Labor Commissioner Luke | Mr. Bill McBrayer | Ms. Sarah West |
| | | Mr. Terry Yearg |

*Attended Via Zoom

Absent: Hon. Sam Searcy

Ms. Mast confirmed that a quorum was present.

ETHICS AWARENESS AND IDENTIFICATION OF CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

Ms. Jonnell Carpenter read the ethics statement and reminded all members of their duty to monitor conflicts of interest. No conflicts were noted.

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

Chair Looney asked for a motion to approve the minutes from February 20, 2026.

A motion to approve the minutes was made by Mr. McBrayer and seconded by Mr. Moore. The minutes were approved unanimously.

APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

Chair Looney polled committee chairs (or vice chairs) for any proposed changes to the agenda.

- Executive Committee Meeting (Mr. John Kane, Vice Chair): added one reporting item
- Transformation Committee (Mr. Scott Ottman): No changes
- Strategic Planning Committee (Dr. Dale McInnis): No changes
- Finance Committee: (Ms. Lisa Estep): No changes
- Accountability and Audit Committee (Mr. Geoffrey Lang): No changes
- Programs and Student Success Committee (Ms. Sarah West): No changes
- State Board Policy and Governance (Ms. Lisa Estep): No changes
- Personnel Committee (Mr. Bill McBrayer): Two items for closed session
- State Board Policy and Governance Committee (Hon. Chaz. Beasley): No changes

A motion to approve the agenda was made by Mr. McBrayer and seconded by Mr. Moore. The agenda was approved unanimously.

APPROVAL OF THE CONSENT AGENDA

The consent agenda was presented with no questions or discussion. A motion to approve the consent agenda was made by Mr. McBrayer and seconded by Mr. Moore. The consent agenda was approved unanimously.

Introduction of Mayland Community College President: Dr. Aron Gabriel.

Chair Looney invited Mr. Bryan Peterson, Chair of the Mayland Community College Board of Trustees, to present the introduction of Dr. Aron Gabriel.

Mr. Peterson provided an overview of the presidential search process, noting that it was comprehensive and thorough following the retirement of the previous president, Dr. John Boyd. He expressed appreciation for Dr. Boyd's leadership and service to the institution. Mr. Peterson then introduced Dr. Aron Gabriel as the new President, effective January.

Mr. Peterson highlighted Dr. Gabriel's nearly 30 years of experience in public education and leadership, including his most recent role as Superintendent of Newton-Conover City Schools. He noted that under Dr. Gabriel's leadership, the district achieved recognition as one of a select number in North Carolina without any schools receiving a D or F designation. Mr. Peterson further outlined Dr. Gabriel's experience in school construction and renovation, workforce development, and student support initiatives, as well as his recognition as a regional superintendent of the year and a state finalist. He also noted Dr. Gabriel's academic credentials and commitment to teamwork, collaboration, and community engagement.

Mr. Peterson expressed confidence in Dr. Gabriel's leadership, particularly as the college and region continue to recover and rebuild from recent challenges and emphasized the importance of his collaboration within the North Carolina Community College System.

Dr. Gabriel addressed the Board and expressed his gratitude for the opportunity to serve as President. He shared that while the role was not initially anticipated, he considers it a significant honor. He acknowledged the leadership of his predecessor and the impact of prior efforts on economic development in the region.

Dr. Gabriel outlined his early priorities as President, emphasizing a focus on people, processes, programs, and organizational culture. He stressed that the work of community colleges is fundamentally centered on serving people and noted his efforts to engage directly with faculty, staff, and community members to better understand the institution and its role within the region.

He further discussed his vision for the college as a resource that helps individuals achieve their goals, highlighting the importance of access, workforce training, and community impact. Dr. Gabriel shared examples illustrating the critical role community colleges and their graduates play in supporting communities, particularly during times of need and recovery.

Dr. Gabriel extended an invitation to Board members to visit Mayland Community College and the surrounding region to further experience its programs and community partnerships firsthand. Board members congratulated Dr. Gabriel on his appointment and welcomed him to the North Carolina Community College System, expressing support for his leadership.

REPORTS

NC Association of Community College Presidents (NCAACP), Dr. Amanda Lee, President of Bladen Community College and NCAACP President

Dr. Amanda Lee, President of the Presidents' Association, provided an update on behalf of the association. She expressed appreciation for the strong partnership between the State Board and the community colleges and highlighted the upcoming success of Community College Day, noting a significant increase in participation from 30 colleges in the previous year to 48 colleges this year.

Dr. Lee reported that colleges are preparing for upcoming events, including Community College Day and various student recognition activities during the spring semester. She noted that the spring term is a particularly active period, with institutions recognizing student achievements through campus events, the Pinnacle Awards, and the Bob Scott Award, which will be presented at the Student Government Association conference.

Dr. Lee emphasized that the system continues to demonstrate strong performance, including positive enrollment trends, successful workforce preparation efforts, and ongoing innovation across colleges. She noted alignment between the Presidents' Association and the State Board on strategic priorities, including efforts to serve "opportunity youth," defined as individuals not currently engaged in education or employment.

She further reported that college presidents have been actively engaged in system initiatives, including participation in surveys and interviews related to the presidential search process, and expressed appreciation for the opportunity to provide input.

Dr. Lee identified key challenges facing colleges, including the rise in fraudulent student applications and the continued implementation of the enterprise resource planning (ERP) system. She noted that collaboration with the System Office has been instrumental in addressing these issues effectively. In discussing legislative priorities, Dr. Lee highlighted ongoing advocacy efforts related to Propel NC and noted increased engagement with elected officials at both the state and local levels. She also emphasized the importance of addressing and correcting misconceptions about collaboration within the system, affirming that the State Board, System Office, and local colleges are working together effectively and cohesively.

Dr. Lee expressed appreciation to Dr. Cox for ensuring community college representation on the Governor's Blue Ribbon Commission and concluded by thanking the Board for its leadership and support of the system.

The Chair commended Dr. Lee for her leadership and noted the strong performance of institutions, including significant enrollment growth at certain colleges.

NC Association of Community College Trustees (NCACCT), Mr. Gene Rees, Trustee, Surry Community College and NCACCT Chair

Mr. Gene Rees, Chair of the Trustees Association, provided an update on behalf of the trustees. Mr. Rees expressed appreciation for the collaboration among the State Board, System Office, presidents, and trustees, noting that the system is operating cohesively and effectively. He congratulated Dr. Aron Gabriel on his appointment as President of Mayland Community College and expressed support from the trustees.

Mr. Rees reported on recent and upcoming Trustees Association activities, including an executive board meeting focused on the 2026 work plan. He noted participation from state legislative leaders, who recognized the critical role of the community college system in supporting North Carolina's economic success. He announced the upcoming Law/Legislative Seminar, to be held April 22–24, 2026 and provided an overview of the agenda, which will include sessions on economic development, legal issues, accreditation updates, and new trustee training. He invited State Board members to attend and participate.

Mr. Rees also reported on trustee engagement in the presidential search process, including participation in discussions with the search firm and completion of questionnaires to inform the presidential profile. He encouraged increased participation from local board chairs to ensure broad input. In closing, Mr. Rees expressed appreciation for the leadership of the State Board and the collaborative efforts that contribute to the system's success.

Chair Looney thanked Mr. Rees for his leadership and service, acknowledging the positive impact of the Trustees Association and the strong partnership across the system.

NC Comprehensive Community College Student Government Association (N4CSGA), Mr. Bannock Scott, President

Mr. Bannock Scott, N4CSGA President, provided an update to the Board, expressing appreciation for the Chair's recent \$100,000 contribution to support students and acknowledging the Board's continued commitment to student success.

The report included updates on N4CSGA initiatives, committee activities, and upcoming events. The Campus Activities Committee is working to strengthen collaboration between local Student Government Associations and campus athletics programs to improve coordination and alignment of student activity resources. Efforts are also underway to enhance the accessibility and effectiveness of the N4CSGA website and to advance childcare initiatives as part of the organization's strategic priorities.

Mr. Scott reported on recent division meetings, noting participation from students, advisors, and guests representing multiple institutions across the state. Feedback indicated that participants found the sessions informative, particularly in areas related to leadership development, governance processes, and student engagement at the local level. Appreciation was expressed to the colleges that hosted these meetings and to student leaders who contributed to their success.

The Board was informed of upcoming events, including the annual N4CSGA conference and the rescheduled Legislative Assembly at the General Assembly. The conference will include workshops, keynote speakers, and student leadership development opportunities, as well as the presentation of the Bob Scott Award in collaboration with the Presidents' Association.

The N4CSGA President introduced the N4CSGA Vice President, Ms. Alexis Odell, who shared remarks on the value of student leadership experiences, emphasizing the importance of mentorship, engagement with professionals, and opportunities for students to connect with leaders and peers. She highlighted the impact of these experiences on student growth and encouraged continued Board participation in student events.

Board members provided feedback and encouraged coordination of student advocacy events with broader system initiatives to maximize engagement and impact. A suggestion was also made to explore opportunities for maintaining connections with former N4CSGA leaders to support mentorship and alumni engagement efforts.

In response, it was noted that efforts are underway to establish an N4CSGA alumni network to maintain engagement with former student leaders and involve them in ongoing initiatives.

The Board expressed appreciation for the report and commended the student leaders for their engagement, leadership, and contributions to the system.

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE, Mr. Tom Looney, Chair

Mr. Tom Looney provided an update on the activities of the Executive Committee, noting that the committee has been established to enhance efficiency, accelerate decision-making, and improve coordination across Board activities. He reported that the committee has held two meetings to date and emphasized its role in advancing initiatives at a faster pace, replacing the previous transformation meeting structure while working in alignment with the Transformation Committee.

Mr. Looney highlighted that the Executive Committee is designed to support timely execution of priorities and to facilitate more focused and productive Board discussions. He expressed appreciation to committee members and committee chairs for their participation and contributions, noting the value of the robust discussions held during recent meetings.

Dr. Dale McInnis expressed support for the establishment of the Executive Committee, noting that it provides a more nimble structure to prepare items for full Board consideration and enhances overall effectiveness.

FOR ACTION

SBCC Vice Chair, Mr. John Kane, presented one item for action, recommending adoption of the committee charter. On behalf of the Executive Committee, Mr. Kane made a motion to approve the Executive Committee Charter.

The motion was seconded and unanimously approved by the Board.

TRANSFORMATION COMMITTEE, Mr. Scott Ottman, Chair

FOR INFORMATION

Enterprise Resource Planning Modernization Update (Attachment TC01)

Mr. Ottman provided the Transformation Committee report and began by expressing appreciation to system leadership, including Dr. Cox, Dr. Price, Dr. Merritt, Dr. Schneider, and their respective teams, as well as institutional partners and CIOs from the pilot colleges, for their collaborative efforts and continued momentum in advancing system transformation initiatives. He emphasized that transformation is a collective effort and credited the progress made to strong teamwork across the system.

Mr. Ottman reported significant progress on key system initiatives. He noted that Dr. Price and his team successfully reconciled the February financials within the new financial system, marking a major milestone. The committee anticipates deployment of the new financial solution at the start of the new fiscal year on July 1, 2026.

An update was also provided on data and technology initiatives. Dr. Schneider and his team have continued development efforts related to the data warehouse, with progress aligning toward a potential July deployment in coordination with the financial system rollout. Mr. Ottman noted that achieving concurrent deployment of these systems would represent substantial progress for the system.

Regarding the common course library, Mr. Ottman indicated that this remains a critical component of the transformation effort. The team is working toward a target of having the system in production by the end of June to support institutional scheduling needs. Further planning updates are expected.

Customer Relationship Management Update (Attachment TC02)

Mr. Ottman also reported that the committee discussed the implementation of a Customer Relationship Management (CRM) system. He emphasized the importance of deploying a unified CRM solution across all colleges to ensure consistency in functionality and capability.

As next steps, the committee will return at the May meeting with:

- A summary of existing CRM-related contracts across the system;
- A proposed business plan; and
- A preliminary deployment strategy aligned with other systemwide technology implementations.

Mr. Ottman concluded by reiterating appreciation for the collective efforts of all contributors and commended the significant progress achieved to date.

Board members expressed appreciation for the progress reported and commended staff and leadership for the successful financial reconciliation and continued advancement of transformation initiatives.

STRATEGIC PLANNING COMMITTEE, Dr. Dale McInnis, Chair

FOR INFORMATION

2022-26 System Strategic Plan Update (PLAN 01)

Dr. McInnis presented the Strategic Planning Committee report and expressed appreciation to system staff for their extensive efforts in preparing a comprehensive presentation on Goal Two of the 2022–2026 Strategic Plan, which focuses on access and enrollment.

Dr. McInnis reported that the committee received an informational presentation highlighting systemwide enrollment trends and institutional progress. The presentation examined data beginning with the pre-pandemic baseline year and traced the evolution of community colleges through and beyond the COVID-19 pandemic. He noted that colleges across the system demonstrated adaptability, innovation, and responsiveness to local community needs, resulting in sustained growth and improved service delivery.

The report emphasized that institutions have developed individualized strategies for success based on their respective service areas. Key areas of growth included expansion of dual enrollment opportunities, increased online learning capacity, and programmatic adjustments aligned with workforce and industry demands. While the overall distribution among curriculum, continuing education, and basic skills programs remained relatively consistent, significant changes have occurred within program offerings to better meet local needs.

Dr. McInnis highlighted that the system has experienced substantial enrollment growth, exceeding national trends. Curriculum enrollment has increased approximately 12 percent compared to a national average of approximately 3 percent. When including all program areas, total student growth is significantly higher. He noted that this growth reflects both increased access and strong student success outcomes, including high performance among transfer students.

The committee also discussed emerging challenges associated with continued growth. Dr. McInnis indicated that the system is approaching a capacity threshold, with current growth levels unlikely to be sustainable without additional resources. He reported that a significant enrollment funding request has been submitted, reflecting growth across the majority of colleges.

Additionally, Dr. McInnis emphasized the importance of continued investment in workforce development initiatives and system infrastructure, including tools and systems such as CRM and ERP, to support future growth and student success. He noted that initiatives aimed at expanding access to high-demand, high-wage career pathways remain a priority.

During discussion, members addressed the relationship between population growth and enrollment increases. It was noted that while North Carolina has experienced population growth, it is uneven across regions, with some areas experiencing rapid growth and others remaining stable or declining. Despite these differences, community colleges continue to play a critical role in serving their local communities.

Dr. McInnis concluded by encouraging board members to utilize the data presented as a resource in the development of future strategic planning efforts.

Board members commended Dr. McInnis for the thorough and data-driven presentation and expressed appreciation for the insights provided to support ongoing strategic planning and decision-making.

The Finance Committee, Ms. Lisa Estep, Chair

FOR ACTION

Service Agreement for Quality Acceptance Inspector (Attachment FC 01)

Ms. Estep reported that the committee reviewed a proposed three-year service agreement with Wake Technical Community College in an amount not to exceed \$387,426. Under the agreement, Wake Tech will provide a quality acceptance inspector responsible for conducting quality acceptance inspections on assets across all 58 community colleges, in accordance with applicable state statute. Upon recommendation from the Finance Committee, a motion was made and seconded to approve the service agreement. The motion carried unanimously.

State Board Reserve Fund Request – Residency Licensure (Attachment FC 02)

Ms. Estep presented a request for \$19,000 in State Board Reserve funds to support the Residency Licensure project. The funds will be allocated to Wayne Community College, which will coordinate the initiative in partnership with the System Office and subject matter experts from multiple colleges. The project will support the development of 18 new education courses, along with instructor professional development, with the goal of creating statewide course content to prepare future educators. Upon recommendation from the committee, a motion was made and seconded to approve the request. The motion carried unanimously.

State Board Reserve Fund Request – ACA 122 (Attachment FC 03)

The committee reviewed a request for \$10,000 in State Board Reserve funds to support the Statewide Course Resource Project for ACA 122 (Career and Transfer Success). Funds will be allocated to Rowan-Cabarrus Community College to develop shared instructional resources that will be housed in the North Carolina Community College System’s Open Educational Resources platform and made publicly accessible. The revised ACA 122 course is scheduled for implementation in Fall 2026. Upon recommendation from the committee, a motion was made and seconded to approve the request. The motion carried unanimously.

Allocation for NC Career Coach Program (Attachment FC 04)

Ms. Estep reported on a proposed allocation of approximately \$659,000 to support the North Carolina Career Coach Program over a three-year period. This funding will expand career coach positions to nine additional colleges, prioritizing institutions that do not currently have such resources. Upon approval, the program will serve 49 colleges statewide. The initiative, which began as a pilot in 2015, continues to support student career exploration and workforce readiness. A motion to approve the allocation was made, seconded, and carried unanimously.

Contract for College Cybersecurity Awareness Training (Attachment FC 05)

The committee reviewed a proposed three-year contract, not to exceed \$414,000, for cybersecurity awareness training services for the System Office and all 58 community colleges. The training will ensure compliance with federal and state requirements and will include required topics such as FERPA and HIPAA. Upon recommendation from the committee, a motion was made and seconded to approve the contract. The motion carried unanimously.

FOR INFORMATION

Estimated Receipts – February 2026 (Attachment FC 08)

Ms. Estep stated that the report on estimated receipts for February 2026 was provided to the committee for informational purposes.

Ms. Estep concluded her report by noting the committee’s intent to revisit financial aid programs in greater detail at a future meeting to enhance understanding of available student supports.

ACCOUNTABILITY AND AUDIT COMMITTEE, Mr. Geoffrey Lang, Chair

FOR INFORMATION

Mr. Geoffrey Lang, Chair of the Accountability and Audit Committee, presented the Committee’s report, noting that the Committee reviewed three informational items.

Cybersecurity Update (Attachment AUD 01)

The Committee received an update on systemwide cybersecurity efforts by Mr. Stephen Reeves, including ongoing grant programs, initiatives addressing fraudulent applications, and required cybersecurity training across the system. Staff reported continued progress in strengthening security measures and increasing awareness to mitigate risks.

College Compliance Reviews – Four-Year Summary (Attachment AUD 02)

An overview of compliance reviews was presented by Ms. Amanda Tolar, highlighting that ten colleges have completed reviews during the current year. Overall, compliance activities remain on track. While a limited number of coaching letters were issued, no significant findings were reported, and institutions continue to demonstrate adherence to required standards.

Internal 2025–2026 Audit Plan Update (Attachment AUD 03)

Mr. David King reviewed the status of the internal audit plan for fiscal years 2025–2026. All audit activities were reported as either completed, in progress, or scheduled as planned. The audit function continues to operate effectively, with no major concerns identified.

Mr. Lang concluded that the system remains in strong standing with respect to accountability, compliance, and audit functions.

PROGRAMS AND STUDENT SUCCESS COMMITTEE, Ms. Sarah West, Chair

FOR FUTURE ACTION

Curriculum Program Application (Attachment PROG 01):

Ms. Sarah West reviewed a curriculum program application submitted for future consideration. The proposed program, presented by Bladen Community College, seeks to establish an Aviation Management and Career Pilot Technology program. The program is designed to equip students with technical knowledge, leadership skills, and operational expertise necessary for careers in airport operations, aviation administration, logistics, and related fields. The Committee noted the significant economic impact of the aviation industry in North Carolina and the strategic location of the college between regional airports, as well as the opportunity to support transitioning military service members. This item was presented for future action.

FOR ACTION

Legislative Report for Short-Term Workforce Development Grant Program (Attachment PROG 02):

Ms. West reviewed the legislative report for the Short-Term Workforce Development Grant Program, which provides financial assistance to students pursuing short-term, noncredit workforce credentials aligned with state labor market priorities. The program, established through a collaborative effort and funded with recurring state support, has expanded access to workforce training opportunities. The report highlighted program outcomes, including student participation and institutional utilization. Following discussion, the Committee recommended approval, and the Board approved the item.

Legislative Report for Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor Pilot Program (Attachment PROG 03):

Ms. West reviewed the legislative report for the Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor Pilot Program, also known as “Bridge to Success.” This initiative places vocational rehabilitation counselors on community college campuses to support students with intellectual and developmental disabilities through counseling, employment planning, and support services. The report outlined participation data, job placement outcomes, and implementation challenges, including staffing constraints. The Committee discussed opportunities for strengthening program effectiveness and coordination with existing initiatives. The Committee recommended approval, and the Board approved the item.

Cooperative Innovative High School Applications (Attachment PROG 04):

Ms. West reviewed applications from Durham Technical Community College and Asheville-Buncombe Technical Community College for funding of Cooperative Innovative High School programs. These programs, which have already been established, were reviewed and approved by the Joint Advisory Committee. The Durham Technical proposal includes a partnership with local public schools and industry stakeholders to enhance workforce pathways. The Committee recommended approval, and the Board approved the item.

New Curriculum Prefix – Propel NC Workforce Sector Funding Model Recommendation (Attachment PROG 05):

Ms. West reviewed a recommendation to establish a new curriculum prefix in Microelectronics Manufacturing (MEM) to support workforce development in the semiconductor industry. The proposed prefix will provide a standardized framework for course offerings aligned with emerging industry needs and is connected to broader statewide and federal initiatives supporting semiconductor research and workforce training. The Committee recommended approval, and the Board approved the item.

FOR INFORMATION

Approved Curriculum Program Applications (Attachment PROG 09):

Ms. West reviewed a report of curriculum program applications that have been approved through established processes.

Approved Curriculum Program Terminations (Attachment PROG 10):

Ms. West reviewed a report of curriculum program terminations that have been approved through established processes.

PERSONNEL COMMITTEE, Mr. Bill McBrayer, Chair

CLOSED SESSION

Mr. McBrayer made a motion to enter Closed Session pursuant to G.S. § 143-318.11(a)(1) and (a)(6). to prevent the disclosure of information that is confidential and privileged in accordance with the general statute 115D-27 and consider the qualifications, competence, performance, character, and fitness of individual public employees and prospective public employees. The motion to go into closed session was seconded and the Board went into closed session at 3:53 p.m.

OPEN SESSION

After returning to open session, Mr. McBrayer reported on the two items reviewed during closed session and recommended the following:

- Associate Vice President of College Finance and Operations, new hire Mr. Josh Lagunas, to begin employment on April 6, 2026.
- Contract Extension for Dr. Laura Leatherwood as President of Blue Ridge Community College

Chair Looney stated the Personnel Committee recommended the approval of the two items and noted that these items were discussed during closed session. The motion passed unanimously.

State Board Policy and Governance Committee, Honorable Chaz Beasley, Chair

FOR ACTION

2B SBCC 500.4 State Board of Proprietary Schools Recommendation to SBCC (Attachment SBPG 01):

Hon. Beasley reviewed a recommendation from the State Board of Proprietary Schools regarding compliance findings related to a hands-on dental assistant training program. An investigation identified three areas of non-compliance, including failure to provide required student refunds, the presentation of false or misleading information related to licensure approval, and failure to provide accurate and required information in the institution's catalog and enrollment agreement. The Committee was informed that all identified issues have been addressed and that all parties are in agreement with the recommended course of action.

The State Board of Proprietary Schools unanimously recommended a 30-day suspension. The Policy and Governance Committee discussed the matter and voted to support the recommendation. Upon a motion duly made and seconded, the Board approved the adoption of Item SBPG 01 as presented. The motion carried.

Chair Beasley also reminded Board members of the requirement to complete and submit Statements of Economic Interest in accordance with state ethics laws by the April 15 deadline.

PRESIDENT REPORT

Dr. Cox provided the President's Report and opened by welcoming Board members, guests, and partners attending both in person and virtually. He expressed appreciation to system partners, including community college presidents, representatives of the Trustees Association, and other stakeholders for their continued engagement and support.

Dr. Cox invited Mr. Alex Fagg to provide an update regarding system advocacy efforts and initiatives. An overview was provided on PropelNC, including its focus on increasing system capacity, aligning workforce outcomes, and supporting enrollment growth. It was noted that a draft planning document is being refined, with additional data and projections to be incorporated. Board members were encouraged to provide feedback.

Mr. Alex Fagg also provided an update on legislative advocacy efforts in advance of the upcoming short session, including ongoing communication of system priorities. Additionally, preparations are underway for Community College Day, scheduled for May 6, with strong participation anticipated from colleges across the system.

Dr. Cox expressed appreciation for collaboration among colleges, trustees, and Board members in advancing legislative priorities and system initiatives.

Dr. Cox recognized Chair Looney and Ms. Looney for a generous \$100,000 contribution to support initiatives centered on elevating the student voice in system decision-making. He announced that additional major funding awards, totaling approximately \$6 million, will be formally presented at a future meeting.

Dr. Cox highlighted a regional initiative in Western North Carolina, "Good Jobs WNC," developed in partnership with philanthropic organizations to support workforce development and economic recovery in communities impacted by Hurricane Helene. The initiative includes collaboration among multiple community colleges and focuses on expanding access to high-demand career pathways. He noted that this effort may serve as a model for broader system implementation.

Dr. Cox also reported on participation in a national conference focused on student success and institutional advancement, where system representatives engaged with national partners and funders to strengthen relationships and highlight North Carolina's work.

He further noted the continued success of the annual convening between K-12 superintendents and community college presidents, emphasizing the importance of strengthening cross-sector partnerships to support student success. Dr. Cox shared remarks reflecting on the importance of mental health awareness, encouraging continued focus on supporting the well-being of students, faculty, and staff across the system.

He concluded his report by sharing a student success story from Nash Community College, illustrating the transformative impact of the community college system in supporting student achievement and career advancement.

PRESIDENTIAL SEARCH UPDATE

Chair Looney provided an update on the Presidential Search process, noting that the search was launched approximately two to three months prior with a commitment to a thoughtful, inclusive, and disciplined approach. He emphasized that the process is focused on ensuring stability, accelerating modernization, and strengthening partnerships with business, communities, and state leadership.

Chair Looney reported that he and Co-Chair Mr. John Kane have conducted numerous one-on-one stakeholder meetings to gather feedback. He noted two consistent themes emerging from these discussions: (1) strong statewide support for the community college system and recognition of the importance of the presidential role, and (2) appreciation from stakeholders for the opportunity to provide input into the process. Mr. Kane added that the level of enthusiasm and engagement has been significant, with discussions often exceeding scheduled timeframes and demonstrating the importance of the system to the state's workforce and economic leadership.

Chair Looney reviewed the overall search timeline, noting that the process remains on track. He stated that the presidential profile will be presented to the Board for approval at a meeting on April 17, 2026. Following approval, the interview process will begin in late April and continue into May, with the goal of identifying finalists in June. He noted that onboarding of the selected candidate is now scheduled to occur in the July-August 2026 timeframe to accommodate transition considerations.

Chair Looney further reported on the extensive stakeholder engagement underway, including surveys, focus groups, and individual meetings. To date, over 1300 stakeholder contacts have been made, including State Board members, faculty and staff, system office personnel, college presidents, trustees, philanthropic partners, and other key stakeholders. Additional outreach efforts will include business and industry representatives, apprenticeship partners, and students, as well as a public-facing website to gather broader input.

The Board was informed that the search is being supported by external partners, including a search firm assisting with candidate recruitment and stakeholder analysis, a marketing firm supporting development of the presidential profile, and a public relations firm to assist with messaging and outreach. Chair Looney emphasized that the process is being managed with a high level of rigor and adherence to established timelines and budget.

Dr. Gold provided additional detail regarding next steps, noting that the Search Committee will review the presidential profile and preliminary survey results prior to the April 17 meeting. The Committee will then make a recommendation to the full Board for approval.

Chair Looney concluded by reiterating his commitment to conducting a comprehensive and transparent search process designed to identify the most qualified candidate and position the system for continued success.

NEW BUSINESS

2026 NC Community Colleges Awards Dinner & Celebration – April 15, 2026 (5:30pm-8:30pm) at the Angus Barn Pavilion

Ms. Amy Mast provided an update on the upcoming 2026 NC Community Colleges Awards Dinner &

Celebration, noting that preparations are well underway and the event is coming together successfully. She reported that six community colleges will participate by showcasing student demonstrations and displays, providing attendees with an opportunity to experience the breadth of student talent and program offerings across the system.

Ms. Mast highlighted several planned features, including interactive exhibits, student performances, and demonstrations representing various academic and workforce programs. She emphasized that the event is designed to be an engaging and dynamic experience that brings the work of the community colleges to life for attendees.

Ms. Mast announced that the awards ceremony is scheduled for Wednesday, April 15, 2026 from 5:30pm-8:30pm at the Angus Barn Pavilion. The event will recognize ten award categories, including students, faculty, staff, college presidents, and business and workforce development partners.

Ms. Mast thanked Dr. Amanda Lee and Ms. Ashely Blizzard. She noted strong collaboration with the Presidents' Association and expressed appreciation for their support in coordinating college participation and attendance from Presidents. Ms. Mast thanked the Presidents of community colleges that will be participating in the Awards Event with college displays and student music, including Carteret Community College, Fayetteville Tech Community College, Haywood Community College, Johnston Community College, Southwestern Community College, and Wake Tech Community College. Ms. Mast also thanked Major General Todd Hunt with the North Carolina National Guard and the NC Trucking Association for their participation in the Awards Event as well.

Ms. Mast thanked the Award Event sponsors, including Duke Energy as the presenting sponsor, and recognized additional contributions from corporate and industry partners. She reported that attendance capacity has been reached, with a waitlist in place, and encouraged Board members to submit RSVPs promptly to ensure accurate planning.

Chair Looney commended the planning efforts and emphasized the significance of the event in showcasing the impact of the community college system and its partnerships statewide.

Student Government Association Conference Invitation

Mr. Bannock Scott provided additional information regarding the upcoming North Carolina Comprehensive Community College Student Government Association (N4CSGA) Conference, scheduled for April 10–12, 2026 at the Raleigh Marriott Crabtree Valley. He extended an invitation to Board members to attend and participate.

Mr. Scott highlighted opportunities for engagement, including a mentor luncheon, workshops, and general session presentations. He noted that the conference theme focuses on empowering student voices and fostering leadership development. Additional details regarding participation and scheduling will be shared with Board members.

Closing Remarks and Adjournment

Chair Looney reminded Board members that there will be no regular meetings in April or June and encouraged full attendance at the May meeting, which will include a recognition event honoring Dr. Cox for his service and contributions to the system.

Mr. Bannock Scott informed the Board that he will be unable to attend the May meeting due to his graduation and noted that the current meeting would be his last in-person meeting. Chair Looney and members of the Board expressed appreciation for Mr. Scott's service and contributions.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.

DATE OF FUTURE MEETINGS

The next State Board Meeting will be held on Thursday, May 14, 2026, and Friday, May 15, 2026, in the State Board Room, Caswell Building, located in Raleigh, NC.

ADJOURNMENT

Chair Looney adjourned the meeting at 12:00 p.m.

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED BY:

APPROVED BY:

Dr. Jeff Cox, System President

Mr. Thomas Looney, Chair

The Most Important Job in North Carolina

Selecting the Next President/CEO of the NC Community College System

North Carolina leads the nation in business and economic growth. The North Carolina Community College System drives that success by developing the skilled workforce behind it.

The next President/CEO will lead this work, expanding opportunity for individuals and strengthening the state's economy.



Voices Across the State

“North Carolina’s business community doesn’t just benefit from a strong community college system – we depend on it. The talent pipeline that runs through our 58 community colleges allows companies to grow here, stay here, and keep choosing North Carolina when they have options everywhere else.”

– Gary Salamido, President and CEO, NC Chamber

“As a former president of the System, I know there is tremendous opportunity for a thoughtful, focused leader to harness our 58 extraordinary community colleges in a way that delivers for all North Carolinians.”

– Peter Hans, President, University of North Carolina System

“The next North Carolina community college system president will be assuming a critical role at a pivotal time. Our Great 58 community colleges have accomplished extraordinary things, student focused innovations are unfolding across the state, and the philanthropic community is invested at every level.”

– MC Belk Pilon, President and Board Chair, John M. Belk Endowment

“The next president of this System isn’t just leading an education organization. They are a key steward of North Carolina’s economic future.”

– Lee Lilley, Secretary of N.C. Department of Commerce

“The partnership between North Carolina’s public schools and our community colleges has been and continues to be a success, allowing many students to begin their journeys to college and careers before they even graduate from high school. When we do this work well together, students graduate from high school and arrive at community college with a direction, not just a diploma. The next President of our community colleges will be a critical partner to North Carolina public schools as they help students realize and deliver their futures.”

– Mo Green, NC Superintendent of Public Instruction



**SCAN QR CODE TO SEE MORE
OF WHAT LEADERS ARE SAYING**

An Inflection Point for North Carolina and the Country



Carteret Community College

“I spent years watching North Carolina compete for the world’s business, and I watched our community colleges quietly be the reason we won — time and time again.”

– Sharon Decker, former Secretary of N.C. Department of Commerce and Senior Advisor for Long-Term Recovery, Governor’s Recovery Office for Western North Carolina

The United States is entering a period of rapid economic and technological transformation. Industries are evolving faster than ever, and the skills required to succeed in today’s labor market are shifting at unprecedented speed. For states that can adapt quickly, the opportunity is extraordinary. For those that cannot, the cost will be measured in lost competitiveness, stalled economic growth, and diminished opportunity for their citizens.

North Carolina stands at the center of this moment.

The state has built one of the most dynamic economies in the country, driven by advanced manufacturing, life sciences, financial services, logistics, and a rapidly growing technology sector. From global biotechnology firms clustered around Research Triangle Park to advanced manufacturing facilities across the Piedmont and growing fintech operations in Charlotte, industries across North Carolina are expanding and competing for skilled talent — and the nature of work within these industries is changing rapidly.

These shifts are placing new expectations on education systems. Students and families increasingly expect a clear return on their investment. Employers are seeking faster pathways to skilled talent and stronger alignment between education and workforce needs. Policymakers are demanding measurable outcomes and accountability for public investment. Across the nation, institutions responsible for preparing people for work are being asked to move faster, operate innovatively, and deliver results.

For North Carolina, meeting this moment is not optional. The state’s long-term economic competitiveness depends on its ability to produce talent, expand opportunity for its citizens, and respond quickly to the needs of employers and communities. Few organizations are more central to that effort than the North Carolina Community College System.

North Carolina's Most Important Organization

The North Carolina Community College System is the most consequential public enterprise in the state.

The System is North Carolina's most powerful force for expanding opportunity. It is where working adults find a path to better wages and a better life, and where individuals gain the skills to move into careers with real momentum. It provides affordable, practical pathways for recent high school graduates and for individuals determined to build a more stable future for themselves and their families. **By meeting students where they are and helping them move forward, the System changes lives while strengthening the workforce.**

— #1 —
state for business*

— #1 —
state for workforce**

58 colleges

630,000+ students

*Source: CNBC, 2025

**Source: 2026 Site Selection Magazine

With 58 colleges serving communities across the state, the System powers North Carolina's economy. The System provides **nearly half of all undergraduate education in the state**, reaching students at a scale unmatched by the university system. Enrollment has increased by 12% since 2019, four times the national average, with five consecutive years of sustained growth. At the same time, the System exceeds national benchmarks in student success, with a 49% six-year completion rate compared to 44% nationally.

Each year, more than one in 14 North Carolinians enroll to build the skills and credentials needed to enter the workforce or advance their careers. **At this scale, the System serves as the primary engine developing the workforce behind North Carolina's economic growth.**



Caldwell Community College & Technical Institute

631,826

2024-2025 TOTAL ENROLLMENT

| | |
|---------------------------|-------------------|
| CURRICULUM ONLY | BASIC SKILLS ONLY |
| 293,843 | 51,202 |
| CONTINUING EDUCATION ONLY | MULTIPLE PROGRAMS |
| 255,655 | 31,126 |

OVERALL ENROLLMENT DISTRIBUTION BY AGE GROUP



+12%

 ENROLLMENT GROWTH SINCE FALL 2019
4X THE NATIONAL AVERAGE

+3%

 ENROLLMENT GROWTH FOR **FIVE CONSECUTIVE YEARS**

Leaders across government and industry recognize this impact. Sustained legislative investment reflects a strong and enduring public commitment to the System’s mission and confidence in its results.

Employers demonstrate that same confidence through deep and growing partnerships with the System. They collaborate to design training programs, align curricula with industry needs, and prepare students for careers

in advanced manufacturing, biotechnology, healthcare, logistics, and financial services.

These partnerships reflect a clear understanding among employers: **the System is North Carolina’s most important competitive advantage.**

Private and philanthropic partners have further strengthened the System’s impact, contributing more than \$55 million through a national campaign launched in 2025. These investments expand access to training, build workforce pathways, and help colleges respond quickly to emerging economic opportunities.

Together, this combination of statewide reach, strong public investment, and deep private-sector partnership makes the System a defining force in North Carolina’s continued growth. As industries expand and evolve, the ability to develop skilled talent remains the state’s greatest advantage. **The System builds that advantage every day.**

DELIVERING RESULTS

- 84%** labor market alignment
- 49%** postsecondary completion rate
(exceeding 2030 goal)
- 84%** first-year persistence rate
(top in the South)
- 36%** increase in certificate production
(2023-2024)

Source: MyFutureNC

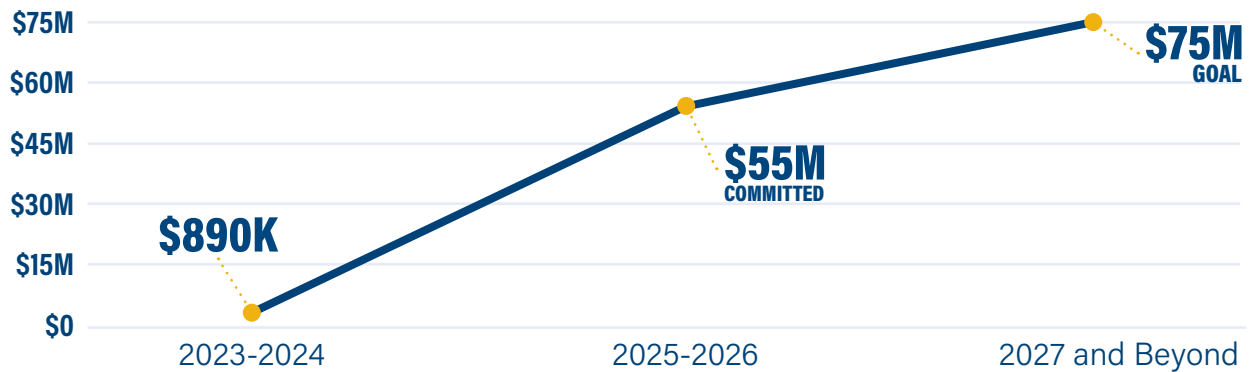
A System Backed by Strategic Investment



The North Carolina Community Colleges Foundation (Foundation) is a public charity and the official supporting organization for the System. The Foundation raises awareness and funds to advance the System’s mission, manages scholarship and award programs that honor excellence, and supports public-private partnerships that foster innovation. In the last three years, the Foundation has grown 50% and is well-positioned for greater impact. Together with the State Board and System Office, the Foundation is leading Soar: The Campaign for NC Community Colleges, a \$75 million multiyear venture to advance statewide priorities with national and multinational private funders.

Early momentum reflects strong confidence in the System’s model and its results. National and regional partners are investing to help North Carolina scale its workforce system, which already delivers impact statewide.

For the next President/CEO, this momentum creates a powerful platform. The role offers the opportunity to lead a system that is performing, attracting national attention, and positioned to grow even stronger.



A few of our strategic partners



Powering One of the Nation's Fastest-Growing Economies

North Carolina has built one of the most competitive economies in the country. The state continues to attract record levels of investment across advanced manufacturing, life sciences, clean energy, and technology, with companies choosing North Carolina for both its business climate and its ability to develop talent.

That growth depends on a steady pipeline of skilled workers.

The North Carolina Community College System builds that pipeline.

Recent announcements reflect the scale and pace of that growth:

TOYOTA
\$14B
CENTRAL NC
5,000+ Jobs
Manufacturing Facility

JETZERO
\$4.7B
PIEDMONT TRIAD
14,500+ Jobs
Manufacturing Facility

ADDITIONAL PROJECTS
More Than
23,000
JOBS
Through State Programs

HOME TO GLOBAL INDUSTRY LEADERS

North Carolina is home to a diverse group of Fortune 500 and global companies across key sectors. This concentration of industry creates sustained demand for skilled talent and reinforces the role of the System as the state's primary workforce engine.



"North Carolina's community colleges don't just fill today's open positions. They build the pipelines for jobs that don't yet exist, train the skilled tradespeople every industry depends on, and adapt faster than any other education sector when the economy shifts. That's not just a talent pipeline. That's a competitive advantage."

– Christopher Chung, Chief Executive Officer, Economic Development Partnership of North Carolina



Craven Community College

This Leader's Charge

The next President/CEO of the North Carolina Community College System will step into a rare moment of momentum with a clear mandate to build on it.

Across the state, the System is expanding employer partnerships, strengthening pathways into high-demand fields, and improving outcomes for the students it serves. The work ahead is not to begin transformation, but to accelerate it.

This role carries a clear mandate: accelerate the System's impact on workforce and economic growth

Economic Development

The President/CEO will help position North Carolina as the top state for talent and workforce development. The System sits at the center of the state's economic strategy, connecting individuals to careers and helping employers build the skilled workforce they need to grow. The President/CEO must strengthen alignment between education and industry, ensure programs evolve with emerging sectors, and reinforce the System's role in driving economic competitiveness.

Workforce Development

The System has made significant progress in expanding pathways into high-demand careers. The next President/

CEO must scale what works, deepen employer partnerships, and improve outcomes across the student journey. This work requires a continued focus on credentials of value, faster pathways into the workforce, and clear connections between training and employment.

One System Leadership

Leading the System requires alignment across 58 colleges with diverse needs. The President/CEO must set clear direction, align strategy and resources, and ensure the System operates with focus and discipline. This includes strengthening accountability, supporting innovation, and enabling the System to respond to workforce needs at the speed of business.



Under Construction: Rendering of Future North Carolina Education Campus



Randolph Community College

Desired Attributes

The following characteristics reflect input from stakeholders across North Carolina, including trustees, college presidents, faculty, staff, students, employers, legislators, business leaders, and community partners.

The successful NCCCS President/CEO will:

- ✓ **Act with urgency and drive results.**
Set clear priorities, make decisions with confidence, and hold the System accountable for outcomes.
- ✓ **Build trust across sectors.**
Establish credibility with the Executive Branch, General Assembly, employers, college leaders, and education partners. Listen, engage, and lead with authenticity.
- ✓ **Decide with conviction.**
Navigate ambiguity, weigh trade-offs, and act on the best available evidence.

- ✓ **Lead with confidence and humility.**
Surround the organization with strong talent, listen actively, and bring out the best in others.
- ✓ **Think and lead at the enterprise level.**
Prioritize statewide outcomes, align strategy across 58 colleges, and reduce fragmentation while respecting local context.
- ✓ **Champion workforce outcomes.**
Focus on credentials of value, job placement, and wage outcomes. Align programs with high-demand careers and demonstrate return on investment.
- ✓ **Use data and technology to drive performance.**
Leverage modern systems and data to improve decision-making, accelerate outcomes, and support student success.
- ✓ **Communicate with clarity and purpose.**
Articulate vision, explain decisions, and represent the System effectively with policymakers, partners, and the public.

✓ **Navigate complex environments.**

Work effectively across government, education, and industry while advancing shared workforce and economic goals.

✓ **Build and lead high-performing teams.**

Create a culture of accountability, attract strong talent, and strengthen execution across the System.

✓ **Lead change with discipline.**

Drive measurable progress while modernizing programs, removing barriers, and scaling what works.

✓ **Represent the System with credibility.**

Serve as a visible, trusted leader and strengthen public confidence in the System's role as North Carolina's talent engine.



Who You Will Lead

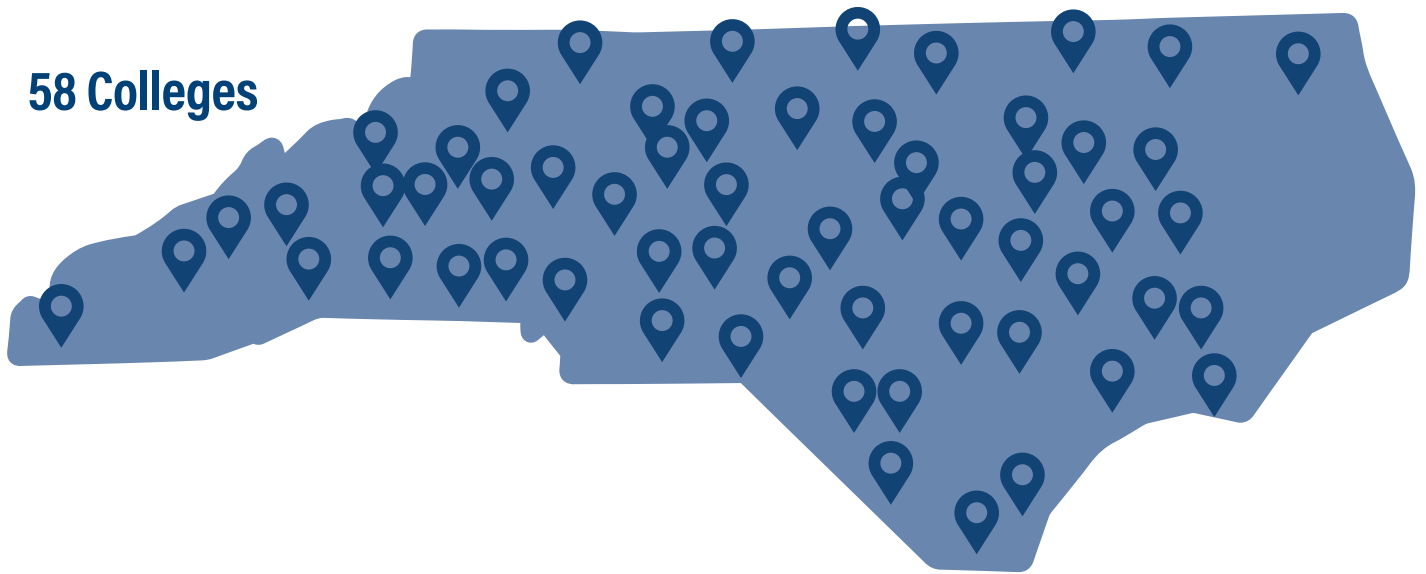
THE NORTH CAROLINA COMMUNITY COLLEGE SYSTEM

\$3.17B Total system-wide operating budget across all 58 colleges

~\$1.8B In state aid allocated annually to 58 colleges through stable funding formula

\$335M budgeted tuition and fee receipts (2025-2026 fiscal year)

31,433 TOTAL EMPLOYEES SYSTEM-WIDE



THE SYSTEM OFFICE

\$40.7M
annual operating budget

\$30M
State

\$5.2M
Federal Grants

\$5.5M
Other

236 budgeted FTE (75 positions partially or fully grant-funded)

93% position fill rate
(2025-2026 fiscal year to date)



Dear Leader,

North Carolina's Community College System is at a defining moment, and we are looking for the leader who will shape what comes next.

Our 58 colleges serve more than 600,000 North Carolinians each year and power the workforce behind North Carolina's rise as the **No. 1 state for business three of the last four years.** Enrollment is growing four times the national rate yet demand for talent in high-wage sectors still exceeds supply. More than one million North Carolinians are within reach of a credential that could transform their lives and strengthen our economy.

This is not a traditional role.

This is enterprise transformation.

The foundation is being built with modernized systems, unified data, AI-enabled technology, and momentum is accelerating.

We are seeking a proven executive, regardless of industry who has led at scale, built high-performing teams, and delivered results with clear return on investment.

Someone who operates with urgency, uses data to drive decisions, and understands that students and employers must be treated as valued customers.

This is a platform to transform lives, strengthen the state, and build a national model for workforce development.

We are looking for a leader who will step up and make North Carolina the undisputed workforce leader in the country.

Sincerely,

Thomas F. Looney

Thomas F. Looney

Board Chair

John Kane

John Kane

Vice Chair

Take Action

To make a nomination, provide a referral, or for additional information, please use the contact information below. While applications and nominations will be accepted until a successful candidate has been appointed, interested individuals are encouraged to submit their materials as soon as possible for full consideration as review of submitted materials will begin immediately.

TO APPLY

Please submit a resume and/or vita, cover letter, and any questions to:

- PresidentNCCCS@buffkinbaker.com
- **Ken Carrick, Partner** - 704-236-0659 | ken@buffkinbaker.com
- **Martin Baker, Managing Partner** - 770-313-5573 | martin@buffkinbaker.com
- **Janny DeLoache, Associate Partner** - 704-377-7828 | janny@buffkinbaker.com

NCCCS does not discriminate against employees, students, or applicants on the basis of race, color, gender, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression/association, national origin, age, height, weight, religion, creed, genetic information, disability, or veteran's status, as defined by law, in employment, admissions, or educational programs and activities. Minorities, women, veterans, and individuals with disabilities are encouraged to apply.



WHY RALEIGH, NORTH CAROLINA

Raleigh offers a rare combination of economic strength and quality of life. As the capital of North Carolina and part of the Research Triangle, it sits at the center of one of the country's fastest-growing regions.

Fast Facts

- **Top 10 fastest-growing** U.S. metro areas (*U.S. Census*)
- **Best City for Quality of Life** on the U.S. East Coast (*Travel & Leisure*)
- **#6 Best Place to Live in the U.S.** (*U.S. News & World Report, 2025-2026*)

Raleigh combines a strong and growing economy with a lifestyle that supports long-term success. The region continues to attract investment across technology, life sciences, and advanced manufacturing, while offering easy access to both the Blue Ridge Mountains and the Atlantic Coast. Residents benefit from vibrant communities, extensive outdoor amenities, and a nationally recognized food and arts scene.

Raleigh offers a place to make an impact and live well while doing it.

NC COMMUNITY
COLLEGES

CREATING SUCCESS