

**State Board of Community Colleges
Access to Achievement Legislative Report FY 2025-26**

REPORT SUMMARY

Presenters:

- **Ms. Nancye Gaj**, State Director, Access to Achievement
- **Ms. Tammy Maddox**, Access to Achievement Advisor/Coordinator at Guilford Technical Community College

Brief Description:

The Access to Achievement report provides a comprehensive overview of the Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (IDD) Workforce Training Program for the fiscal year 2025-26, highlighting the initiative's progress, activities, and early outcomes. Administered by the North Carolina Community College System (NCCCS), this initiative aims to improve employment outcomes and credential attainment among individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities by offering innovative vocational training and extensive student support across 15 participating community colleges.

The report outlines the development of the state-level infrastructure, including technical assistance, data collection processes, professional development initiatives, online resource creation, and robust marketing efforts. It further elaborates on local implementation activities, showcasing how each participating college addressed legislative requirements through unique, community-responsive strategies.

Ms. Nancye Gaj, State Director, will introduce the session and the featured speaker. Ms. Tammy Maddox, Access to Achievement Advisor/Coordinator from Guilford Technical Community College. She will focus on the effectiveness and impact on the initiative at the college.

STATE BOARD OF COMMUNITY COLLEGES
Legislative Report IDD Workforce Training Program FY 2025-26

Request: The State Board of Community Colleges (SBCC) is requested to approve the Legislative Report for the IDD Workforce Training Program.

Background: The General Assembly has established evaluation criteria for the IDD Workforce Training Program. Each year that funds are expended, the State Board of Community Colleges must report on the Program's impact on participants. This report must include information on establishing best practices, providing financial aid and benefits counseling, integrating assistive technology, maximizing access to credentials and degree programs, promoting integration to the greatest extent possible, marketing, needs assessment, and outreach.

Rationale: Reviewing and evaluating the IDD Workforce Training Program is essential for ensuring its continued success. This current report includes information on how the funds were distributed and used, the types of services provided locally, and the number of students served. Additionally, the report includes information on the development of state-level infrastructure which includes data collection, professional development, faculty resource creation, website development, marketing, and evaluation.

Contact(s):

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State Director
Access to Achievement (IDD Workforce Training Program)



NCCCS IDD Training Program
Access to Achievement

Annual Report to the
Joint Legislative Oversight Committee

Submitted by the State Board of Community Colleges

As Required by GS 115D-44

May 1, 2026

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BACKGROUND

In 2021, a two-year pilot project began to provide opportunities for students with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities in the community college system to earn credentials leading to increased employment outcomes.

Following the success of these two pilots, Catawba Valley Community College and Brunswick Community College, in 2022-23 Section 6.9 (a) Article 3 of chapter 115D of the General Statutes was amended to establish a community college training, based on the pilot colleges' strategies and outcomes for students with IDD. In the 2023-2025 session, this new IDD Student Workforce Training Program was awarded \$3, 963,094 in recurring funds for up to 15 community colleges.

In compliance with Section 6.9 of Session Law 2023-134, the program must a) provide opportunities for students to earn a variety of credentials and b) increase employment outcomes for students with IDD by supporting participating colleges in creating and providing innovative vocational training, which includes a) work-based learning (e.g. practicums, internships, apprenticeships, etc.) and b) employability skills and career exploration. The goals of the initiative are implemented through six elements required by the legislation.

The six elements are:

1. Establishing best practices for providing vocational training,
2. Providing financial and benefits counseling,
3. Developing strategies for integrating assistive technology,
4. Maximizing access, with supports, to credentials and degrees,
5. Identifying methods to integrate students into the campus community, and
6. Determining needs and developing marketing and evaluation strategies in response.

ALLOCATION OF FUNDS

On November 14, 2023, NCCCS invited all 58 community colleges to apply to be a part of the initiative. Although 32 applied, only 15 could be funded as outlined in the legislation. Of those 15, two were the original pilot colleges. Interested colleges were required to submit a letter of intent as well as participate in virtual interviews with the NCCCS staff and pilot project site directors. Applications were evaluated based on the college's demonstrated commitment to serving IDD students according to the legislative elements referenced above. The funded colleges are: Alamance Community College, Asheville Buncombe Technical College, Brunswick Community College, Catawba Valley Community College, College of the Albemarle, Guilford Technical Community College, James Sprunt Community College, Johnston Community College, McDowell Technical Community College, Richmond Community College, Robeson Community College, Sandhills Community College, South Piedmont Community College, Stanly Community College, and Wilkes Community College. Funds were distributed to

these colleges in March 2024 for the 2023-2024 academic year; funds for the 2024-2025 academic year were approved by the State Board in July 2024. After funding was initially allocated to the colleges, the initiative became referred to as “Access to Achievement” to reflect its two emphases, eliminating barriers and supporting success. Funding for the 2025-2026 program year remained at the same level as the previous two years.

Of the funds appropriated by the legislature, a total of 73% is allocated to the colleges. The remaining 27% is retained at the System Office to develop and operationalize an infrastructure and support system for the initiative. NCCCS has established a core team to lead these efforts. The team is made up of a State Director who reports directly to the Senior Vice President and Chief Academic Officer of the community college system, an Associate Director for Implementation and Professional Development, an Associate Director for Pathways and Partnerships and a part-time Administrative Assistant. Through strategic planning, resource development, and robust support, the team assures that each institution has the tools and frameworks needed to successfully implement the initiative’s goals.

2025-2026 Distribution of Funds

College	Allocation
Brunswick Community College	\$194,000
Catawba Valley Community College	\$194,000
Alamance Community College	\$194,000
Asheville-Buncombe Technical Community College	\$194,000
College of the Albemarle	\$194,000
Guilford Technical Community College	\$194,000
James Sprunt Community College	\$194,000
Johnston Community College	\$194,000
McDowell Technical Community College	\$194,000
Richmond Community College	\$194,000
Robeson Community College	\$194,000
Sandhills Community College	\$194,000
South Piedmont Community College	\$194,000
Stanly Community College	\$194,000
Wilkes Community College	\$194,000
College Total	\$2,910,000
System Office	\$1,053,094
Total Allocation	\$3,963,094

STATE LEVEL INFRASTRUCTURE AND INITIATIVES

Implementation Guide and Requirements

In response to requests from the field as well as the need to establish benchmarks, state-level staff developed an implementation guide based on the six legislative elements. This guide includes minimum programmatic requirements for local implementation, including enrollment goals, student access to credential options and college experience, institutional self-evaluation, as well as professional development and technical assistance targets.

Technical Assistance and Site Visits

The NCCCS Access to Achievement team has provided extensive technical assistance to support local coordinators and college staff in enhancing program outcomes. Between July 1, 2025, and March 31, 2026, there were 136 technical assistance encounters, 18 of which were conducted in person at local colleges. This targeted assistance, which can be initiated by local coordinators, college staff, or System Office representatives, has been instrumental in addressing a variety of needs. Many of these site visits included participation in local Access to Achievement Implementation Team meetings and the provision of targeted technical assistance to programs needing additional support in specific areas, such as outreach and student recruitment, data driven strategic planning, creating pathways for student success, fostering community outreach efforts, and strengthening employer engagement strategies. This hands-on support ensures that local initiatives are aligned with broader legislative and institutional goals, driving success at both the program and community levels.

In addition to providing individualized and targeted technical assistance upon request, the state-level team facilitates technical assistance video calls monthly for the local college coordinators. These calls provide an opportunity to share initiative updates and information in an environment that allows the coordinators to learn from the System Office team as well as peers from other local colleges. In addition to the monthly coordinator calls, the state-level team facilitates quarterly meetings with Access to Achievement supervisors at the local colleges. These meetings provide supervisors with an opportunity to discuss challenges and share insights related to their roles and develop a network of supervisor support while also enabling the SO team to communicate important updates and program information directly to supervisory leadership.

Data Collection

The Access to Achievement System Office team partnered with the SO internal IT Service Management and Strategy team to develop a site within the ServiceNow platform that allows for data to be collected that is relevant to Access to Achievement. The data collected includes, but is not limited to: student demographics; student course enrollment and outcomes associated with these courses; professional development offered locally by coordinators to staff and faculty at their institutions; any pathways created or expanded as a result of Access to Achievement input or support; and outreach conducted by each local coordinator. All data for the month is entered

into the ServiceNow system by the tenth of the following month. This process allows System Office staff to have an accurate picture of statewide Access to Achievement data outcomes regularly, aiding in decision making and planning as the initiative moves forward. This data collection was launched on January 1, 2025, and data points collected have been adjusted as the initiative evolves in order to ensure accuracy, relevance, and impact.

Professional Development

The NCCCS Access to Achievement team has provided a robust array of professional development opportunities to enhance the skills and knowledge of local coordinators. Key events include the Center for Occupational Research and Development Pathways Ecosystem training in October 2025, the December Showcase in December 2025, and the Spring Conference in April 2026. Additionally, monthly calls have featured guest speakers from Employment and Independence for Persons with Disabilities, State Employees Credit Union Financial Literacy Simulations, and Universal Design for Learning, providing valuable insights into emerging trends and best practices. State-level staff offer updates and technical assistance as needed during the monthly calls. Coordinators have also attended state and national-level conferences such as the Association on Higher Education and Disability Conference, the NC Community College Adult Educators Association Conference, the State-of-the-Art Conference, Challenging the Paradigm, the Southeastern Post-Secondary Education Alliance Conference, and the NCPN Connect Conference.

To further support ongoing learning, the NCCCS team has developed asynchronous online courses specifically tailored for both new and existing Access to Achievement Coordinators. These courses provide coordinators with detailed guidance on program procedures, reporting requirements, and data collection processes, as well as strategies for effective program implementation. They have also proven beneficial for local college Implementation Teams and senior leadership by fostering a deeper understanding of Access to Achievement and strengthening their capacity to support and expand program implementation across their campuses. The NCCCS team remains in continuous contact with local coordinators, sharing professional development opportunities from a variety of sources and organizations at local, statewide, and national levels.

In addition to the professional development opportunities provided to the local coordinators and supervisors, the NCCCS team has contracted with CAST, Inc. to provide an eight-week course in Universal Design for Learning for up to 50 faculty members from the 15 colleges participating in Access to Achievement. The course will run from April 7, 2026, through May 29, 2026, and will equip participating faculty with the knowledge, tools, and strategies needed to effectively apply the Universal Design for Learning. This framework supports instructors in creating an environment that ensures all learners have access to and can participate in meaningful learning opportunities within their courses and academic programs. Each faculty member who completes the course will be eligible to receive a Level 1 Postsecondary Universal Design for Learning

credential issued by Cast, Inc. In order to introduce this framework to as many faculty and staff in the community college system as possible, a pre-conference session, sponsored by Access to Achievement, will be offered at the System Conference in October 2026.

Online Program Resources

Access to Achievement partnered with the Center for Occupational Research and Development (CORD) to design an internal website for use by state-level staff, local Access to Achievement Coordinators, and other college staff and faculty. This site was launched in December 2025 and provides general information about Access to Achievement and links to resources available across the community college system. Additionally, this site links to an online portal where Access to Achievement Coordinators and college staff and faculty can access on-demand training, exchange ideas and ask questions of one another through a message board. Two courses entitled, “The Role of the Access to Achievement Coordinator” and “Person-Centered Planning”, have been completed and are available to Access to Achievement programs across the state. Two more courses, “Reporting Processes” and “Marketing Strategies and Resources”, are in development and scheduled to be completed and available by June 30, 2026.

In addition to the shared resources, an asynchronous training module for the IDD Career Exploration Curriculum, created by SCR Consulting, and other classroom resources have been added to the website. These modules were developed in partnership with Title II staff at both McDowell Technical Community College and the System Office. This curriculum provides instructors with tools to implement practical hands-on career exploration instruction.

Marketing/Outreach

Marketing has been instrumental in establishing Access to Achievement as a brand under the umbrella of the North Carolina Community College System Office. The breadth of materials provided by the marketing firm Honestly, Inc. has allowed System Office staff to provide local Coordinators with the necessary resources to inform a variety of publics and recruit students. Specifically, marketing materials have been essential in connecting with stakeholders across North Carolina, including state agencies, disability advocacy groups, employers and more.

As Access to Achievement entered its second year of implementation at the colleges, the state level team continued to work with Honestly, Inc. to refine communication and respond to emerging needs about the types of messaging which might be even more effective for students who would benefit from the initiative. An ad hoc group made up of Access to Achievement coordinators was formed to advise during this process. The goal of the group was to help refine marketing language to counter stereotypical thinking and promote recruitment of students with a wide range of disabilities, both in type and level. Staff from Honestly interviewed members of this group as a first step in assessing local marketing effectiveness. Additionally, Honestly developed two surveys to collect information about the level of awareness and understanding at the fifteen participating

colleges. The faculty/staff survey indicates a relatively high level of familiarity with Access to Achievement, but differing levels of understanding about what type of students are served and the types of supports available to them. Survey results indicate that more precise language is needed to describe both enrollment and engagement processes, as well as supports. The survey of participating students shows a strong, positive association with both the local coordinators and the services available through the initiative. Students were able to identify what had benefitted them and what had been the impact on their career pathway progress. In response to these surveys and focus group results, state level staff are currently working with Honestly to refine the branding and marketing guidelines provided to local colleges, particularly regarding reaching younger students.

As part of expanding efforts to increase awareness of the initiative to high school students with intellectual and developmental disabilities who might be considering dual enrollment, Access to Achievement partnered with Formation PR +Brand to develop a digital outreach strategy marketed directly to them. A targeted, short term digital video campaign which began in March, was implemented across YouTube and programmatic platforms to reach these high school students and their parents within the 15 participating colleges' service areas. The videos highlight how Access to Achievement provides personalized supports that help students gain skills and succeed in college-level coursework. The campaign's primary objective is awareness, directing users to the Access to Achievement website where they can learn more and connect with a local coordinator. Although the marketing campaign is not yet over, metrics to date reflect strong visibility and engagement, with over 600,000 total impressions or posts on users' screens. Out of these views, almost 500 individuals clicked on the landing page, and 63% of them watched the entire recruitment and explanation video. Analysis of these metrics indicates the content is resonating with the intended audience, providing support for localized, on-the-ground outreach efforts.

Access to Achievement staff has made presentations in a variety of local, state and national settings throughout the program year. Examples of these conference audiences include but are not limited to: The National Career Pathway Network, the NC DPI Exceptional Children's Conference, the Exceptional Children's Assistance Center Transitions Conference, The Autism Society of North Carolina, and the North Carolina Community College Advising Association.

Evaluation

As part of the outside evaluation process, HEI began data collection efforts in 2025 focused on the implementation and impact of Access to Achievement across the Community College System. Data were gathered through multiple qualitative methods to capture perspectives at the state, institutional, and student levels. The methods included

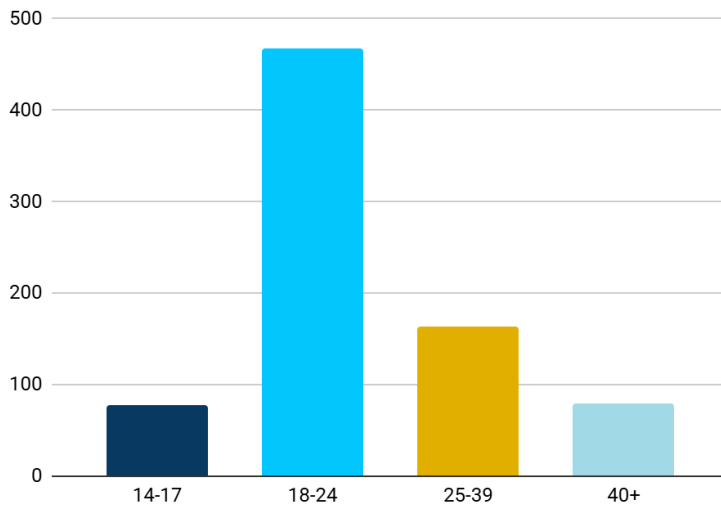
interviews with the SO team, other state level staff and stakeholders, interviews with local coordinators, and site visits to six campuses. The research team visited three colleges per region and involved local staff and stakeholders, students, and family members. The findings from this process will be presented in a final report due June 30, 2026. The report will be organized into five sections: 1) legislative guidance and program leadership, 2) technical assistance and coordinator development, 3) program structure and operations, 4) student-level experiences, and 5) impacts and opportunities. The implementation of Access to Achievement varies across campuses due to differences in campus context, reporting structures, program placement, and the internal and external partnerships that support students. Coordinators actively share strategies and insights with one another, fostering collaboration that supports consistent program success statewide. They also report being supported by SO staff through one-on-one technical assistance visits as well as robust professional development opportunities. The data collected indicate that A2A has had a substantial institutional impact at the colleges. The initiative is disrupting silos that were previously normalized, reducing the likelihood that student success is undermined by fragmented systems. It is also supporting a shift toward more inclusive practices through concrete, visible supports that help faculty and staff better understand the strengths and abilities of students. The final report will be the culmination of a two-year process consisting of a variety of types of data collection and analysis. Data from ServiceNow will be analyzed to determine areas of strength and opportunities for growth. Future expansion and implementation strategies will be guided by the report's findings and recommendations just as the Cansler Report in 2020 guided Access to Achievement's legislative parameters and programmatic emphases at inception.

DATA OUTCOMES 2024-2026

To date, 871 North Carolina Community College students have received support from an Access to Achievement Coordinator this program year.

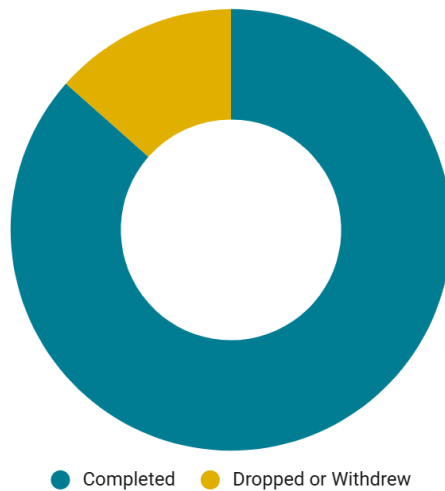
Access to Achievement students represent all age groups enrolled at Community Colleges with the greatest number of students falling into the traditional college student age range, which is similar to the trend in the general population in NC community colleges.

Access to Achievement Students by Age 2025-2026



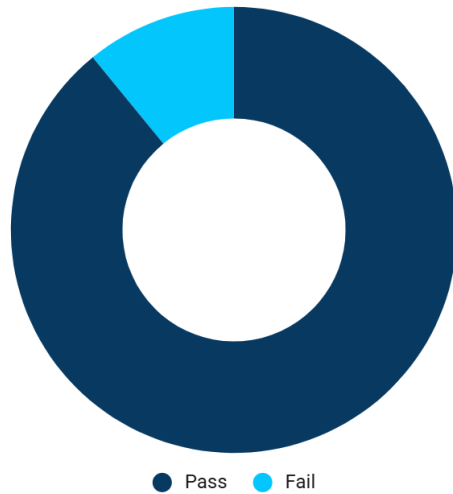
During the Fall 2025 semester, 87% of courses attempted were completed.

Fall 2025 Course Retention



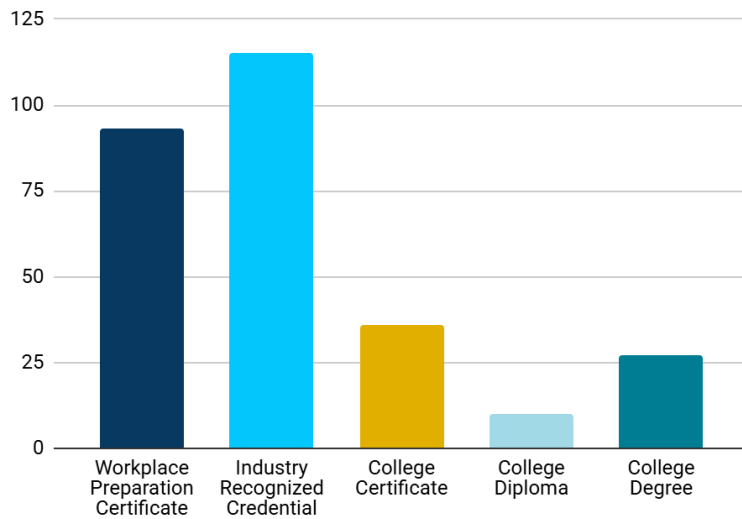
Of those courses completed, 89% were completed with a passing grade.

Successful Course Completion Fall 2025



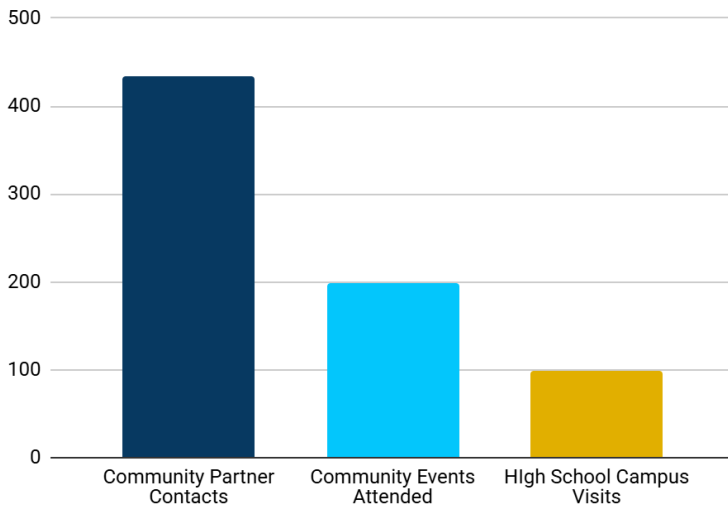
Outcome data is presented over a two-year period due to the fact that some outcomes require at least a two-year period to complete. The available data shows that students earn industry recognized short-term credentials at a higher rate than any other type of outcome.

Number of Students Earning Credentials 2024-2026



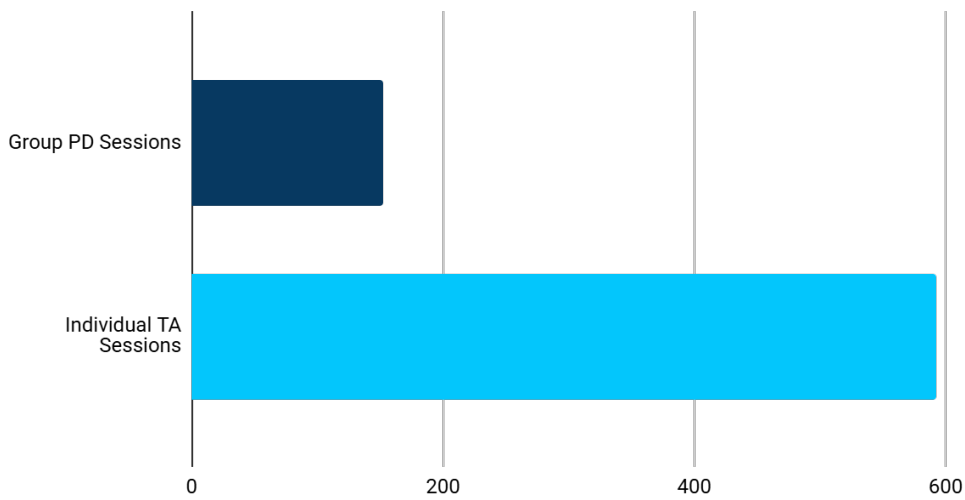
Access to Achievement coordinators continue to assess and address local education, community resource and business and industry partnerships through multiple means including one-on-one contacts, community events, speaking engagements and campus visits.

Local Marketing and Recruitment 2025-2026



Access to Achievement coordinators engage with faculty and staff across their campuses in both group presentations and individual technical assistance sessions.

Faculty and Staff Professional Development Conducted by Coordinators



LOCAL IMPLEMENTATION ACTIVITIES AND OUTCOMES

Program Highlights 2025-2026

Asheville–Buncombe Technical Community College

Utilizing Best Practices

- Led monthly Implementation Team meetings to maintain progress
- Engaged workforce, academics, student services, community partners, and college leadership to strengthen alignment and better support students
- Partnered with admissions and advising to correct transcript errors and ensure proper placement of students with intellectual and developmental disabilities

Providing Financial Aid and Benefits Counseling

- Met with students to address financial aid related issues, including suspensions and support plans
- Assisted with emergency fund applications and coordinated FAFSA completion to prevent course withdrawal
- Planned the WNC I/DD Resource HUB Transition Fair to provide a centralized resource for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities and their families

Integrating Assistive Technology

- Trained students on recording tools, read-aloud software, smartpens, and accessibility features
- Installed touchless door openers to improve building access
- Distributed an Assistive Technology survey and met with the Virtual Learning Center Coordinator to enhance accessibility supports

Maximizing Access to Credentials and Certifications

- Hosted training for faculty and staff on supporting neurodivergent students in courses and programs
- Working to provide earlier entry points to expand access for students with intellectual and developmental disabilities

Promoting Participation in Full College Experience

- Developed a new Human Resources Development course to help students navigate college and build interpersonal skills
- Collaborated with internal partners to create peer mentor models and training
- Increased outreach, partnerships, and structured support labs to improve student success

Conducting Needs Assessment, Marketing and Evaluation

- Successfully marketed services to students and faculty, resulting in a current caseload of 74 students
- Distributed materials campus-wide and met with community organizations to strengthen awareness and collaboration

Alamance Community College

Utilizing Best Practices

- Met monthly with a cross-departmental Implementation Team to review data, plan budget, and strategically problem-solve
- Engaged 50% of the student caseload in hands-on learning opportunities
- Enhanced partnerships through faculty and staff training, financial aid and academic support collaborations and transcript review process improvements

Providing Financial Aid and Benefits Counseling

- Held two fall workshops were on establishing ABLE Accounts and accessing Financial Aid through Self-Service
- Promoted weekly FAFSA 1:1 workshops and showed students how to access awards and reimbursement information
- Assisted students with withdrawal timelines, foundation grant applications, Employment and Independence for Persons with Disabilities' tuition assistance, and additional aid options

Integrating Assistive Technology

- Completed an annual assessment to assist with planning for program year
- Provided professional development for faculty on available assistive technologies w
- Developed informational kiosks for students and staff and held workshops to introduce and install Everway tools

Maximizing Access to Credentials and Certifications

- Created new Animal Husbandry certificate as well as Integrated Education and Trainings (IETs) options in Child Care and Information Technology
- Established course specific study groups and developed a new Peer Mentor Advisor/Instructor course

Promoting Participation in Full College Experience

- Delivered coordinated Access to Achievement orientation sessions and developed the peer mentoring program
- Provided workshops titled "Toolbox for Success" and a stress management workshop

- Hosted multiple “Slice of College Life” events and supported Access to Achievement representation in the Student Government Association

Conducting Needs Assessment, Marketing and Evaluation

- Met regularly with recruiters, advisors, providers, and student groups, and participated in two college resource fairs
- Developed partnerships with local garden retailers and NCWorks to develop internships, apprenticeships, and employer-sponsored training opportunities
- Shared ServiceNow data monthly with leadership and the Implementation Team to guide goal-setting and next steps

Brunswick Community College

Utilizing Best Practices

- Expanded outreach through disability training and employer meetings to develop internships
- Participated in multiple professional development events to guide improvement of workforce practices and course alignment
- Supported hands-on learning, pathway exploration, and workforce events to advance credential and employment outcomes

Providing Financial Aid and Benefits Counseling

- Coordinated with NCWorks and the Brunswick Community College Foundation to cover tuition gaps, laptops, welding personal protective equipment, and school supplies
- Arranged a paid internship for a student in Performing Arts with SoundWave, providing income and hands-on stage/sound experience
- Held workshops and presentations to provide ongoing group and individual financial aid and benefits support

Integrating Assistive Technology

- Finalized and launched the Assistive Technology Needs Survey, reviewed results with leadership, and aligned training and purchasing priorities to campus needs
- Contributed to Distance Learning accessibility efforts, explored artificial intelligence scaffolds for learners with intellectual and developmental disabilities, and evaluated virtual reality simulations for workforce training
- Purchased laptops and supported students’ virtual engagement practices to reduce barriers and support online/hybrid learning success

Maximizing Access to Credentials and Certifications

- Supported caseload of 52 students through weekly contacts in their pursuit of credentials and certifications
- Strengthened employer and pathway coordination through Windmills training and other professional development
- Promoted credential pathways (e.g., Manicurist certification; Welding, CNA, Culinary exploration) aligned with workforce goals

Participating in Full College Experience

- Provided orientation and promoted inclusion through campus and co-curricular events.
- Developed peer mentor program to help reduce barriers and strengthen campus connections.
- Delivered classroom presentations on inclusive practices and supported students through credential obtainments

Conducting Needs Assessment, Marketing, and Evaluation

- Published local marketing video to share with faculty/advisors and to present at outreach events and speaking engagements.
- Collaborated with NCWorks and campus partners to align supports in high needs areas.
- Met with leadership to improve Moodle accessibility.

College of the Albemarle

Utilizing Best Practices

- Hosted the Access to Achievement Fall Orientation and delivered a Virtual Reality career exploration session
- Developed internship plans for the Demonstration Farm, Performing Arts Center, and Art Department
- Engaged 50% of caseload participated in hands-on learning experiences

Providing Financial Aid and Benefits Counseling

- Referred students to the Foundation for textbook assistance and supported access to NextGen services
- Collaborated with Accessibility and Student Services to create a resource guide explaining the differences between Access to Achievement and Accessibility Services
- Sponsored a “Minding Your Money” workshop to strengthen student money management skills

Integrating Assistive Technology

- Hosted a multi-college faculty training on Texthelp and provided training videos to all faculty and staff
- Provided Texthelp/Everway access for all students to expand accessibility supports
- Referred students to the Digital Education Specialist for technology assistance, digital skills training, and workshop planning

Maximizing Access to Credentials and Certifications

- Supported students in earning Forklift Operator and other certifications through hands-on training.
- Promotes student support and referral awareness at Convocation.
- Provided in-class, specialized tutors to boost student success in health sciences.

Promoting Participation in Full College Experience

- Invited students to participate in FERPA 101 and other support workshops
- Distributed personalized reminders and guidance connecting students to campus events and resources
- Collaborated with the Academic Success Center to develop peer mentoring programs and other enhanced student support including tutoring

Conducting Needs Assessment, Marketing, and Evaluation

- Promoted Access to Achievement through presentations at community agencies, high schools, and student orientations
- Raised program awareness through media and marketing efforts, including a radio appearance and student testimonial video
- Planned and coordinated peer mentoring opportunities across campus

Catawba Valley Community College

Utilizing Best Practices

- Engaged sixty percent of the student caseload in hands-on learning experiences
- Met regularly with the Implementation Team to ensure coordinated program delivery and continuous improvement
- Provided ongoing faculty outreach and collaborative meetings to strengthen work-based learning placements and student success efforts

Providing Financial Aid and Benefits Counseling

- Held meetings to provide individual syllabus “walk-throughs” with each student

- Offered a financial aid workshop to equip students with tools to navigate academic and funding requirements
- Assisted students in securing additional financial support through foundation scholarships and NC Works grants

Integrating Assistive Technology

- Established ongoing evaluation and expansion of assistive technology to ensure students have access to updated and effective tools
- Provided professional development sessions to equip faculty and students to effectively utilize assistive technologies
- Collaborated with the Disability Coordinator to establish supported assessment goals and strategic technology enhancements

Maximizing Access to Credentials and Certifications

- Aligned its efforts with the college's guided pathways model to clarify, support, and advance student learning and credential attainment
- Enrolled students in new credential pathways—including Cyber Security, Early Childhood, Information Technology, and Automotive Systems Technology
- Provided comprehensive professional development, including inclusive teaching sessions and a campus-wide TEACCH event about inclusive classroom practices

Promoting Participation in Full College Experience

- Provided comprehensive orientation programming, including inclusive and focused sessions, prepared students for a successful transition to campus
- Developed structured academic support, including a weekly inclusive Study Lab, Blackboard assistance, and required Cengage training—strengthened student readiness and engagement
- Created a peer mentor program and hired a Academic Support Coach to ensure ongoing, individualized support for students

Conducting Needs Assessment, Marketing, and Evaluation

- Strengthened strategic partnerships through collaboration with Employment and Independence for Persons with Disabilities, work-based learning programs, and NC Works
- Provided outreach at regional enrollment events to expand awareness and recruitment opportunities
- Engaged with local employers created hands-on learning and workforce pathways for students

Guilford Technical Community College

Utilizing Best Practices

- Developed cross-departmental collaboration to strengthen inclusive teaching practices, expanded workforce partnerships, and streamlined student service alignment
- Increased hands-on learning initiatives through employer engagement, reverse job fair participation, and coordination with NC Works and Employment and Independence for Persons with Disabilities
- Developed strategic program elements—including caseload analysis, assistive technology support, and expanded implementation team membership—and enhanced student access and experiential learning opportunities

Providing Financial Aid and Benefits Counseling

- Expanded outreach through community enrollment fairs, FAFSA events, and campus resource programs to connect students with financial support services
- Assisted students with appeals, documentation of barriers, and direct coordination with the Financial Aid office
- Provided individualized financial coaching including Social Security Disability Income guidance and budgeting support

Integrating Assistive Technology

- Helped develop a construction pilot program to award micro-credentials and pre-construction certificates while integrating resume and interview preparation
- Expanded use of innovative technologies—including virtual reality simulations, soft skills pathways, and artificial intelligence-based applications—to enhance career exploration
- Strengthened institutional capacity to support inclusive learning through faculty engagement, assistive technology assessments, and professional development workshops

Maximizing Access to Credentials and Certifications

- Collaborated with Adult Education, Human Resources Development, K–12 partners, and workforce leaders to expand accessible and in-demand credential pathways
- Provided professional development and faculty engagement opportunities to strengthen referral systems and inclusive instructional practices
- Advanced career readiness by supporting students to earn multiple micro-credentials through innovative Virtual Reality construction training

Promoting Participation in Full College Experience

- Encouraged student engagement through orientations, faculty outreach, Student Government Association collaboration, and retention initiatives

- Developed partnerships with Career Services and Disability Services expand mentoring, hands-on learning, and student development opportunities
- Provided mentorship training, sensory space planning, awareness initiatives and additional holistic supports

Conducting Needs Assessment, Marketing, and Evaluation

- Provided K–12 outreach, campus tours, and immersive virtual reality career exploration to strengthen recruitment pipelines
- Expanded student caseload significantly as a result of increased visibility, refined referral processes, and strengthened campus partnerships
- Collaborated across campus through multiple faculty engagement activities and strategic planning to increase inclusive access and institutional awareness

James Sprunt Community College

Utilizing Best Practices

- Established a cross-departmental Implementation Team which meets monthly to drive strategic goals aligned with state legislative priorities
- Expanded on-the-job training and internship placements, resulting in over 50% of students engaging in hands-on learning experiences
- Increased employer and campus partnerships advanced internship alignment, Americans with Disabilities Act-compliant technology adoption, and streamlined scholarship access

Providing Financial Aid and Benefits Counseling

- Provided integrated workshops in financial literacy, résumé development, FAFSA navigation, and personal wellness
- Established an Access to Achievement Scholarship, including formal guidelines and an application process for students not eligible for traditional aid
- Conducted a scholarship-access review to develop informed improvements for all financial aid processes and benefits counseling

Integrating Assistive Technology

- Developed a comprehensive assistive technology assessment to identify accessibility gaps within Moodle and informed strategic improvements
- Collaborated with the Americans with Disabilities Act Compliance Committee, Distance Learning, and Information Technology staff, resulting in the approved purchase of Anthology to strengthen Moodle accessibility

- Provided professional development and tool demonstrations to equip faculty and staff to effectively implement accessible instructional practices

Maximizing Access to Credentials and Certifications

- Provided leadership in Americans with Disabilities Act compliance and faculty development to strengthen accessible curriculum design and equitable student advocacy
- Engaged in strategic planning with campus and community partners to expand micro-credentials, workforce-aligned classes, and internship pathways
- Participated in ongoing pathway development—including integration with Continuing Education and the Spartan Career Academy—so support inclusive education opportunities

Promoting Participation in Full College Experience

- Expanded awareness of Access to Achievement services and peer mentoring opportunities across all program areas through orientation and outreach
- Established a structured peer mentoring program to promote campus connection and inclusive engagement
- Provided comprehensive student support including wellness initiatives, study skills workshops, tutoring coordination, and campus-wide engagement events

Conducting Needs Assessment, Marketing and Evaluation

- Exceeded the established student caseload goal through strategic recruitment, marketing, and follow-up outreach efforts
- Expanded employer engagement internship pipelines through collaborative events and new partnerships with local business and industry
- Participated in campus events, high school presentations, employer outreach, and direct mail postcards to increase program visibility and student referrals

Johnston Community College

Utilizing Best Practices

- Collaborated with the Implementation Team, Employment and Independence for Persons with Disabilities, and local workforce partners to strengthen inclusive internship and employment pathways
- Provided professional development through Center for Occupational Research and Development training to inform industry-aligned, stackable credential pathways and strengthened cross-sector partnerships

- Engaged Implementation Team in experiential learning activities to build empathy and awareness of the barriers faced by students to build institutional commitment to inclusive support

Providing Financial Aid and Benefits Counseling

- Partnered to provide financial aid and benefits workshops tailored to students with IDD and their families, covering FAFSA, scholarships, work-study, and Social Security Disability Income
- Developed a plain-language, one-page financial aid and benefits guide to make processes more accessible and easier to navigate
- Increased community awareness by participating in high school FAFSA nights, connecting prospective students to inclusive college support

Integrating Assistive Technology

- Expanded access to assistive technology including ILA Translate, Transfr VR, Ophaya Smart Pens, and TextHelp Read&Write
- Provided a “Lunch and Learn” virtual series for families of students with intellectual and developmental disabilities, providing accessible information about Access to Achievement, assistive technology, and student support
- Provided virtual reality-based career exploration directly to high school Career and Technical Education students

Maximizing Access to Credentials and Certifications

- Explored expansion of the horticulture program to include enhanced certificate options and new landscaping courses aligned with local workforce needs
- Attended Center for Occupational Research and Development Training through the North Carolina Community College System to strengthen industry-informed career pathways
- Continued implementation discussions to improve pathway alignment and student support, with follow-up meetings scheduled to sustain progress

Promoting Participation in Full College Experience

- Collaborated with the First-Year Coordinator to design inclusive campus events and a peer mentoring system to reduce barriers and increase participation
- Developed accessible engagement tools including “What to Expect” guides, a visual event calendar, and pre-event campus tours
- Promoted Access to Achievement during Spring Orientation to raise awareness

Conducting Needs Assessment, Marketing and Evaluation

- Conducted student, family, and faculty check-ins to identify barriers and guide programming
- Shared program information through emails, newsletters, and outreach to raise awareness
- Connected with local businesses and partners to expand employment pathways for students

McDowell Technical Community College

Utilizing Best Practices

- Led monthly Implementation Team meetings with campus leaders and external partners to address barriers, align pathways work, and support program implementation
- Engaged 30% of students in on-the-job training or apprenticeships, collaborating with Employment and Independence for Persons with Disabilities and workforce partners, and providing individualized vocational guidance
- Presented Access to Achievement resources to faculty and staff and led regional and statewide meetings to strengthen inclusive practices

Providing Financial Aid and Benefits Counseling

- Co-led FAFSA Night with Financial Aid to provide FAFSA guidance and one-on-one support, resulting in completed applications and stronger referral partnerships
- Partnered with State Employees Credit Union and Employment and Independence for Persons with Disabilities, integrating budgeting and benefits guidance into advising and inclusive student workshops
- Increased referral pathways by meeting with Financial Aid and Early College staff to create an online referral form to streamline the referral process

Integrating Assistive Technology

- Partnered with Accessibility Services and Testing to review assistive technology functionality and availability to ensure effective student access
- Co-led convocation training for 100+ faculty and staff on Read&Write, OrbitNote, and EquatIO to promote inclusive instructional technology practices
- Renewed licenses for Read&Write, OrbitNote, and EquatIO, and collaborated with technology staff to support system functionality across campus

Maximizing Access to Credentials and Certifications

- Initiated the Outdoor Economy pathway with stackable credentials in Customer Service Industry and Recreational Leadership

- Collaborated with the Dean of Students and Health & Human Services to expand technical standards and credentialing aligned with best practices
- Expanded faculty and academic support by delivering accessibility training, providing individual faculty consultations, and hiring a part-time tutor to increase instructional support for students with disabilities

Promoting Participation in Full College Experience

- Collaborated with Accessibility Services to design and deliver integrated orientations and accommodations for students with intellectual and developmental disabilities
- Strengthened peer mentoring and student services by developing structured mentor training
- Increased student engagement and inclusive leadership by attending campus events, advising weekly Student Government Association meetings, and supporting community outreach events

Conducting Needs Assessment, Marketing, and Evaluation

- Maintained and increased a student caseload that exceeds the 2025-2026 goal set for McDowell Technical Community College
- Collaborated with Employment and Independence for Persons with Disabilities, joining monthly workforce pipeline meetings, and worked with the Work-Based Learning Coordinator to align student preparation with employer needs
- Created an Access to Achievement landing page on the college website which included an online referral form

Richmond Community College

Utilizing Best Practices

- Created partnerships with campus programs, local employers and Employment and Independence for Persons with Disabilities to support 19 students in embedded coursework and paid internships
- Promoted workforce readiness through individualized career advising, assistive technology access, job shadowing, internships
- Provided an internship to a Human Services student to serve as a campus job coach to ensure supportive, skill-building work-based learning experiences

Providing Financial Aid and Benefits Counseling

- Advised students through financial aid navigation, eligibility requirements, and informed decision-making to reduce financial barriers to education

- Highlighted financial education through participation in the *My Financial Adult Life* workshops to provide interactive learning on budgeting, saving, credit management, and long-term planning

Integrating Assistive Technology

- Provided a specialized stethoscope for a nursing student with intellectual and developmental disability and hearing impairment to ensure full academic and clinical participation
- Promoted equitable access to instructional materials through accessible digital platforms and Moodle integrated with Brickfield and accessibility plugins
- Expanded campus-wide accessibility by collaborating with Information Technology staff to install shared assistive technology stations at the Hamlet and Scotland campuses

Maximizing Access to Credentials and Certifications

- Expanded accessible credential pathways by allowing students to bypass placement testing and entry-level math and English courses
- Partnered with Continuing Education and the Customized Training Coordinator to develop stand-alone and credit-bearing micro-credentials in areas such as manufacturing, customer service, retail, custodial services, and patient caregiving

Promoting Participation in Full College Experience

- Provided comprehensive onboarding by connecting students to online orientation and Access to Achievement webpage and offering individualized campus tours
- Launched a formal peer mentoring program, updated mentoring guidelines and policies, and developed a 50-hour online certification to prepare mentors
- Hired a dedicated math tutor to address identified learning gaps, expanding access to Academic Success Center services for tutoring and certification preparation

Conducting Needs Assessment, Marketing, and Evaluation

- Collaborated with Disability Services and provided regular check-ins with internship supervisors to monitor student progress
- Expanded early identification and intervention efforts by embedding student- and faculty-specific QR code surveys on the website and distributing codes to students
- Partnered with the Customized Training Coordinator to secure interest from three local industries willing to hire or host interns with in-house training

Robeson Community College

Utilizing Best Practices

- Contracted with Lumberton Airport for an off-campus internship
- Partnered with the Human Resources Development Coordinator to offer job readiness classes in resume writing, interview skills, workplace communication, and time management
- Worked with the Implementation Team to increase credential opportunities including potential pathways in Vet Tech, Landscaping, Carpentry, and Automotive Repair

Providing Financial Aid and Benefits Counseling

- Expanded financial access by collaborating across campus to secure alternative funding sources
- Strengthened financial literacy and career planning by partnering with Counseling/Career Services to deliver workshops on FAFSA and budgeting
- Partnered with Counseling/Career Services to provide transportation to and from campus and for employment, including off-campus work study and internships

Integrating Assistive Technology

- Collaborated with four Access to Achievement colleges to deliver virtual Everway training sessions for faculty and staff
- Improved accessibility in instruction and testing by working with Information Technology staff to integrate assistive software into proctored testing environments
- Advanced technology access and planning by developing a campus-wide survey to assess student needs and develop an assistive technology pla.

Maximizing Access to Credentials and Certifications

- Developed career pathways that allow Access to Achievement students to earn workplace credentials while completing their current programs of study
- Expanded access and credential attainment by working to make Integrated Education and Trainings (IETs) available for students

Promoting Participation in Full College Experience

- Informed students via email of current and upcoming events happening on and around campus
- Collaborated with the implementation team to enhance the accessibility of the student center and increase daily on-campus activities
- Expanded student support initiatives by working with the Student Government Association to create peer mentoring opportunities for students across campus

Conducting Needs Assessment, Marketing and Evaluation

- Distributed a “Student Learning Survey” to gauge interest in Access to Achievement and other campus resources, including assistive technology needs
- Strengthened K–12 outreach by visiting each high school in Robeson County to provide information to students and parents
- Increased program visibility and collaboration by planning a stronger presence on satellite campuses through weekly visits

Sandhills Community College

Utilizing Best Practices

- Strengthened instructional and professional capacity by meeting monthly with instructors to share best practices for supporting students with intellectual and development disabilities
- Expanded workforce development and employment outcomes by meeting with internship supervisors and Employment and Independence for Persons with Disabilities/NCWorks
- Promoted Access to Achievement student talent at the Moore County Economic Development Manufacturing Breakfast with approximately 20 manufacturers

Providing Financial Aid and Benefits Counseling

- Attended multiple meetings and webinars with NCWorks, Employment and Independence for Persons with Disabilities, and Workforce Innovations and Opportunities Act representatives to identify available resources to provide paid internships
- Provided direct financial and logistical support to students with various financial aid forms, as well as provide guidance toward seeking additional financial support
- Increased student awareness and informed decision-making by distributing written handouts explaining how employment may impact public benefits

Integrating Assistive Technology

- Advanced campus-wide accessibility initiatives by presenting to and meeting monthly with the Accessibility Committee to discuss needs assessments and consistent technical standards
- Expanded innovative instructional technology by collaborating with TRANSFR to develop an immersion virtual reality lab for Workforce/Continuing Education and Curriculum students

- Increased direct student outreach and digital literacy support by requesting and contacting students registered with Disability Services to offer Access to Achievement services

Maximizing Access to Credentials and Certifications

- Collaborated with Horticulture, Manufacturing, Nursing, Automotive, and Early Child Care departments to design early onramps and credential opportunities
- Expanded career-aligned credential pathways by creating transitions from Human Resources Development's Career Explorations to Continuing Education Courses
- Developed and marketed Integrated Education and Training (IETs) through open houses and social media

Promoting Participation in Full College Experience

- Created and promoted a peer mentoring program
- Launched SlickText texting platform to notify students of campus events
- Collaborated with Student Services and Student Life to offer student-focused workshops and to ensure inclusion of students in campus events

Conducting Needs Assessment, Marketing, and Evaluation

- Led an expanded marketing and outreach campaign by partnering with the marketing department on videos, social media, emails, and newsletters
- Strengthened campus systems by developing faculty/staff training surveys with the Planning and Research department
- Served on the Accessibility Committee to review and standardize technical and textbook accessibility guidelines

South Piedmont Community College

Utilizing Best Practices

- Created an Implementation Team which meets monthly to review progress and guide initiative efforts
- Secured two paid, on-campus internships aligned with students' degree areas
- Strengthened professional expertise by attending multiple vocational training professional development sessions to enhance best practices

Providing Financial Aid and Benefits Counseling

- Assisted students and families with FAFSA and scholarship applications and referred students to external agencies for additional support

- Strengthened funding pathways by collaborating with Financial Aid to identify grant options for Human Resources Development and non-curriculum classes
- Provide ongoing transportation assistance to students in need

Integrating Assistive Technology

- Purchased accessible computers in admissions, academic support, and other designated campus locations to eliminate accessibility barriers
- Piloted note-taking support through Genio services to 17 students during Fall 2025 for expansion campus-wide in Spring 2026.
- Increased digital accessibility skills by continuing to assist students in using built-in accessibility features on their personal laptops, tablets, and phones

Maximizing Access to Credentials and Certifications

- Delivered campus-wide professional development session for staff and collaborated with Accessibility Services to support faculty and students
- Advanced credential and pathway alignment by supporting the launch of Introduction to Early Childhood classes in partnership with Wingate University and Union County Public Schools
- Attended multiple professional development events to strengthen expertise and community advocacy by and serving on the United Way advisory council

Promoting Participation in Full College Experience

- Strengthened peer and leadership engagement by identifying two potential peer mentors and supporting three Access to Achievement students attending SkillsUSA
- Expanded individualized student supports by providing one-on-one workshops on financial aid and life skills and participating in New Student Orientation
- Increased outreach and campus presence working two days per week at the Polkton Campus to support local students

Conducting Needs Assessment, Marketing, and Evaluation

- Expanded outreach efforts by sending communications to Union and Anson County public schools as well as private and homeschool co-ops
- Partnered with the secondary partnerships department to connect with Career and College Promise and other prospective students
- Elevated program visibility by featuring students in college marketing materials and collaborating with the marketing department to update Access to Achievement materials with the new South Piedmont logo and mascot branding

Stanly Community College

Utilizing Best Practices

- Lead Implementation Team meetings with representatives from all departments and faculty members, as well as external partners
- Expanded hands-on learning and workforce pathways by supporting 13 students in career-aligned experiential learning during the fall semester
- Established a paid on-campus internship program, enabling two students to secure employment in their fields of interest while continuing their education

Providing Financial Aid and Benefits Counseling

- Expanded integrated financial aid support by hosting two Financial Aid workshops on FAFSA completion and funding opportunities
- Increased personalized counseling and funding access by assisting students one-on-one with FAFSA completion
- Coordinated with Financial Aid on required documentation and appeals, and assisted students to secure NCWorks NextGen funding

Integrating Assistive Technology

- Strengthened assistive technology identification by adding disability and technology-need questions to the monthly Success Coach survey
- Distributed a campus-wide faculty/staff survey and collaborated with the Disability Services Coordinator and Implementation Team to assess needs and develop solutions
- Expanded access to assistive tools by compiling a campus inventory and proposing new purchases where needed

Maximizing Access to Credentials and Certifications

- Collaborated with faculty and staff to identify a list of credentials earned in each career cluster to inform student career pathway goals
- Presented at Faculty Professional Development Day on 'Supporting Students with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities,' sharing universal design for learning strategies for online and in-person instruction
- Partnered with the Dean of Advanced Manufacturing to allow students to gain workforce credentials and experience

Promoting Participation in the Full College Experience

- Established a peer mentoring program to provide support based on academic content or social skill needs on an as-needed basis

- Worked with Disability Services to expand accessible support services, including tutoring through the Learning Resource Center, and the online platform Brainfuse
- Provide Access students with regular check-ins and individualized support, including use of a dedicated study hall lab which provides skill-specific assistance

Conducting Needs Assessment, Marketing, and Evaluation

- Developed extensive outreach efforts and established a defined referral process, resulting in a student caseload that surpasses the institutional goal of 50 students
- Continued outreach through NCWorks partner meetings, Career Connect internship discussions, and Chamber of Commerce Lunch-and-Learn opportunities
- Continued program evaluation and long-term planning are ongoing, with Service Now data reviewed monthly and a full program evaluation scheduled for April

Wilkes Community College

Utilizing Best Practices

- Collaborated with Employment and Independence for Persons with Disabilities on shared caseloads, exploring Workforce/Continuing Education courses, vocational training, and childcare pathway options for students
- Met with individual students and community members to connect them with vocational training opportunities and career development resources
- Engaged in cross-departmental pathway planning to align students' educational and career strategies

Providing Financial Aid and Benefits Counseling

- Met with multiple students individually to assist with FAFSA applications and coordinate financial aid support
- Connected students to the Financial Aid office for ongoing support and collaborated with a financial aid representative to ensure successful completion of applications
- Initiated communication with the Financial Aid Director regarding newly approved programs qualifying for Pell Grant and Next NC Fund

Integrating Assistive Technology

- Participated in multiple Genio trainings and planning meetings to strengthen campus implementation
- Completed AIM training, the college's new disability services management system, to better support faculty use and improve assistance provided to students

Maximizing Access to Credentials and Certifications

- Collaborated with the Health Sciences department to discuss accommodation options for students
- Initiated communication with the Financial Aid Director regarding newly approved programs for Pell Grant and Next NC
- Contacted various college programs to identify credentials embedded within their offerings to better inform pathway planning

Promoting Participation in Full College Experience

- Collaborated with the Counseling department to host workshops focused on career planning, mental health, and other student supports
- Promoted student engagement by sharing Welcome Week activities and campus events with students on the caseload to encourage involvement and connection

Conducting Needs Assessment, Marketing, and Evaluation

- Promoted Access to Achievement at new student orientation and distributed a marketing email template to instructors and advisors to reintroduce services across campus
- Conducted outreach to local high schools by providing campus tours, presenting to students, and contacting Career Coaches to schedule tours and school visits
- Presented at the Health Science Leadership meeting to increase faculty awareness of available student support and engagement tools

Appendix A: ACCESS TO ACHIEVEMENT PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS**Access to Achievement Program Requirements****2025-2026****Utilize Best Practices****1) Form a Cross-Departmental Implementation Team**

This is the responsibility of the Access to Achievement Coordinator. The Coordinator, in consultation with his/her supervisor, will develop a list of desired team members, schedule the initial meeting, and extend an invitation to the team members. Programs that received funding for 2024-2025 will have the implementation team in place by June 30, 2025. New programs will have the implementation team in place within 60 days of receiving funding.

- Required core implementation team members include a member of senior leadership, faculty representatives, Disability Services, Student Services leadership, Workforce Development leadership, Continuing Education leadership, Curriculum leadership, Student Life, and College and Career Readiness leadership.
- Additional recommended Implementation Team members include a member of Human Resources Development, Customized Training, Small Business Center, Financial Aid, IT, Business Office, Apprenticeship Coordinator, Work-based Learning, Student Government Association, Career Services, and mental health counselor.
- Once an implementation team has been established, meetings should be scheduled on a regular basis to discuss goals of Access to Achievement, brainstorm, and develop strategies that address goals as well as concerns and issues
- After six months, the implementation team should expand beyond the college to include area employers and community agencies (EIPD, NCWorks, WIOA, K-12 representatives.)

Action: An implementation team will be established at the local college and will meet monthly.

2) On-the-Job Training and Apprenticeships

Hands-on vocational training and learning opportunities, such as internships and apprenticeships, are essential for students with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD) as they provide practical experience, build job-specific skills, and promote independence. These experiences allow students

to apply what they learn in real-world settings, which enhances their understanding and retention of skills. Additionally, hands-on learning helps foster confidence, self-advocacy, and social interaction, while also exposing employers to the value and capabilities of individuals with IDD. By participating in supportive work environments, students with IDD are better prepared for meaningful employment and greater community involvement, ultimately contributing to their long-term success and quality of life. Students with disabilities should be placed into paid internships, apprenticeships, or other hands-on learning opportunities that provide real-world job experience.

Action: Half of the Access to Achievement caseload will participate in a hands-on learning experience by the end of the program year. For example, if the Access to Achievement caseload is 25 students, 13 of those students should be participating, or have participated, in a hands-on learning experience in their area of study by the end of the current program year. This can be accomplished through a lab component in a class but can also be created through collaborations with the work-based learning coordinator and/or apprenticeship coordinator, as well as through collaborations with outside agencies such as NCWorks and EIPD. Internships can also be created within departments on your college campus. For a student who is currently working in their desired career area, their employment could also count as a hands-on learning experience. While paid internships and apprenticeships are preferred, unpaid internships are also acceptable forms of hands-on learning opportunities.

Financial Aid and Benefits Counseling

1) Develop Integrated Workshops and Counseling

Integrated workshops and seminars that include students with intellectual disabilities provide valuable opportunities for all students to learn together while addressing essential topics such as Financial Aid, mental health services, employability skills, financial literacy, effective communication and other topics relevant to student success. These learning experiences promote a sense of community, reduce stigma, and help students with intellectual disabilities build confidence and practical life skills alongside their peers. The Access to Achievement Coordinator plays a key role in organizing these events, ensuring content is accessible and relevant, and collaborating with campus departments and community partners to deliver meaningful programming. Additionally, the Coordinator is responsible for marketing these workshops in a way that encourages broad participation and highlights their supportive nature.

Action: A minimum of two workshops per semester will be developed (or supported by the coordinator) and offered to all students across campus (with and without disabilities.) These workshops can focus on areas such as appropriate communication with instructors, financial literacy, financial aid options, resume building, interview skills, etc. These workshops can be created by the Access to Achievement Coordinator in partnership with other departments across campus such as the Career Center and Financial Aid, as well as external partners.

Integrate Assistive Technology

1) Assistive Technology Needs

The Access to Achievement Coordinator plays a vital role in integrating assistive technology across the community college campus to support students with intellectual and developmental disabilities. This includes identifying, implementing, and promoting the use of technology that enhances access to learning and fosters greater independence. To ensure the effectiveness of these tools, the Coordinator must collaborate closely with the Disability and Accessibility Services department to align technology choices with students' individual needs. Additionally, coordination with the IT department is essential to guarantee that selected technologies are compatible with existing campus systems and infrastructure.

Through these partnerships, the Coordinator helps create a more accessible and seamless educational experience for all students.

- In collaboration with Disability/Accessibility services and IT, an evaluation of assistive technology needs should be completed by the Access to Achievement Coordinator.

Action: An annual Assistive Technology assessment will be conducted to address new opportunities or upgrading existing technologies. Professional development around these technologies will be offered to faculty annually. Include a summary of this assessment in the quarterly narrative reports.

Maximizing Access to Credentials, Certificates, and Degrees

1) Create Learning Opportunities

A key responsibility of the Access to Achievement Coordinator is to *support* the creation of universal curriculum design and academic pathways that meet the diverse needs of students with intellectual and developmental disabilities. This involves working closely with faculty to ensure course content, instructional strategies, and assessment methods are accessible and promote meaningful

participation. The Coordinator should actively engage the local implementation team to identify and address specific challenges faced by both students and faculty, leveraging their insights and expertise to develop effective, individualized solutions. By fostering collaboration and open communication, the Coordinator helps build a more supportive learning environment across the college.

- Support the development of micro-credentials that are accessible to both IDD students and others enrolled at the college. These micro-credentials should address areas of high need in the local job market based on job market data and serve as an early on-ramp for existing career pathways.
- Provide technical support and professional development to instructors to ensure that all students have access to opportunities.
- A minimum of two professional development opportunities for local faculty and staff will be offered each program year.
- Students with IDD should be integrated to the greatest extent possible.

Action: Periodically, review current career pathways. With your implementation team, discuss opportunities for new entry points that would provide an on-ramp to already existing credentials, increasing accessibility for all students. Include a summary of these discussions in your quarterly narrative reports.

Promote Participation in Full College Experience

1) Integrated Orientation Program:

An Access to Achievement Coordinator is responsible for providing comprehensive orientation and peer mentor supports tailored to students with intellectual and developmental disabilities. This includes ensuring that students are fully included in the college community from the start by integrating their orientation into the broader orientation events and services offered to all students at the local college. By aligning these supports with general student services, the coordinator fosters an environment that promotes equal access to information, resources, and opportunities for social engagement. Additionally, the coordinator oversees peer mentoring initiatives that connect students with trained mentors who can offer guidance, encouragement, and support throughout their college experience.

Action: The Access to Achievement Coordinator will develop an orientation program specifically for students with disabilities that focuses on college navigation, available support (such as Access to Achievement), peer mentorship

and integration into the broader campus community. This orientation program should be available to all students who self-report with IDD. This orientation program can be offered as a breakout session during the existing orientation program at the college and can be open to students without disabilities as well. The orientation program should be offered at the beginning of each semester. **Action:** The Access to Achievement Coordinator will develop a peer mentoring program for students with disabilities to be paired with trained peer mentors from the student body. Peer mentors can be generalized peer mentors or can be peer mentors identified within specific courses of study at the college who agree to serve as mentors within that specific course of study. For example, a student enrolled in the studio photography certificate/degree program might be the best peer mentor for an Access to Achievement student who is also enrolled in the studio photography certificate/degree program.

1) Develop Accessible Support Services

Developing targeted wraparound support services through workshops in areas such as financial aid, financial literacy, mental health, study skills, interview skills, and other essential life and academic skills is crucial for fostering student success, particularly for those who may face additional challenges. These workshops provide students with the tools and knowledge they need to navigate both academic and everyday life more confidently and independently. By addressing a wide range of needs, wraparound services help create a holistic support system that promotes well-being, reduces barriers to learning, and enhances overall college and career readiness. Empowering students with these foundational skills not only supports their academic achievement but also prepares them for long-term personal and professional success.

Action: The Access to Achievement Coordinator will organize two workshops per semester to provide support services in areas such as mental health, study skills, financial literacy, appropriate communication, financial aid, interview skills, no-cost accessibility tools, etc. These workshops can be created in collaboration with mental health services, Human Resources Development, Financial Aid or other campus departments.

Action: Academic tutoring will be made available for students with intellectual and developmental disabilities, in addition to peer mentoring programs. Tutoring services should also include certification exam preparation and study skills.

Marketing and Needs Assessment

1) Increase Caseload to 1% of Total Enrollment

Research shows that one in nine students ages 16-24 have an intellectual and/or developmental disability. The Access to Achievement Coordinator's goal is to reach those students and provide support services based on the individual student's goals and needs. Based on the most recent official statistics available from the Research and Performance Management section of the North Carolina Community College System, specific Access to Achievement enrollment goals have been established.

- Identify currently enrolled students with disabilities by collaborating with disability services to review students who have requested accommodations and services. Distribute a confidential survey to all students enrolled at the local college to identify individuals with disabilities who may not have disclosed their disability. Once these students have been identified, create targeted communication to these students via email, phone calls, etc.) to discuss and offer Access to Achievement services.
- Active recruiting efforts in area high schools, including public and private institutions, as well as charter schools and Early College. Services can also be provided to students who are dually enrolled in high school and community college courses through CCP programs and Cooperative Innovative High School programs.
- Active recruiting efforts through community agencies that serve individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities.
- Area marketing campaign utilizing the materials provided by the North Carolina Community College System as well as marketing materials created by the local college utilizing the Access to Achievement branding.
- Each student seeking support from the Access to Achievement Coordinator will have the option to create a person-centered plan and should be encouraged to do so.
- Become a visible presence on the college campus. Go where the students are. Distribute Access to Achievement marketing materials in high traffic areas of the campus.

Action: Access to Achievement caseload will reflect a minimum of 1% of the total enrollment at the local college as a result of marketing and recruitment efforts by the Access to Achievement Coordinator and colleagues.

2) Outreach to Local Business and Industry

Access to Achievement students aim to successfully enter the workforce, either during their enrollment at the local community college or after completing specific coursework. Coordinators are responsible for providing transitional support for six months after a student leaves the college. This includes connecting students with local employers offering internships, apprenticeships, or competitive integrated employment opportunities. While Coordinators lead this effort, they should also collaborate with college departments and external agencies that have existing employer relationships to better advocate for students.

- Identify and build relationships with local employers interested in hiring individuals with IDD. This can be accomplished by partnering with Workforce Development, WBL, ApprenticeshipNC, NCWorks, EIPD, or other internal and external entities who have existing partnerships with local employers. This can also be accomplished by outreach efforts through local business organizations such as human resources associations and area Chambers of Commerce.

Action: In year one, plan partnerships which will result in internships, on-the-job training and/or apprenticeships for IDD students will be established with a minimum of three local employers. In subsequent years, students will be actively engaged in on-the-job learning opportunities as outlined in year one planning. In addition, outreach efforts will continue to develop partnerships with more employers.

3) Evaluation and Long-term Planning

Program evaluation is a vital component for community colleges offering Access to Achievement programs that serve students with IDD. By utilizing data from platforms such as ServiceNow, colleges can systematically track student progress, monitor the effectiveness of support services, and assess overall program impact. This data-driven approach enables institutions to identify strengths, address gaps, and make informed decisions to enhance curriculum design, student engagement, and post-secondary outcomes. While ServiceNow provides a valuable and standardized method for data collection and analysis, colleges also have the option to develop their own program evaluation processes tailored to their specific goals, resources, and student populations. Whether using centralized tools or localized strategies, consistent evaluation ensures continuous improvement, supports accountability, and strengthens

the long-term success and sustainability of programs that empower students with IDD to reach their full potential.

Action: ServiceNow data will be reviewed monthly by Access to Achievement Coordinator and supervisor in order to inform program development and planning.

Action: Program evaluation will be completed annually by the Access to Achievement Coordinator and supervisor. Evaluation results should be utilized for future-planning and program implementation.

Appendix B: SERVICENOW REPORTING GUIDE



**NC COMMUNITY
COLLEGES**

**Access to
Achievement**

ServiceNow Reporting Guide

November 2024

Updated: April 2025

Updated: September 2025

Access to Achievement began as a result of a legislative action in 2023. Collecting data related to student experience, student and college outcomes and community involvement will guide the state in decision making to best support this initiative and most importantly, community college students with IDD across the state of North Carolina.

Coordinators

Coordinator Name – should auto populate

Email – should auto populate

Community College – please choose from drop down

Years employed as an Access to Achievement Coordinator – enter value

Student Data

On the left side: Add New Student - click red box to enter a new student (a student for whom you are developing a person-centered plan)

Coordinator Name – should auto populate

Legal Name – first and last

Preferred Name – if applicable, may be left blank if student prefers to go by legal name

Student ID # - enter student's Colleague number

Email – can be college email or personal email – ask the student for the address with which they are most likely to engage

Primary phone contact – preferably the student's number

Secondary phone contact – a backup number in case the student cannot be reached on the primary line

DOB – enter in MM/DD/YYYY format, or select calendar icon to choose date from a calendar

County of Residence – Select from drop down. Choose “Out of State” (last option in drop down) if the student is not a resident of NC.

Address – enter physical address where student currently resides

Ethnicity - student may select the option(s) with which they identify. This is not required so if the student prefers not to answer it may be left blank.

Race – student may select the option(s) with which they identify. This is not required so if the student prefers not to answer it may be left blank.

Gender – student may select the option with which they identify

Guardianship – select which option fits the student’s situation

Is this a high school student enrolled in CCP, Early College or Dual Enrolled? Select Yes or No.

Did the student participate in CTE classes in high school – select yes, no or transcript not available. It is preferable to collect this information via transcript, but if you are not able to see a transcript you can answer based on student report or select transcript not available if they are unsure.

Does the student have a Person-Centered Plan? - Select Yes or No. Remember to return to this to update if the student did not originally have a PCP but later changed their mind.

Is the student employed at the time of enrollment in Access to Achievement? - Select Yes or No. If yes, answer the questions that populate based on student report.

Referral Source – How did the student hear about Access to Achievement? You may select more than one or choose other, at which time you will be prompted to enter a short answer

Date student originally enrolled in the Access to Achievement Program – Enter the date you began working with the student on their person-centered plan.

Is the student re-enrolling in the Access to Achievement program? - select yes or no, if yes, enter date of re-enrollment. This would be the date either a new PCP was initiated or the former PCP was revisited and updated.

Active Student and Student Status – when you enter a new student they will automatically be categorized as active. This checkbox for “Active Student” will not appear until after the student profile has been created and you go back in to view. Likewise, the dropdown menu for Student Status will not appear until after the student profile has been created and you go back in to view.

A student remains active until they are through with their 6 months of follow-up.

When a student leaves Access to Achievement for any reason you will edit the Student Status to **Follow Up**.

Once a student has completed 6 months of follow-up you will change the student status to **Exited** and uncheck the Active Student box.

Outcomes

For each question, answer yes or no.

- Degrees earned prior to the student's participation in this program are not entered here. This is only for outcomes earned while in the Access to Achievement program (for any portion of their time working toward the outcome).
- Do not answer yes until the student has completed the coursework and passed the test to officially earn the credential, certificate, diploma or degree.
- When you answer yes, you will be prompted to enter the name of the credential, certificate, diploma or degree. For employment outcomes, answer employment related questions that populate when Yes is selected.

Definitions:

Workforce CE industry recognized credential: credentials that are exam based, administered by third parties, supplemental to traditional postsecondary credentials, and sought or accepted by employers in an industry

Workplace Preparation credential: This could be a credential, certificate or badge. Examples or programs through which a student may earn this are Working Smart, Northstar Digital Literacy, WorkKeys, etc. These are credentials that prepare individuals for the general workplace and are not necessarily specific to a certain industry or job.

Stand-Alone Certificate (Curriculum Standard is Certificate-Only):

When a curriculum standard indicates the only award available is a certificate, the college's certificate program must contain the following:

- Total hours of 12 SHC minimum and 18 SHC maximum.
- General education is not required but may be included as appropriate.
- All core courses on the curriculum standard must be included.
- The remaining hours must come from the prefixes listed in the Other Major Hours section of the curriculum standard.
- A maximum of 2 SHC of WBL (Work-Based Learning)
- A maximum of 3 SHC of selected topics and seminar courses.
- A maximum of 1 SHC of other required hours. These are courses that are not general education courses and not included in the prefixes in the Other Major Hours category of the curriculum standard, but are necessary to fulfill graduation requirements, such as ACA and

computer literacy courses.

Diploma from Associate in Applied Science (AAS) Program:

A college with a System Office approved program of study for an AAS program may offer a diploma comprised of courses from the AAS program. The college's diploma program must contain the following:

- Total hours of 36 SHC minimum and 48 SHC maximum.
- Six SHC of general education courses, three of which must be in communication. A college may substitute diploma/certificate level general education courses (course numbers 100-109) for the general education courses in the AAS program.
- A minimum of 12 SHC from the core of the AAS program if the diploma is the highest level offered by the college. If the curriculum standard denotes core courses required for a diploma, all such courses must be included in the core of the diploma program. • A maximum of 4 SHC of WBL (Work-Based Learning).
- A maximum of 3 SHC of selected topic or seminar courses.
- A maximum of 4 SHC of other required hours. These are courses that are not general education courses and not included in the prefixes in the Other Major Hours category of the curriculum standard, but are necessary to fulfill graduation requirements.

Degree: - an associate's degree earned as a result of a planned program of study. Specific definitions for different degrees can be found in the [Curriculum Procedure Reference Manual](#).

Add New Student Enrollments

Click the red banner to enter information regarding specific courses in which a student is enrolled.

Coordinator Name – should auto populate

Student Name – select from drop down. If you do not see the student there, go back to make sure that they have been entered and they are active.

Student Services/Barriers - Please remember to update this quarterly or as needs change.

Is the student being referred to other services? - Select Yes or No. If Yes is selected, identify which services from drop down.

Are there barriers to the student accessing their education? Select Yes or No. If Yes is selected, identify which services from drop down.

Is the student receiving services through EIPD? - this could be either through the college-based EIPD (if you are one of the 6 pilot colleges) or through your local EIPD office.

Is the student receiving formal accommodations through accessibility services? - Answer yes only if all the paperwork is in place and accommodations are officially in place.

Is the student utilizing assistive technology in one or more courses? - this may be officially through Accessibility Services or informally through Access to Achievement or something the student has put in place themselves (ie: through their iPhone, etc)

If you answer yes, please document which forms of assistive technology are currently being used.

Is the student participating in a hands-on learning opportunity? If you select yes, you will be prompted to choose the type of hands-on learning opportunity. Please select the option that is most applicable to the student's scenario.

Is the student participating in inclusive extracurricular clubs/organizations?

Please answer based on the student's current involvement. Only enter participations that are created for and available to the general college student body.

If you answer yes, please enter which clubs or organizations they are involved in.

Course Enrollments

For each category, enter whether or not the student is enrolled in that type of class. If you answer yes:

- You will then be given the opportunity to enter up to 6 different classes of that type that they may be enrolled in.
- You will be asked if the class is inclusive. This means that it is a class that is offered to the general college population and was not designed especially for students with disabilities.
- You will be asked to enter the status. You may select enrolled if they are still in the class, completed if they have finished the class, or dropped/withdrawn if they did not complete the class.
 - If you choose completed, you will be asked to enter if they earned a passing grade.
- For work-based learning or internship enter yes or no.

Student Encounter

Click on the green banner to add a new student encounter. This should be done each time you meet with a student whether it be in person, via email, text, phone, etc. This is only done during the student's active period. Once they are in follow-up, information is documented in the follow-up section.

Bulk texts and emails do not need to be documented in ServiceNow as an encounter unless a bulk text or email results in a two-way conversation with a student regarding their education or educational experience at your college. At that time, it would become appropriate for an encounter.

Coordinator name – should auto populate

Student Name – enter student name First Last

Date of Encounter – enter the date or the contact with the student

Type of Encounter – select from drop down the type of encounter. If you choose other, you will be prompted to specify the type of encounter.

Have you updated the Enrollments and Outcomes forms? This is a reminder to enter any new enrollments, or to close out any enrollments as courses are completed. Please also remember to enter an outcome any time a student earns a credential, certificate, diploma or degree.

Provide a brief summary of the student encounter: This is your area to enter a case note. You may also attach a document if you enter the case note in word or google doc, etc. You may also upload any other documents that are related to this specific encounter as you see fit.

Outreach

Please be sure this section is filled out for each month by the 5th of the following month (or the Monday after if the 5th falls on a weekend. If the 5th falls on a holiday, please have it complete by the next business day).

Click in the blue banner to begin a new month's outreach.

Coordinator Name – should auto populate

Month/Year – select the month and enter the year during which the outreach took place

Number of community events attended by coordinator – enter the total number of community events attended where outreach about Access to Achievement took place. Examples of community events are civic clubs (ie: Kiwanis, Rotary), Chamber of Commerce events, community fairs, etc.

Number of high school campus visits by Coordinator – enter total number of high school visits (either at the high school or at your college) during which the coordinator met with either faculty/staff or students to share information about Access to Achievement.

Number of business/industry meetings or events attended or hosted by Coordinator – enter total number of business or industry related meetings or events attended or hosted.

Number of agency or community partner contacts by Coordinator – Enter the number of contacts with local agencies or partners that were not events (phone calls, meetings, email outreach, etc).

How many contacts with potential students (not yet enrolled in the college)? - Here you would count any prospective students who requested to meet with you as they prepare to enroll. They do not count as an active student until they enroll, but you can capture meetings with potential students here.

You would NOT count students here who you were meeting with at a resource fair or a high school visit as those numbers would be captured in the questions above.

Other – please add any information you feel is pertinent to Outreach that does not fall into one of the above categories.

Add attachments at the bottom if you have any photos or documents you would like to share (flyers, email invitations, etc).

Pathways

Click in the orange banner at the top to add new pathway information.

Coordinator Name – should auto populate

Has a new vocational training opportunity been created? This would include a new Pathway opportunity at your college or a new access point to a Pathway that provides opportunities for your students.

If you select yes:

- **Is it part of a career pathway?** - does it fall within one of the 16 career clusters and does

it prepare students for a job in a specific field?

- **Name of Pathway** – typically these are the names of the career clusters, or may be a more specific path within a career cluster (ie: Health Science or Nursing)
- **Select the type of training course** – select whether this is a CU or CE course. If it is/can be either, select which you are planning to enroll students in at this time.
- **Will it result in a credential, certificate or degree?** - this question related to the specific course created to allow students access to a Pathway. For example, some colleges have created a Companion Care course that serves as a precursor to a Personal Care Assistant or CNA course.

Professional Development

Click in the blue banner to begin Professional Development documentation for a new month.

Coordinator Name – should auto populate

Month/Year – select the month and enter the year during which the outreach took place

Number of Professional Development opportunities/sessions provided to local staff – this includes formal, planned sessions offered to a group of people.

Number of Technical Assistance encounters with faculty and staff regarding inclusivity and instruction of students with IDD – this includes one-on-one phone calls, email conversations or meetings supporting faculty and staff on more specific student situations.

Number of specialized credentials regarding inclusivity and instruction of individuals with IDD obtained by faculty and staff – enter the number of specialized credentials members of your faculty and staff earned within the month specific to working with individuals with IDD. This would likely be through a post-secondary/graduate/Ph.D program, through a partner such as ThinkCollege, etc.

Add attachments at the bottom if you have any photos or documents you would like to share (flyers, email invitations, etc).

Follow Up

Once it is indicated in the Student Data section that a student is in follow up, their name will appear in the drop-down menu when “Add New Follow Up” is clicked.

Click on the red banner to add a new follow up entry. This should be done once per month for the six months following the student’s separation from Access to Achievement.

Student Name – select from drop-down. If the name is not present, check Student Data section to be sure it is indicated that the student is in follow up.

Month – select from drop down

Year – enter year

What brought this student to follow up? - select completed course of study or left program prior to completion. If the student left prior to completion, you will have the opportunity to enter an explanation in a text box.

Is the individual enrolled in postsecondary education elsewhere? - Select this if the student is at another community college or has transferred to a four year college or university. Once selected, you will be prompted to enter where they are attending and what course of study they are following.

Is the individual employed? - Select yes if the student has a paying job. You will be prompted to enter information about the job when Yes is selected.

Notes – please use this section to explain any circumstances that may be different from the month before (if they left a job explain why, if they are not employed or in school explain why). You may also enter information about assistive technology being used, support needed by the student or employer, etc.

Reports

Use this area to pull reports monthly to discuss with your supervisor or include in college and/or community updates.

CONCLUSION

After the second full year of implementation, Access to Achievement has demonstrated meaningful success at the fifteen colleges. Students with IDD have gained academic and work force skills, practical and meaningful opportunities, and a sense of independence and acceptance. Coordinators have played a critical role in connecting students to resources, providing professional development for faculty and staff, fostering inclusive campus environments, and guiding program implementation and institutional change. Leadership at the state level has provided robust, responsive technical assistance, guidance, and high-quality resources to ensure consistent support for local efforts. As the initiative grows in numbers and types of students served, it is also being strategically integrated into the community college infrastructure. The recently launched collaboration with state level subject matter experts to develop practical, skills-based entry points in several career pathways indicates a willingness to serve not only students who have chosen to enroll at a community college but also those potential students who have never considered community college enrollment a viable option for them. With a strong success record and institutional momentum, Access to Achievement is having a transformational impact within the NC Community College System.