

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

Request: The State Board of Community Colleges is requested to approve allocations of \$463,229 per year of state funds. These funds will be for a new concurrent cohort that will parallel the last two fiscal years of our current five-year grant cycle. The funds will be for salary, benefits, professional development, and advising support per the NC Career Coach legislation (G.S. 115D-30.30).

Strategic Plan Reference:

Goal 2 Enrollment: Streamline and strengthen the pathways to community colleges and careers.
 Strategy 2.3.2: Expand the use of Career Coaches to include the remaining North Carolina community colleges.

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

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

Effective July 1, 2019, G.S. 115D-30.30(c)(2)(b)(2) adjusted the matching formula based on county tiers. Table 1 indicates the county tier ranking for each program based on the LEA county in which the coach will be serving.

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

Rationale: In March 2026, the System office staff reviewed the applications of twelve colleges that requested an allocated coach in accordance with the requirements outlined in G.S. 115D-30.30. Allocations were made to nine colleges; however, three applications were not approved due to limited funding. The total of these applications is \$212,700. Additional Career Coach funding has become available, and this item would fund the remaining three colleges. Approved funds in the following amounts will allow the colleges to hire one additional Career Coach: Cleveland CC for \$86,790; Craven CC for \$47,896; and James Sprunt CC for \$78,014.

Additionally, the collaboration with the Gear Up program ended June 30, 2026. With the additional funding, this item would support Beaufort County CC, College of The

Albemarle, and Southwestern CC with funding to replace the position lost due to the Gear Up grant ending. Beaufort County CC will receive \$95,000, College of The Albemarle will receive \$84,472, and Southwestern CC will receive \$71,057. South Piedmont Community College received funding in the March 2026 allocation to replace its GEAR UP-funded career coach, so they will not receive additional funds.

Table 1: Recommended Allocations

Community College	Region	Tier Ranking & County	# New Coaches	New Funding FY 2026-2027; FY 2027-2028	Total Funding FY 2026-2027; FY 2027-2028
Beaufort County CC	Eastern	Tier 1 – Washington	1	\$ 95,000	\$285,000
Cleveland CC	Western	Tier 1 – Cleveland	1	\$ 86,790	\$237,162
College of The Albemarle	Eastern	Tier 1 – Pasquotank County	1	\$ 84,472	\$253,416
Craven CC	Eastern	Tier 2 – Craven	1	\$ 47,896	\$ 94,476
James Sprunt CC	Eastern	Tier 1 – Duplin	1	\$ 78,014	\$238,466
Southwestern CC	Western	Tier 2 - Jackson	1	\$ 71,057	\$142,114
6 Colleges			6	\$463,229	\$1,250,634

Fund Source and Availability: October 1, 2026-June 30, 2027; allowable expenditures retroactive to July 1, 2026, may be charged against these funds. FY 2027-28 allocations are contingent upon the availability of State General Fund appropriation. Funding will be adjusted as appropriate to reflect legislative salary and benefit rate increases.

Contact:

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