

Article 2B.

High School Programs.

**§ 115D-30.5. Career and College Promise Program.**

(a) There is established the Career and College Promise Program to allow pathways for qualified high school students to take community college courses without the payment of tuition.

(b) Subject to the approval of the State Board of Community Colleges, local community colleges may collaborate with public school units and nonpublic schools to offer courses through the following programs:

- (1) Academic transition pathways for qualified high school students that lead to a career technical education certificate, diploma, or State or industry-recognized credential.
- (2) College transfer pathways requiring the successful completion of 30 semester credit hours of transfer courses, including English and mathematics, for the following students:
  - a. Qualified junior and senior high school students.
  - b. Qualified freshmen and sophomore high school students, if all of the following requirements are met:
    1. The student is determined to be academically gifted, have a demonstrated readiness for the course material, and have the maturity to justify admission to the community college by (i) the community college president, (ii) the student's high school principal or equivalent administrator, and (iii) the academically gifted coordinator, if one is employed by the high school or local school administrative unit.
    2. The student participates in academic advising focused on the implications of being admitted to college early with representatives from the high school and the community college.
    3. The student's parent or guardian has given consent for the student to participate.
- (3) Career and College Ready Graduate pathways introducing college developmental mathematics and developmental English and reading curricula in the junior or senior year of high school, including the immediately preceding summers of those years, and providing opportunities for college remediation for students prior to high school graduation, ensuring students are prepared for college and career success as they transition from high school to higher education. (2025-56, ss. 1(f), 2.5(b).)

**§ 115D-30.10. Evaluation of Career and College Promise Program.**

(a) Evaluation. – In addition to the evaluation of cooperative innovative high schools by the State Board of Education pursuant to G.S. 115C-238.55, the State Board of Community Colleges, in conjunction with the State Board of Education and the Board of Governors of The University of North Carolina, shall evaluate the success of students participating in the Career and College Promise Program, including the College Transfer pathway and the Career and Technical Education pathway.

(b) Metrics. – Success shall be measured by high school retention rates, high school completion rates, high school dropout rates, certification and associate degree completion,

admission to four-year institutions, postgraduation employment in career or study-related fields, and employer satisfaction of employees who participated in the programs. The evaluation shall also include an analysis of the cost of students participating in each of the programs within the Career and College Promise Program, including at least the following:

- (1) Total enrollment funding, the number of budgeted full-time equivalent students, and the number of students enrolled in courses through cooperative innovative high schools, the College Transfer pathway, and the Career and Technical Education pathway.
- (2) The cost and number of waivers of tuition and registration fees provided for students enrolled in courses through cooperative innovative high schools, the College Transfer pathway, and the Career and Technical Education pathway.
- (3) Any additional costs of a student attending courses on campus if a student is not attending public school in a local school administrative unit for the majority of the student's instructional time.

(c) Report. – The Boards shall jointly report by March 15 of each year to the Joint Legislative Education Oversight Committee, the Senate Appropriations Committee on Education/Higher Education, the House Appropriations Committee on Education, and the Fiscal Research Division of the General Assembly. The report shall be combined with the evaluation of cooperative innovative high schools required by G.S. 115C-238.55, and the Community Colleges System Office shall be responsible for submitting the combined report. (2025-56, s. 1(f).)

#### **§ 115D-30.15. Cooperative innovative high schools.**

Subject to the approval of the State Board of Community Colleges, local community colleges may collaborate with local school administrative units to offer cooperative innovative high school programs, as provided by Part 9 of Article 16 of Chapter 115C of the General Statutes. (2025-56, s. 1(f).)

#### **§ 115D-30.20. Noncredit courses.**

Subject to rules adopted by the State Board of Community Colleges, local community colleges may provide for the following:

- (1) During the summer quarter, persons less than 16 years old may be permitted to take noncredit courses on a self-supporting basis.
- (2) High school students may be permitted to take noncredit courses in safe driving on a self-supporting basis during the academic year or the summer.
- (3) High school students 16 years and older may be permitted to take noncredit courses, except adult basic skills.
- (4) Notwithstanding any other provision of this Article, qualified youth 15 years and older may be permitted to enroll in courses, including certification-eligible courses, in fire training pursuant to G.S. 95-25.5(n) and on a specialized course list approved by the State Board of Community Colleges in accordance with G.S. 115D-30.5. (2025-56, s. 1(f).)

#### **§ 115D-30.25. Gateway to College Program.**

The purpose of the first semester of the Gateway to College Program is to address additional support to successfully complete the Program. Students may need to take developmental courses necessary for the transition to more challenging courses; therefore, the State Board of Community

Colleges shall (i) permit high school students who are enrolled in Gateway to College Programs to enroll in developmental courses based on an assessment of their individual student needs by a high school and community college staff team and (ii) include this coursework in computing the budget FTE for the colleges. (2025-56, s. 1(f).)

**§ 115D-30.30. NC Career Coach Program.**

(a) Purpose. – There is established the NC Career Coach Program to place community college career coaches in high schools to assist students with determining career goals and identifying community college programs that would enable students to achieve these goals.

(b) Memorandum of Understanding. – The board of trustees of a community college and a local board of education of a local school administrative unit within the service area of the community college shall enter into a memorandum of understanding for the placement of career coaches employed by the board of trustees of the community college in schools within the local school administrative unit. At a minimum, the memorandum of understanding shall include the following:

- (1) Requirement that the community college provides the following:
  - a. Hiring, training, and supervision of career coaches. The board of trustees may include a local board of education liaison on the hiring committee to participate in the decision making regarding hiring for the coach positions.
  - b. Salary, benefits, and all other expenses related to the employment of the career coach. The coach will be an employee of the board of trustees and will not be an agent or employee of the local board of education.
  - c. Development of pedagogical materials and technologies needed to enhance the advising process.
  - d. Criminal background checks required by the local school administrative unit for employees working directly with students.
  - e. Agreement that, while on any school campus, the career coach will obey all local board of education rules and will be subject to the authority of the school building administration.
- (2) Requirement that the local school administrative unit provides the following to career coaches:
  - a. Access to student records, as needed to carry out the coach's job responsibilities.
  - b. Office space on site appropriate for student advising.
  - c. Information technology resources, including, but not limited to, internet access, telephone, and copying.
  - d. Initial school orientation and ongoing integration into the faculty and staff community.
  - e. Promotion of school-wide awareness of coach duties.
  - f. Facilitation of the coach's access to individual classes and larger assemblies for the purposes of awareness building.

(c) Application for NC Career Coach Program Funding. – The board of trustees of a community college and a local board of education of a local school administrative unit within the service area of the community college jointly may apply for available funds for NC Career Coach

Program funding from the State Board of Community Colleges. The State Board of Community Colleges shall establish a process for award of funds as follows:

- (1) Advisory committee. – Establishment of an advisory committee, which shall include representatives from the NC Community College System, the Department of Public Instruction, the Department of Commerce, and at least three representatives of the business community, to review applications and make recommendations for funding awards to the State Board.
- (2) Application submission requirements. – The State Board of Community Colleges shall require at least the following:
  - a. Evidence of a signed memorandum of understanding that meets, at a minimum, the requirements of this section.
  - b. Evidence that the funding request will be matched with local funds in accordance with the following:
    1. Matching funds may come from public or private sources.
    2. The match amount shall be determined based on the development tier designation of the county in which the local school administrative unit is located where the career coach is assigned on the date of the award of funds by the State Board of Community Colleges according to the following:
      - I. If located in a tier one county as defined in G.S. 143B-437.08, no local match shall be required.
      - II. If located in a tier two county as defined in G.S. 143B-437.08, one dollar (\$1.00) of local funds for every two dollars (\$2.00) in State funds shall be required.
      - III. If located in a tier three county as defined in G.S. 143B-437.08, one dollar (\$1.00) of local funds for every one dollar (\$1.00) in State funds shall be required.
- (3) Awards criteria. – The State Board of Community Colleges shall develop criteria for consideration in determining the award of funds that shall include the following:
  - a. Consideration of the workforce needs of business and industry in the region.
  - b. Targeting of resources to enhance ongoing economic activity within the community college service area and surrounding counties.
  - c. Geographic diversity of awards.
- (d) Annual Report. –
  - (1) The board of trustees of a community college that employs one or more career coaches shall report annually to the State Board of Community Colleges on implementation and outcomes of the Program, including the following information:
    - a. Number of career coaches employed.
    - b. Number of local school administrative units served and names of schools in which career coaches are placed.
    - c. Number of students annually counseled by career coaches.
    - d. Impact of career coaches on student choices, as determined by a valid measure selected by the State Board of Community Colleges.

- (2) The State Board of Community Colleges shall report annually no later than October 1 to the Joint Legislative Education Oversight Committee on the following:
- a. A compilation of the information reported by the board of trustees of community colleges, as provided in subdivision (1) of this subsection.
  - b. Number and names of partnership applicants for NC Career Coach Program funding.
  - c. Number, names, and amounts of those awarded NC Career Coach Program funding.

(e) Administrative Costs. – The North Carolina Community Colleges System Office may use up to four percent (4%) of the funds appropriated for the NC Career Coach Program for administrative costs, including system office staffing, professional development, and program management and evaluation. These funds shall be utilized to enhance the effectiveness and sustainability of the program, ensuring its continued support for students within the community college system. The North Carolina Community Colleges System Office shall have the authority to allocate and oversee the utilization of these administrative funds in alignment with the Program's goals and requirements. (2025-56, ss. 1(f), 2.5(c).)