GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA
SESSION 2025

SESSION LAW 2025-56
SENATE BILL 125

AN ACT TO REORGANIZE CHAPTER 115D OF THE GENERAL STATUTES AND MAKE NECESSARY CONFORMING CHANGES, TO MAKE VARIOUS CHANGES TO THE COMMUNITY COLLEGES STATUTES, TO ALLOW CERTAIN NONPUBLIC SCHOOLS TO REQUEST RESIDENCY LICENSES FOR TEACHERS, AND TO EXTEND THE REVERSION DATE OF SCHOOL SAFETY GRANT FUNDS.

The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

PART I. REORGANIZATION OF CHAPTER 115D

SECTION 1.(a) Article 1 of Chapter 115D of the General Statutes reads as rewritten:

"Article 1.

"General Provisions for State Administration.

"Part 1. Establishment and Administration of the North Carolina Community Colleges System.

"**§ 115D-1. Statement of purpose.**

The purposes of this Chapter are to provide for the establishment, organization, and administration of a system of educational institutions throughout the State offering courses of instruction in one or more of the general areas of two-year college parallel, technical, vocational, and adult education programs, to serve as a legislative charter for such institutions, and to authorize the levying of local taxes and the issuing of local bonds for the support thereof. The major purpose of each and every institution operating under the provisions of this Chapter shall be and shall continue to be the offering of vocational and technical education and training, and of basic, high school level, academic education needed in order to profit from vocational and technical education, for students who are high school graduates or who are beyond the compulsory age limit of the public school system and who have left the public schools, provided, juveniles of any age committed to the Division of Juvenile Justice of the Department of Public Safety by a court of competent jurisdiction may, if approved by the director of the youth development center to which they are assigned, take courses offered by institutions of the system if they are otherwise qualified for admission.

The Community Colleges System Office is designated as the primary lead agency for delivering workforce development training, adult literacy training, and adult education programs in the State.

…

"~~**§ 115D-1.3. Accreditation of secondary school located in North Carolina shall not be a factor in admissions, loans, scholarships, or other educational policies.**~~

~~(a) For purposes of this section, the term "accreditation" shall include certification or any other similar approval process.~~

~~(b) The State Board of Community Colleges shall adopt a policy that prohibits any community college from soliciting or using information regarding the accreditation of a secondary school located in North Carolina that a person attended as a factor affecting admissions, loans, scholarships, or other educational activity at the community college, unless the accreditation was conducted by a State agency.~~

…

"**§ 115D-4.1. College transfer program approval; standards for programs; annual reporting requirements.**

(a) Repealed by Session Laws 1995, c. 288, s. 1, effective September 1, 1995.

(b) The State Board of Community Colleges may approve the addition of the college transfer program to a community college. If addition of the college transfer program to an institution would require a substantial increase in funds, State Board approval shall be subject to appropriation of funds by the General Assembly for this purpose.

(c) Addition of the college transfer program shall not decrease an institution's ability to provide programs within its basic mission of vocational and technical training and basic academic education.

(d) The State Board of Community Colleges shall develop appropriate criteria and standards to regulate the addition of the college transfer program to institutions.

(e) The State Board of Community Colleges shall develop appropriate criteria and standards to regulate the operation of college transfer programs.

(f) The Board of Governors of The University of North Carolina shall report to each community college and to the State Board of Community Colleges in accordance with G.S. 116-11(10b) on the academic performance of that community college's transfer students. If the State Board of Community Colleges finds that college transfer students from a community college are not consistently performing adequately at a four-year college, the Board shall review the community college's program and determine what steps are necessary to remedy the problem. The Board shall report annually to the General Assembly on the reports it receives and on what steps it is taking to remedy problems that it finds.

(g) The Community Colleges System Office shall report by April 15, 2011, and annually thereafter, to the Joint Legislative Education Oversight Committee, the State Board of Education, the Office of State Budget and Management, and the Fiscal Research Division of the General Assembly on the implementation of the UNC-NCCCS 2+2 E-Learning Initiative. This report shall include:

(1) The courses and programs within the 2+2 E-Learning Initiative;

(2) The total number of prospective teachers that have taken or are taking part in this initiative to date broken down by the current academic period and each of the previous academic periods since the program's inception;

(3) The total number of teachers currently in the State's classrooms, by local school administrative unit, who have taken part in this initiative;

(4) The change in the number of teachers available to schools since the program's inception;

(5) The qualitative data from students, teachers, local school administrative unit personnel, university personnel, and community college personnel as to the impact of this initiative on our State's teaching pool; and

(6) An explanation of the expenditures and collaborative programs between the North Carolina Community College System and The University of North Carolina, including recommendations for improvement.

"**§ 115D-5. Administration of institutions by State Board of Community Colleges; personnel exempt from North Carolina Human Resources Act; extension courses; tuition waiver; in-plant training; contracting, etc., for establishment and operation of extension units of the community college system; use of existing public school facilities.**

(a) The State Board of Community Colleges may adopt and execute such policies, regulations and standards concerning the establishment, administration, and operation of institutions as the State Board may deem necessary to insure the quality of educational programs, to promote the systematic meeting of educational needs of the State, and to provide for the equitable distribution of State and federal funds to the several institutions.

~~The State Board of Community Colleges shall establish standards and scales for salaries and allotments paid from funds administered by the State Board, and all employees of the institutions shall be exempt from the provisions of the North Carolina Human Resources Act. Any and all salary caps set by the State Board for community college presidents shall apply only to the State-paid portion of the salary. Except as otherwise provided by law, the employer contribution rate on the local-paid portion of the salary, to be paid from local funds, shall be set by the State Treasurer based on actuarial recommendations. The State Board shall have authority with respect to individual institutions: to approve sites, capital improvement projects, budgets; to approve the selection of the chief administrative officer; to establish and administer standards for professional personnel, curricula, admissions, and graduation; to regulate the awarding of degrees, diplomas, and certificates; to establish and regulate student tuition and fees within policies for tuition and fees established by the General Assembly; and to establish and regulate financial accounting procedures.~~

~~The State Board of Community Colleges shall require each community college to meet the faculty credential requirements of its accrediting agency for all community college programs.~~

~~(a1) Notwithstanding G.S. 66-58(c)(3) or any other provisions of law, the State Board of Community Colleges may adopt rules governing the expenditure of funds derived from bookstore sales by community colleges. These expenditures shall be consistent with the mission and purpose of the Community College System. Profits may be used in the support and enhancement of the bookstores, for student aid or scholarships, for expenditures of direct benefit to students, and for other similar expenditures authorized by the board of trustees, subject to rules adopted by the State Board. These funds shall not be used to supplement salaries of any personnel.~~

~~(a2) The State Board of Community Colleges shall comply with the provisions of G.S. 116-11(10a) to plan and implement an exchange of information between the public schools and the institutions of higher education in the State.~~

~~(a3) The State Board of Community Colleges shall adopt the following rules to assist community colleges in their administration of procedures necessary to implement G.S. 20-11 and G.S. 20-13.2:~~

- ~~(1) To establish the procedures a person who is or was enrolled in a community college must follow and the requirements that person must meet to obtain a driving eligibility certificate.~~
- ~~(2) To require the person who is required under G.S. 20-11(n) to sign the driving eligibility certificate to provide the certificate if he or she determines that one of the following requirements is met:~~
  - ~~a. The person seeking the certificate is eligible for the certificate under G.S. 20-11(n)(1) and is not subject to G.S. 20-11(n1).~~
  - ~~b. The person seeking the certificate is eligible for the certificate under G.S. 20-11(n)(1) and G.S. 20-11(n1).~~
- ~~(3) To provide for an appeal through the grievance procedures established by the board of trustees of each community college by a person who is denied a driving eligibility certificate.~~
- ~~(4) To define exemplary student behavior and to define what constitutes the successful completion of a drug or alcohol treatment counseling program.~~

~~The State Board also shall develop policies as to when it is appropriate to notify the Division of Motor Vehicles that a person who is or was enrolled in a community college no longer meets the requirements for a driving eligibility certificate. The State Board also shall adopt guidelines to assist the presidents of community colleges in their designation of representatives to sign driving eligibility certificates.~~

~~The State Board shall develop a form for the appropriate individuals to provide their written, irrevocable consent for a community college to disclose~~

~~to the Division of Motor Vehicles that the student no longer meets the conditions for a driving eligibility certificate under G.S. 20-11(n)(1) or G.S. 20-11(n1), if applicable, in the event that this disclosure is necessary to comply with G.S. 20-11 or G.S. 20-13.2. Other than identifying under which statutory subsection the student is no longer eligible, no other details or information concerning the student's school record shall be released pursuant to this consent.~~

~~(b) In order to make instruction as accessible as possible to all citizens, the teaching of curricular courses and of noncurricular extension courses at convenient locations away from institution campuses as well as on campuses is authorized and shall be encouraged. A pro rata portion of the established regular tuition rate charged a full-time student shall be charged a part-time student taking any curriculum course. In lieu of any tuition charge, the State Board of Community Colleges shall establish a uniform registration fee, or a schedule of uniform registration fees, to be charged students enrolling in extension courses for which instruction is financed primarily from State funds. The State Board of Community Colleges may provide by general and uniform regulations for waiver of tuition and registration fees for the following:~~

- ~~(1) Persons not enrolled in elementary or secondary schools taking courses leading to a high school diploma or equivalent certificate.~~
- ~~(2) Courses requested by the following entities that support the organizations' training needs and are on a specialized course list approved by the State Board of Community Colleges:~~
  - ~~a. Volunteer fire departments.~~
  - ~~b. Municipal, county, or State fire departments.~~
  - ~~c. Volunteer EMS or rescue and lifesaving departments.~~
  - ~~d. Municipal, county, or State EMS or rescue and lifesaving departments.~~
  - ~~d1. Law enforcement, fire, EMS or rescue and lifesaving entities serving a lake authority that was created by a county board of commissioners prior to July 1, 2012.~~
  - ~~e. Radio Emergency Associated Communications Teams (REACT) under contract to a county as an emergency response agency.~~
  - ~~f. Municipal, county, or State law enforcement agencies.~~
  - ~~f1. Campus police agencies of private institutions of higher education certified by the Attorney General pursuant to Chapter 74G of the General Statutes.~~
  - ~~g. The Division of Prisons of the Department of Adult Correction and the Division of Juvenile Justice of the Department of Public Safety for the training of full-time custodial employees and employees of the Divisions required to be certified under Article 1 of Chapter 17C of the General Statutes and the rules of the Criminal Justice and Training Standards Commission.~~
  - ~~h. Repealed by Session Laws 2017-186, s. 2(hhhhh), effective December 1, 2017.~~
  - ~~i. The Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians law enforcement, fire, EMS or rescue and lifesaving tribal government departments or programs.~~
  - ~~j. The Criminal Justice Standards Division of the Department of Justice for the training of criminal justice professionals, as defined in G.S. 17C-20(6), who are required to be certified under (i) Article 1 of Chapter 17C of the General Statutes and the rules of the North Carolina Criminal Justice Education and Training Standards Commission or (ii) Chapter 17E of the General Statutes and the rules of the North Carolina Sheriffs' Education and Training Standards~~

Commission. The waivers provided for in this sub-subdivision apply to participants and recent graduates of the North Carolina Criminal Justice Fellows Program to obtain certifications for eligible criminal justice professions as defined in G.S. 17C-20(6).

(2a) Firefighters, EMS personnel, and rescue and lifesaving personnel whose duty station is located on a military installation within North Carolina for courses that support their organizations' training needs and are approved for this purpose by the State Board of Community Colleges.

(3) Repealed by Session Laws 2011-145, s. 8.12(a), effective July 1, 2011.

(4) Trainees enrolled in courses conducted under the Customized Training Program.

(5) through (9) Repealed by Session Laws 2011-145, s. 8.12(a), effective July 1, 2011.

(10) Elementary and secondary school employees enrolled in courses in first aid or cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR).

(11) Repealed by Session Laws 2013-360, s. 10.6, effective July 1, 2013.

(12) All courses taken by high school students at community colleges, in accordance with G.S. 115D-20(4) and this section.

(13) Human resources development courses for any individual who (i) is unemployed; (ii) has received notification of a pending layoff; (iii) is working and is eligible for the Federal Earned Income Tax Credit (FEITC); or (iv) is working and earning wages at or below two hundred percent (200%) of the federal poverty guidelines.

(14) Repealed by Session Laws 2011-145, s. 8.12(a), effective July 1, 2011.

(15) Courses providing employability skills, job-specific occupational or technical skills, or developmental education instruction to certain students who are concurrently enrolled in an eligible community college literacy course, in accordance with rules adopted by the State Board of Community Colleges.

(16) Courses provided to students who are participating in a pre-apprenticeship or apprenticeship program that meets all of the following criteria:

a. Meets one of the following:

1. Is a registered apprenticeship program recognized by the United States Department of Labor.

2. Is a pre-apprenticeship program recognized and approved by the State agency administering the statewide apprenticeship program.

b. Has a documented plan of study with courses relating to a job-specific occupational or technical skill.

c. Requires the participants in the program to be North Carolina high school students when entering the program.

The State Board of Community Colleges shall not waive tuition and registration fees for other individuals.

(b1) The State Board of Community Colleges shall not waive tuition and registration fees for community college faculty or staff members. Community colleges may, however, use State or local funds to pay tuition and registration fees for one course per semester for full-time community college faculty or staff members employed for a nine-, ten-, eleven-, or twelve-month term. Community colleges may also use State and local funds to pay tuition and registration fees for professional development courses and for other courses consistent with the academic assistance program authorized by the State Human Resources Commission.

(b2) Beginning February 1, 2018, and annually thereafter, the Community Colleges System Office shall report to the Joint Legislative Education Oversight Committee on the number and type of waivers granted pursuant to subsection (b) of this section.

(c) No course of instruction shall be offered by any community college at State expense or partial State expense to any captive or co-opted group of students, as defined by the State Board of Community Colleges, without prior approval of the State Board of Community Colleges. All course offerings approved for State prison inmates or prisoners in local jails must be tied to clearly identified job skills, transition needs, or both. Approval by the State Board of Community Colleges shall be presumed to constitute approval of both the course and the group served by that institution. The State Board of Community Colleges may delegate to the President the power to make an initial approval, with final approval to be made by the State Board of Community Colleges. A course taught without such approval will not yield any full-time equivalent students, as defined by the State Board of Community Colleges.

(c1) Community colleges shall report full-time equivalent (FTE) student hours for correction education programs on the basis of student membership hours. No community college shall operate a multi-entry/multi-exit class or program in a prison facility, except for a literacy class or program.

The State Board shall work with the Division of Adult Correction and Juvenile Justice of the Department of Public Safety on offering classes and programs that match the average length of stay of an inmate in a prison facility.

(c2) Courses in federal prisons shall not earn regular budget full-time equivalents, but may be offered on a self-supporting basis.

(c3) Funds appropriated for community college courses for prison inmates shall be used only for inmates in State prisons. The first priority for the use of these funds shall be to restore the FTE for basic skills courses to the FY 2008-2009 level. Funds not needed for this purpose may be used for continuing education and curriculum courses related to job skills training.

(d) Recodified as G.S. 115D-5.1(a) by Session Laws 2005-276, s. 8.4(a), effective July 1, 2005.

(e) Repealed by Session Laws 1999-84, s. 3, effective May 21, 1999.

(f) A community college may not offer a new program without the approval of the State Board of Community Colleges except that approval shall not be required if the tuition for the program will fully cover the cost of the program. If at any time tuition fails to fully cover the cost of a program that falls under the exception, the program shall be discontinued unless approved by the State Board of Community Colleges. If a proposed new program would serve more than one community college, the State Board of Community Colleges shall perform a feasibility study prior to acting on the proposal. The State Board of Community Colleges shall consider whether a regional approach can be used when developing new programs and, to the extent possible, shall initiate new programs on a regional basis.

The State Board of Community Colleges shall collect data on an annual basis on all new programs and program terminations it approved and any regionalization of programs during the year, including the specific reasons for which each program was terminated or approved.

(f1) The State Board shall adopt a policy requiring community colleges to be accredited in accordance with G.S. 115D-6.2.

(g) Funds appropriated to the Community Colleges System Office as operating expenses for allocation to the institutions comprising the North Carolina Community College System shall not be used to support recreation extension courses. The financing of these courses by any institution shall be on a self-supporting basis, and membership hours produced from these activities shall not be counted when computing full-time equivalent students (FTE) for use in budget-funding formulas at the State level.

(h) Whenever a community college offers real estate continuing education courses pursuant to G.S. 93A-4.1, the courses shall be offered on a self-supporting basis.

(i) Recodified as G.S. 115D-5.1(c) by Session Laws 2005-276, s. 8.4(a), effective July 1, 2005.

(j) The State Board of Community Colleges shall use its Board Reserve Fund for feasibility studies, pilot projects, start-up of new programs, and innovative ideas.

(k) Recodified as G.S. 115D-5.1(b) by Session Laws 2005-276, s. 8.4(a), effective July 1, 2005.

(*l*) The State Board shall review and approve lease purchase and installment purchase contracts as provided under G.S. 115D-58.15(b). The State Board shall adopt policies and procedures governing the review and approval process.

(m) The State Board of Community Colleges shall maintain an accountability function that conducts periodic reviews of each community college operating under the provisions of this Chapter. The purpose of the compliance review shall be to ensure that (i) data used to allocate State funds among community colleges is reported accurately to the System Office and (ii) community colleges are charging and waiving tuition and registration fees consistent with law. The State Board of Community Colleges shall require the use of a statistically valid sample size in performing compliance reviews of community colleges. All compliance review findings that are determined to be material shall be forwarded to the college president, local college board of trustees, the State Board of Community Colleges, and the State Auditor. The State Board of Community Colleges shall adopt rules governing the frequency, scope, and standard of materiality for compliance reviews.

(n) The North Carolina Community Colleges System Office shall provide the Department of Revenue with a list of all community colleges, including name, address, and other identifying information requested by the Department of Revenue. The North Carolina Community Colleges System Office shall update this list whenever there is a change.

(o) All multicampus centers approved by the State Board of Community Colleges shall receive funding under the same formula. The State Board of Community Colleges shall not approve any additional multicampus centers without identified recurring sources of funding. A community college facility shall be considered a multicampus center if it meets all of the following criteria:

(1) Is at least 4 miles away from the main campus of the community college and other multicampus center locations.

(2) Any other criteria established by the State Board.

(p) The North Carolina Community College System may offer courses, in accordance with Article 17D of Subchapter V of Chapter 115C of the General Statutes, to individuals who choose to enter the teaching profession through residency licensure.

(q) Repealed by Session Laws 2009-451, s. 8.9, effective July 1, 2009.

(r) The State Board of Community Colleges shall develop curriculum and continuing education standards for courses of instruction in American Sign Language and shall encourage community colleges to offer courses in American Sign Language as a modern foreign language.

(s) The State Board of Community Colleges may establish, retain and budget fees charged to students taking an adult high school equivalency diploma test, including fees for retesting. Fees collected for this purpose shall be used only to (i) offset the costs of the test, including the cost of scoring the test, (ii) offset the costs of printing adult high school equivalency diplomas, and (iii) meet federal and State reporting requirements related to the test.

(t) 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.

(u) The State Board of Community Colleges shall direct each community college to adopt a policy that authorizes a minimum of two excused absences each academic year for religious observances required by the faith of a student. The policy may require that the student provide written notice of the request for an excused absence a reasonable time prior to the religious observance. The policy shall also provide that the student shall be given the opportunity to make up any tests or other work missed due to an excused absence for a religious observance.

(v) Community colleges may teach curriculum courses at any time during the year, including the summer term. Student membership hours from these courses shall be counted when computing full-time equivalent students (FTE) for use in budget funding formulas at the State level.

(w) The State Board of Community Colleges shall review, at least every five years, service areas that include counties assigned to more than one community college to determine the feasibility of continuing to assign those counties to more than one community college. The State Board shall revise service areas as needed to ensure that counties are served effectively. The first review and any revisions shall be completed no later than March 1, 2016, and the State Board shall report its findings and any revisions to the Joint Legislative Education Oversight Committee no later than March 1, 2016. All subsequent reviews and revisions shall also be submitted to the Committee.

(x) 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. 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.

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.

(y) The State Board of Community Colleges shall adopt a policy to be applied uniformly throughout the Community College System to provide that any student enrolled in a community college who is a National Guard service member placed onto State active duty status during an academic term shall be given an excused absence for the period of time the student is on active duty. The policy shall further provide all of the following:

(1) The student shall be given the opportunity to make up any test or other work missed during the excused absence.

(2) The student shall be given the option, when feasible, to continue classes and coursework during the academic term through online participation for the period of time the student is placed on active duty.

(3) The student shall be given the option of receiving a temporary grade of "incomplete (IN)" or "absent from the final exam (AB)" for any course that the student was unable to complete as a result of being placed on State active duty status; however, the student must complete the course requirements within the period of time specified by the community college to avoid receiving a failing grade for the course.

(4) The student shall be permitted to drop, with no penalty, any course that the student was unable to complete as a result of being placed on State active duty status.

(z) The State Board of Community Colleges shall monitor community colleges for compliance with Article 38 of Chapter 116 of the General Statutes. If the State Board determines that a community college is in violation of Article 38, it shall report the identity of the community college to the Joint Legislative Education Oversight Committee.

"**§ 115D-5.1. Workforce Development Programs.**

(a) Community colleges shall assist in the preemployment and in-service training of employees in industry, business, agriculture, health occupation and governmental agencies. Such training shall include instruction on worker safety and health standards and practices applicable to the field of employment. The State Board of Community Colleges shall make appropriate regulations including the establishment of maximum hours of instruction which may be offered at State expense in each in-plant training program. No instructor or other employee of a community college shall engage in the normal management, supervisory and operational functions of the establishment in which the instruction is offered during the hours in which the instructor or other employee is employed for instructional or educational purposes.

(b) through (d) Repealed by Session Laws 2008-107, s. 8.7(a), effective July 1, 2008.

(e) There is created within the North Carolina Community College System the Customized Training Program. The Customized Training Program shall offer programs and training services to assist new and existing business and industry to remain productive, profitable, and within the State. Before a business or industry qualifies to receive assistance under the Customized Training Program, the President of the North Carolina Community College System shall determine that:

(1) The business is making an appreciable capital investment;

(2) The business is deploying new technology;

(2a) The business or individual is creating jobs, expanding an existing workforce, or enhancing the productivity and profitability of the operations within the State; and

(3) The skills of the workers will be enhanced by the assistance.

(f) The Community Colleges System Office shall report no later than September 1 of each year to the Joint Legislative Education Oversight Committee on:

(1) The total amount of funds received by a company under the Customized Training Program.

(1a) The types of services sought by the company, whether for new, expanding, or existing industry.

(2) The amount of funds per trainee received by that company.

(3) The amount of funds received per trainee by the community college delivering the training.

(4) The number of trainees trained by the company and community college.

(5) The number of years that company has been funded.

(f1) Notwithstanding any other provision of law, the State Board of Community Colleges may adopt guidelines that allow the Customized Training Program to use funds appropriated for that program to support training projects for the various branches of the Armed Forces of the United States.

(f2) Funds available to the Customized Training Program shall not revert at the end of a fiscal year but shall remain available until expended. Up to ten percent (10%) of the college-delivered training expenditures and up to five percent (5%) of the contractor-delivered training expenditures for the prior fiscal year for Customized Training may be allotted to each college for capacity building at that college.

(f3) Of the funds appropriated in a fiscal year for the Customized Training Programs, the State Board of Community Colleges may approve the use of up to eight percent (8%) for the training and support of regional community college personnel to deliver Customized Training Program services to business and industry.

(g) The State Board shall adopt guidelines to implement this section. At least 20 days before the effective date of any criteria or nontechnical amendments to guidelines, the State Board must publish the proposed guidelines on the Community Colleges System Office's web site and provide notice to persons who have requested notice of proposed guidelines. In addition, the State Board must accept oral and written comments on the proposed guidelines during the 15 business days beginning on the first day that the State Board has completed these notifications. For the purpose of this subsection, a technical amendment is either of the following:

(1) An amendment that corrects a spelling or grammatical error.

(2) An amendment that makes a clarification based on public comment and could have been anticipated by the public notice that immediately preceded the public comment.

"**§ 115D-5.1A. Short-Term Workforce Development Grant Program.**

(a) Program Established. There is established the North Carolina Community College Short-Term Workforce Development Grant Program (Program) to be administered by the State Board of Community Colleges. The State Board shall adopt rules for the disbursement of the grants pursuant to this section.

(b) Programs of Study. The State Board of Community Colleges, in collaboration with the Department of Commerce, shall determine the eligible programs of study for the Program, according to the occupations that are in the highest demand in the State. The eligible programs of study shall include programs such as architecture and construction, health sciences, information technology, electrical line worker, and manufacturing programs and may include other programs to meet local workforce needs.

(c) Award Amounts. To the extent funds are made available for the Program, the State Board of Community Colleges shall award grants in an amount of up to seven hundred fifty dollars ($750.00) to students pursuing short-term, noncredit State and industry workforce credentials. The State Board of Community Colleges shall establish criteria for initial and continuing eligibility for students. At a minimum, students shall be required to qualify as a resident for tuition purposes under the criteria set forth in G.S. 116-143.1 and in accordance with the coordinated and centralized residency determination process administered by the State Education Assistance Authority.

(d) Report. The State Board shall submit a report by April 1, 2024, and annually thereafter, on the Program to the Joint Legislative Education Oversight Committee and the Fiscal Research Division. The report shall contain, for each academic year and by programs of study, the amount of grant funds disbursed and the number of eligible students receiving funds.

"**§ 115D-5.2. Commercial fishing and aquaculture classes.**

(a) The General Assembly urges all community colleges serving the coastal area of the State to offer classes on commercial fishing and aquaculture.

~~(b) The North Carolina Community Colleges System Office shall provide technical assistance to these colleges on offering such classes.~~

~~(c) The North Carolina Community Colleges System Office shall report to the Joint Legislative Education Oversight Committee on any fiscal and administrative issues it identifies that limit colleges' ability to offer such courses.~~

"**§ 115D-5.5. Board Reserve Fund.**

The State Board of Community Colleges shall use its Board Reserve Fund for feasibility studies, pilot projects, start-up of new programs, and innovative ideas.

"Part 2. Administration of Local Community Colleges by State Board of Community Colleges.

"**§ 115D-6. Withdrawal of State support.**

The State Board of Community Colleges may withdraw or withhold State financial and administrative support of any institutions subject to the provisions of this Chapter in the event ~~that:~~of any of the following:

(1) The required local financial support of an institution is not ~~provided;~~provided.

(2) Sufficient State funds are not ~~available;~~available.

(3) The officials of an institution refuse or are unable to maintain prescribed standards of administration or ~~instruction; or~~instruction.

(4) Local educational needs for such an institution cease to exist.

"**§ 115D-6.1. Administration of institutions.**

(a) Policies. – The State Board of Community Colleges may adopt and execute such policies, regulations, and standards concerning the establishment, administration, and operation of institutions as the State Board may deem necessary to ensure the quality of educational programs, to promote the systematic meeting of educational needs of the State, and to provide for the equitable distribution of State and federal funds to the several institutions.

(b) Authority. – The State Board shall have the following authority with respect to individual institutions:

(1) To approve sites, capital improvement projects, and budgets.

(2) To approve the selection of the chief administrative officer.

(3) To establish and administer standards for professional personnel, curricula, admissions, and graduation.

(4) To regulate the awarding of degrees, diplomas, and certificates.

(5) To establish and regulate student tuition and fees within policies for tuition and fees established by the General Assembly.

(6) To establish and regulate financial accounting procedures.

(c) Salaries. – The State Board shall establish standards and scales for salaries and allotments paid from funds administered by the State Board, and all employees of the institutions shall be exempt from the provisions of the North Carolina Human Resources Act. Any and all salary caps set by the State Board for community college presidents shall apply only to the State-paid portion of the salary. Except as otherwise provided by law, the employer contribution rate on the local-paid portion of the salary, to be paid from local funds, shall be set by the State Treasurer based on actuarial recommendations.

(d) Faculty Credentials. – The State Board of Community Colleges shall require each community college to meet the faculty credential requirements of its accrediting agency for all community college programs.

"**§ 115D-6.2. ~~Accreditation.~~Accreditation policy.**

The State Board of Community Colleges shall adopt a policy requiring community colleges to be accredited in accordance with G.S. 115D-21.2.

~~(a) Definitions. The following definitions apply in this section:~~

~~(1) Accreditation cycle. The period of time during which a community college is accredited.~~

~~(2) Accrediting agency. – An agency or association that accredits institutions of higher education.~~

~~(3) Regional accrediting agency. – One of the following accrediting agencies:~~

~~a. Higher Learning Commission.~~

~~b. Middle States Commission on Higher Education.~~

~~c. New England Commission on Higher Education.~~

~~d. Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities.~~

~~e. Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges.~~

~~f. Western Association of Schools and Colleges Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges.~~

~~(b) Prohibit Consecutive Accreditation by an Accrediting Agency. – A community college shall not receive accreditation by an accrediting agency for consecutive accreditation cycles except as provided in subsection (c) of this section.~~

~~(c) Accreditation Transfer Procedure. – A community college that pursues accreditation with a different accrediting agency in accordance with this section shall pursue accreditation with a regional accrediting agency. If the community college is not granted candidacy status by any regional accrediting agency that is different from its current accrediting agency at least three years prior to the expiration of its current accreditation, the community college may remain with its current accrediting agency for an additional accreditation cycle.~~

~~(d) Certain Programs Exempt. – The requirements of this section do not apply to professional, departmental, or certificate programs at community colleges that have specific accreditation requirements or best practices, as identified by the State Board of Community Colleges.~~

~~(e) Cause of Action. – A community college may bring a civil action, as follows:~~

~~(1) Against any person who makes a false statement to the accrediting agency of the community college, if all of the following criteria are met:~~

~~a. The statement, if true, would mean the community college is out of compliance with its accreditation standards.~~

~~b. The person made the statement with knowledge that the statement was false or with reckless disregard as to whether it was false.~~

~~c. The accrediting agency conducted a review of the community college as a proximate result of the statement.~~

~~d. The review caused the community college to incur costs.~~

~~(2) A community college that prevails on a cause of action initiated pursuant to this subsection shall be entitled to the following:~~

~~a. Costs related to the review conducted by the accrediting agency, including for the following:~~

~~1. Additional hours worked by community college personnel.~~

~~2. Contracted services, including outside legal counsel.~~

~~3. Travel, lodging, and food expenses.~~

~~4. Fees required by the agency.~~

~~b. Reasonable attorney fees.~~

~~c. Court costs.~~

"**§ 115D-6.5. Notice of noncompliance; appointment of an interim board of trustees.**

…

(c) Interim Board Assumption of Powers and Duties. – The adoption of the resolution to remove the full board under this section shall have the effect of vacating the terms of all of the members serving on the board of trustees. Notwithstanding G.S. 115D-12, the State Board of Community Colleges shall appoint an interim five-member board of trustees for a period not to exceed 12 months with input from the advisory committee listed in subsection (a) of this section.

To preserve local autonomy, the appointing authorities of the local administrative area of the community college under G.S. 115D-12 shall make recommendations to the State Board on the appointment of the members to the interim board of trustees. All appointees to the interim board of trustees shall be residents of the administrative area of the institution for which they are selected or of counties contiguous thereto with the exception of members provided for in ~~subsection (a) of G.S. 115D-12, Group Four.~~ G.S. 115D-12(a)(3). At the end of the period of service of the interim board of trustees, a board of trustees for the community college shall be appointed in accordance with G.S. 115D-12. Initial terms of members of the new board of trustees shall be staggered to align with the remainder of the vacated terms of the members of the board of trustees.

…

"**§ 115D-9.5. Bookstore sales.**

Notwithstanding G.S. 66-58(c)(3) or any other provisions of law, the State Board of Community Colleges may adopt rules governing the expenditure of funds derived from bookstore sales by community colleges. These expenditures shall be consistent with the mission and purpose of the Community College System. Profits may be used in the support and enhancement of the bookstores, for student aid or scholarships, for expenditures of direct benefit to students, and for other similar expenditures authorized by the board of trustees, subject to rules adopted by the State Board. These funds shall not be used to supplement salaries of any personnel.

"**§ 115D-9.10. Exchange of information with The University of North Carolina and North Carolina public schools.**

The State Board of Community Colleges shall comply with the provisions of G.S. 116-11(10a) to plan and implement an exchange of information between the public schools and the institutions of higher education in the State.

"**§ 115D-9.15. Lease purchase and installment purchase contracts.**

The State Board of Community Colleges shall review and approve lease purchase and installment purchase contracts as provided under G.S. 115D-58.15(b). The State Board shall adopt policies and procedures governing the review and approval process.

"**§ 115D-9.20. Compliance review and requested information.**

(a) Compliance Review. – The State Board of Community Colleges shall maintain an accountability function that conducts periodic reviews of each community college operating under the provisions of this Chapter. The purpose of the compliance review shall be to ensure that (i) data used to allocate State funds among community colleges is reported accurately to the System Office and (ii) community colleges are charging and waiving tuition and registration fees consistent with law. The State Board of Community Colleges shall require the use of a statistically valid sample size in performing compliance reviews of community colleges. All compliance review findings that are determined to be material shall be forwarded to the college president, local college board of trustees, the State Board of Community Colleges, and the State Auditor. The State Board of Community Colleges shall adopt rules governing the frequency, scope, and standard of materiality for compliance reviews.

(b) Information to Department of Revenue. – The North Carolina Community Colleges System Office shall provide the Department of Revenue with a list of all community colleges, including name, address, and other identifying information requested by the Department of Revenue. The North Carolina Community Colleges System Office shall update this list whenever there is a change.

"**§ 115D-9.25. Multicampus centers.**

All multicampus centers approved by the State Board of Community Colleges shall receive funding under the same formula. The State Board of Community Colleges shall not approve any additional multicampus centers without identified recurring sources of funding. A community college facility shall be considered a multicampus center if it meets the criteria established by the

State Board and is at least 4 miles away from the main campus of the community college and other multicampus center locations.

"**§ 115D-9.30. Service areas.**

The State Board of Community Colleges shall review, at least every five years, service areas that include counties assigned to more than one community college to determine the feasibility of continuing to assign those counties to more than one community college. The State Board shall revise service areas as needed to ensure that counties are served effectively. The State Board shall report its findings and any revisions to the Joint Legislative Education Oversight Committee within 60 days of revisions being made.

"**§ 115D-9.35. Athletic teams.**

The State Board of Community Colleges shall monitor community colleges for compliance with Article 38 of Chapter 116 of the General Statutes. If the State Board determines that a community college is in violation of Article 38 of Chapter 116 of the General Statutes, it shall report the identity of the community college to the Joint Legislative Education Oversight Committee.

…

"Part 3. Community College Programs.

"**§ 115D-10.5. Program funding.**

(a) New Programs and Terminations of Programs. – A community college may not offer a new program without the approval of the State Board of Community Colleges except that approval shall not be required if the tuition for the program will fully cover the cost of the program. If at any time tuition fails to fully cover the cost of a program that falls under the exception, the program shall be discontinued unless approved by the State Board. If a proposed new program would serve more than one community college, the State Board shall perform a feasibility study prior to acting on the proposal. The State Board shall consider whether a regional approach can be used when developing new programs and, to the extent possible, shall initiate new programs on a regional basis. The State Board shall collect data on an annual basis on all new programs and program terminations it approved and any regionalization of programs during the year, including the specific reasons for which each program was terminated or approved.

(b) Recreation Extension Courses. – Funds appropriated to the Community Colleges System Office as operating expenses for allocation to the institutions comprising the North Carolina Community College System shall not be used to support recreation extension courses. The financing of these courses by any institution shall be on a self-supporting basis, and membership hours produced from these activities shall not be counted when computing full-time equivalent students (FTE) for use in budget-funding formulas at the State level.

(c) Real Estate Continuing Education Courses. – Whenever a community college offers real estate continuing education courses, the courses shall be offered on a self-supporting basis.

"**§ 115D-10.10. College transfer program approval; standards for programs; annual reporting requirements.**

(a) The State Board of Community Colleges may approve the addition of the college transfer program to a community college. If addition of the college transfer program to an institution would require a substantial increase in funds, State Board approval shall be subject to appropriation of funds by the General Assembly for this purpose.

(b) Addition of the college transfer program shall not decrease an institution's ability to provide programs within its basic mission of vocational and technical training and basic academic education.

(c) The State Board of Community Colleges shall develop appropriate criteria and standards to regulate the addition of the college transfer program to institutions.

(d) The State Board of Community Colleges shall develop appropriate criteria and standards to regulate the operation of college transfer programs.

(e) The Board of Governors of The University of North Carolina shall report to each community college and to the State Board of Community Colleges in accordance with G.S. 116-11(10b) on the academic performance of that community college's transfer students. If the State Board of Community Colleges finds that college transfer students from a community college are not consistently performing adequately at a four-year college, the Board shall review the community college's program and determine what steps are necessary to remedy the problem. The Board shall report annually to the General Assembly on the reports it receives and on what steps it is taking to remedy problems that it finds.

(f) The Community Colleges System Office shall report annually by April 15 to the Joint Legislative Education Oversight Committee, the State Board of Education, the Office of State Budget and Management, and the Fiscal Research Division of the General Assembly on the implementation of the UNC-NCCCS 2+2 E-Learning Initiative. This report shall include the following:

(1) The courses and programs within the 2+2 E-Learning Initiative.
(2) The total number of prospective teachers that have taken or are taking part in this initiative to date broken down by the current academic period and each of the previous academic periods since the program's inception.
(3) The total number of teachers currently in the State's classrooms, by local school administrative unit, who have taken part in this initiative.
(4) The change in the number of teachers available to schools since the program's inception.
(5) The qualitative data from students, teachers, local school administrative unit personnel, university personnel, and community college personnel as to the impact of this initiative on our State's teaching pool.
(6) An explanation of the expenditures and collaborative programs between the North Carolina Community College System and The University of North Carolina, including recommendations for improvement.

"**§ 115D-10.15. Workforce development programs.**

Community colleges shall assist in the preemployment and in-service training of employees in industry, business, agriculture, health occupation, and governmental agencies. Such training shall include instruction on worker safety and health standards and practices applicable to the field of employment. The State Board of Community Colleges shall make appropriate regulations, including the establishment of maximum hours of instruction which may be offered at State expense in each in-plant training program. No instructor or other employee of a community college shall engage in the normal management, supervisory, and operational functions of the establishment in which the instruction is offered during the hours in which the instructor or other employee is employed for instructional or educational purposes.

"**§ 115D-10.17. Customized Training Program.**

(a) There is created within the North Carolina Community College System the Customized Training Program. The Customized Training Program shall offer programs and training services to assist new and existing business and industry to remain productive, profitable, and within the State. Before a business or industry qualifies to receive assistance under the Customized Training Program, the President of the North Carolina Community College System shall determine the following:

(1) The business is making an appreciable capital investment.
(2) The business is deploying new technology.
(3) The business or individual is creating jobs, expanding an existing workforce, or enhancing the productivity and profitability of the operations within the State.
(4) The skills of the workers will be enhanced by the assistance.

(b) The Community Colleges System Office shall report no later than September 1 of each year to the Joint Legislative Education Oversight Committee on the following:

(1) The total amount of funds received by a company under the Customized Training Program.

(2) The types of services sought by the company, whether for new, expanding, or existing industry.

(3) The amount of funds per trainee received by that company.

(4) The amount of funds received per trainee by the community college delivering the training.

(5) The number of trainees trained by the company and community college.

(6) The number of years that company has been funded.

(c) Notwithstanding any other provision of law, the State Board of Community Colleges may adopt guidelines that allow the Customized Training Program to use funds appropriated for that program to support training projects for the various branches of the Armed Forces of the United States.

(d) Funds available to the Customized Training Program shall not revert at the end of a fiscal year but shall remain available until expended. Up to ten percent (10%) of the college-delivered training expenditures and up to five percent (5%) of the contractor-delivered training expenditures for the prior fiscal year for Customized Training may be allotted to each college for capacity building at that college.

(e) Of the funds appropriated in a fiscal year for the Customized Training Program, the State Board of Community Colleges may approve the use of up to eight percent (8%) for the training and support of regional community college personnel to deliver Customized Training Program services to business and industry.

(f) The State Board shall adopt guidelines to implement this section. At least 20 days before the effective date of any criteria or nontechnical amendments to guidelines, the State Board must publish the proposed guidelines on the Community Colleges System Office's website and provide notice to persons who have requested notice of proposed guidelines. In addition, the State Board must accept oral and written comments on the proposed guidelines during the 15 business days beginning on the first day that the State Board has completed these notifications. For the purpose of this subsection, a technical amendment is either of the following:

(1) An amendment that corrects a spelling or grammatical error.

(2) An amendment that makes a clarification based on public comment and could have been anticipated by the public notice that immediately preceded the public comment.

"**§ 115D-10.19. Short-Term Workforce Development Grant Program.**

(a) Program Established. – There is established the North Carolina Community College Short-Term Workforce Development Grant Program (Program) to be administered by the State Board of Community Colleges. The State Board shall adopt rules for the disbursement of the grants pursuant to this section.

(b) Programs of Study. – The State Board of Community Colleges, in collaboration with the Department of Commerce, shall determine the eligible programs of study for the Program, according to the occupations that are in the highest demand in the State. The eligible programs of study shall include programs such as architecture and construction, health sciences, information technology, electrical line worker, and manufacturing programs and may include other programs to meet local workforce needs.

(c) Award Amounts. – To the extent funds are made available for the Program, the State Board of Community Colleges shall award grants in an amount of up to seven hundred fifty dollars ($750.00) to students pursuing short-term, noncredit State and industry workforce credentials. The State Board of Community Colleges shall establish criteria for initial and continuing eligibility for students. At a minimum, students shall be required to qualify as a

resident for tuition purposes under the criteria set forth in G.S. 116-143.1 and in accordance with the coordinated and centralized residency determination process administered by the State Education Assistance Authority.

(d) Report. – The State Board shall submit a report by April 1 annually on the Program to the Joint Legislative Education Oversight Committee and the Fiscal Research Division. The report shall contain, for each academic year and by programs of study, the amount of grant funds disbursed and the number of eligible students receiving funds.

"**§ 115D-10.21. Training programs for students with intellectual and developmental disabilities.**

(a) The State Board of Community Colleges shall establish a community college training program for up to 15 community colleges. The program shall provide opportunities for micro-credentials or other credentials that lead to increased employment outcomes for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD). To the extent funds are appropriated for this purpose, the program shall improve the ability of participating community colleges to offer training and educational components that include improving employability skills and providing on-the-job training and apprenticeships with business and industry for individuals with IDD. The goal of the program shall be to inform community colleges and address cross-departmental supports within the individual community colleges on programs for individuals with IDD related to at least the following:

(1) Establishing best practices for providing vocational training for individuals with IDD.
(2) Providing financial and benefits counseling.
(3) Developing strategies on integrating assistive technology.
(4) Maximizing access, with supports, to credential and degree programs, including micro-credentials that are established by the State Board.
(5) Identifying methods to increase orientation and integration of individuals with IDD into the college community to the greatest extent possible.
(6) Determining a needs assessment, marketing, and evaluation to serve a broad array of individuals with developmental and other similar disabilities or learning challenges to assure adequate demand for new or existing programs.

(b) No later than May 1 of each year, the Community Colleges System Office shall report on the funds appropriated to the System Office for the purposes of this section to the Joint Legislative Education Oversight Committee and the Fiscal Research Division. At a minimum, the report shall address the impact of the program, the use of any additional positions created at community colleges, professional development training for staff, and funding sources identified for individuals with IDD to build programs at community colleges that support postsecondary trainings and certifications that enable individuals with IDD to engage in competitive, sustainable employment.

"**§ 115D-10.25. Commercial fishing and aquaculture classes.**

(a) The General Assembly urges all community colleges serving the coastal area of the State to offer classes on commercial fishing and aquaculture.

(b) The North Carolina Community Colleges System Office shall provide technical assistance to these colleges on offering such classes.

(c) The North Carolina Community Colleges System Office shall report to the Joint Legislative Education Oversight Committee on any fiscal and administrative issues it identifies that limit colleges' ability to offer such courses.

"**§ 115D-10.30. Correction education programs.**

(a) Approval. – No course of instruction shall be offered by any community college at State expense or partial State expense to any captive or co-opted group of students, as defined by the State Board of Community Colleges, without prior approval of the State Board. All course offerings approved for State prison inmates or prisoners in local jails must be tied to clearly

identified job skills, transition needs, or both. Approval by the State Board shall be presumed to constitute approval of both the course and the group served by that institution. The State Board may delegate to the President the power to make an initial approval, with final approval to be made by the State Board. A course taught without such approval will not yield any full-time equivalent students, as defined by the State Board. Community colleges shall report full-time equivalent (FTE) student hours for correction education programs on the basis of student membership hours. Funds appropriated for community college courses for prison inmates shall be used only for inmates in State prisons. The first priority for the use of these funds shall be to restore the FTE for basic skills courses to the FY 2008-2009 level. Funds not needed for this purpose may be used for continuing education and curriculum courses related to job skills training. No community college shall operate a multi-entry/multi-exit class or program in a prison facility, except for a literacy class or program. The State Board shall work with the Division of Adult Correction and Juvenile Justice of the Department of Public Safety on offering classes and programs that match the average length of stay of an inmate in a prison facility.

(b) Courses in Federal Prisons. – Courses in federal prisons shall not earn regular budget full-time equivalents but may be offered on a self-supporting basis.

"**§ 115D-10.35. Teacher residency licensure courses.**

The North Carolina Community College System may offer courses, in accordance with Article 17D of Subchapter V of Chapter 115C of the General Statutes, to individuals who choose to enter the teaching profession through residency licensure.

"**§ 115D-10.40. American Sign Language courses.**

The State Board of Community Colleges shall develop curriculum and continuing education standards for courses of instruction in American Sign Language and shall encourage community colleges to offer courses in American Sign Language as a modern foreign language.

"**§ 115D-10.45. Adult high school equivalency diploma test.**

The State Board of Community Colleges may establish, retain, and budget fees charged to students taking an adult high school equivalency diploma test, including fees for retesting. Fees collected for this purpose shall be used only to (i) offset the costs of the test, including the cost of scoring the test, (ii) offset the costs of printing adult high school equivalency diplomas, and (iii) meet federal and State reporting requirements related to the test.

"**§ 115D-10.50. Motorcycle Safety Instruction Program.**

(a) There is created a Motorcycle Safety Instruction Program for the purpose of establishing statewide motorcycle safety instruction to be delivered through the Community Colleges System Office. The Program may be administered by a motorcycle safety coordinator who shall be responsible for the planning, curriculum, and completion requirements of the Program. The State Board of Community Colleges may elect a motorcycle safety coordinator upon nomination of the President of the Community College System, and the compensation of the motorcycle safety coordinator shall be fixed by the State Board upon recommendation of the President of the Community College System pursuant to G.S. 115D-3. The State Board of Community Colleges may contract with an appropriate public or private agency or person to carry out the duties of the motorcycle safety coordinator.

(b) The Motorcycle Safety Instruction Program shall be implemented through the Community Colleges System Office at institutions which choose to provide the Program. The motorcycle safety coordinator shall select and facilitate the training and certification of instructors who will implement the Program.

"Part 4. Students.

"**§ 115D-10.65. Accreditation of secondary school located in North Carolina shall not be a factor in admissions, loans, scholarships, or other educational policies.**

(a) For purposes of this section, the term "accreditation" shall include certification or any other similar approval process.

(b) The State Board of Community Colleges shall adopt a policy that prohibits any community college from soliciting or using information regarding the accreditation of a secondary school located in North Carolina that a person attended as a factor affecting admissions, loans, scholarships, or other educational activity at the community college, unless the accreditation was conducted by a State agency.

"**§ 115D-10.70. Driving eligibility certificates.**

(a) The State Board of Community Colleges shall adopt the following rules to assist community colleges in their administration of procedures necessary to implement G.S. 20-11 and G.S. 20-13.2:

(1) To establish the procedures a person who is or was enrolled in a community college must follow and the requirements that person must meet to obtain a driving eligibility certificate.

(2) To require the person who is required under G.S. 20-11(n) to sign the driving eligibility certificate to provide the certificate if he or she determines that one of the following requirements is met:

a. The person seeking the certificate is eligible for the certificate under G.S. 20-11(n)(1) and is not subject to G.S. 20-11(n1).

b. The person seeking the certificate is eligible for the certificate under G.S. 20-11(n)(1) and G.S. 20-11(n1).

(3) To provide for an appeal through the grievance procedures established by the board of trustees of each community college by a person who is denied a driving eligibility certificate.

(4) To define exemplary student behavior and to define what constitutes the successful completion of a drug or alcohol treatment counseling program.

(b) The State Board shall develop policies as to when it is appropriate to notify the Division of Motor Vehicles that a person who is or was enrolled in a community college no longer meets the requirements for a driving eligibility certificate. The State Board also shall adopt guidelines to assist the presidents of community colleges in their designation of representatives to sign driving eligibility certificates.

(c) The State Board shall develop a form for the appropriate individuals to provide their written, irrevocable consent for a community college to disclose to the Division of Motor Vehicles that the student no longer meets the conditions for a driving eligibility certificate under G.S. 20-11(n)(1) or G.S. 20-11(n1), if applicable, in the event that this disclosure is necessary to comply with G.S. 20-11 or G.S. 20-13.2. Other than identifying under which statutory subsection the student is no longer eligible, no other details or information concerning the student's school record shall be released pursuant to this consent.

"**§ 115D-10.75. Excused absences for religious observances.**

The State Board of Community Colleges shall direct each community college to adopt a policy that authorizes a minimum of two excused absences each academic year for religious observances required by the faith of a student. The policy may require that the student provide written notice of the request for an excused absence a reasonable time prior to the religious observance. The policy shall also provide that the student shall be given the opportunity to make up any tests or other work missed due to an excused absence for a religious observance.

"**§ 115D-10.76. Excused absences for National Guard service members.**

The State Board of Community Colleges shall adopt a policy to be applied uniformly throughout the Community College System to provide that any student enrolled in a community college who is a National Guard service member placed onto State active duty status during an academic term shall be given an excused absence for the period of time the student is on active duty. The policy shall further provide all of the following:

(1) The student shall be given the opportunity to make up any test or other work missed during the excused absence.

(2) The student shall be given the option, when feasible, to continue classes and coursework during the academic term through online participation for the period of time the student is placed on active duty.

(3) The student shall be given the option of receiving a temporary grade of "incomplete (IN)" or "absent from the final exam (AB)" for any course that the student was unable to complete as a result of being placed on State active duty status; however, the student must complete the course requirements within the period of time specified by the community college to avoid receiving a failing grade for the course.

(4) The student shall be permitted to drop, with no penalty, any course that the student was unable to complete as a result of being placed on State active duty status."

SECTION 1.(b) G.S. 115D-20(4) reads as rewritten:

"(4) To apply the standards and requirements for admission and graduation of students and other standards established by the State Board of Community Colleges. ~~Notwithstanding any law or administrative rule to the contrary, local community colleges are permitted to offer the following programs:~~

~~a. 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. Repealed by Session Laws 2022-71, s. 3.2, effective July 8, 2022.~~

~~2. Academic transition pathways for qualified junior and senior high school students that lead to a career technical education certificate, diploma, or State or industry-recognized credential and academic transition pathways for qualified freshmen and sophomore high school students that lead to a career technical education certificate or diploma in (i) industrial and engineering technologies, (ii) agriculture and natural resources, (iii) transportation technology, (iv) construction, or (v) business technologies.~~

~~3. College transfer pathways requiring the successful completion of 30 semester credit hours of transfer courses, including English and mathematics, for the following students:~~

~~I. Qualified junior and senior high school students.~~

~~II. Qualified freshman and sophomore high school students, if all of the following requirements are met:~~

~~A. 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.~~

~~B. 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.~~

~~C. The student's parent or guardian has given consent for the student to participate.~~

~~a1. 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.~~

~~b. During the summer quarter, persons less than 16 years old may be permitted to take noncredit courses on a self-supporting basis, subject to rules of the State Board of Community Colleges.~~

~~c. 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.~~

~~d. High school students 16 years and older may be permitted to take noncredit courses, except adult basic skills, subject to rules promulgated by the State Board of Community Colleges.~~

~~e. Notwithstanding any other provision of this subdivision, 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-5(b)(2).~~"

SECTION 1.(c) Article 2 of Chapter 115D of the General Statutes is amended by adding a new section to read:

"**§ 115D-21.2. Accreditation.**

(a) Definitions. – The following definitions apply in this section:

(1) Accreditation cycle. – The period of time during which a community college is accredited.

(2) Accrediting agency. – An agency or association that accredits institutions of higher education.

(3) Regional accrediting agency. – One of the following accrediting agencies:

a. Higher Learning Commission.

b. Middle States Commission on Higher Education.

c. New England Commission on Higher Education.

d. Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities.

e. Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges.

f. Western Association of Schools and Colleges Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges.

(b) Prohibit Consecutive Accreditation by an Accrediting Agency. – A community college shall not receive accreditation by an accrediting agency for consecutive accreditation cycles except as provided in subsection (c) of this section.

(c) Accreditation Transfer Procedure. – A community college that pursues accreditation with a different accrediting agency in accordance with this section shall pursue accreditation with a regional accrediting agency. If the community college is not granted candidacy status by any regional accrediting agency that is different from its current accrediting agency at least three years prior to the expiration of its current accreditation, the community college may remain with its current accrediting agency for an additional accreditation cycle.

(d) Certain Programs Exempt. – The requirements of this section do not apply to professional, departmental, or certificate programs at community colleges that have specific

accreditation requirements or best practices, as identified by the State Board of Community Colleges.

(e) Cause of Action. – A community college may bring a civil action, as follows:

(1) Against any person who makes a false statement to the accrediting agency of the community college, if all of the following criteria are met:

a. The statement, if true, would mean the community college is out of compliance with its accreditation standards.

b. The person made the statement with knowledge that the statement was false or with reckless disregard as to whether it was false.

c. The accrediting agency conducted a review of the community college as a proximate result of the statement.

d. The review caused the community college to incur costs.

(2) A community college that prevails on a cause of action initiated pursuant to this subsection shall be entitled to the following:

a. Costs related to the review conducted by the accrediting agency, including for the following:

1. Additional hours worked by community college personnel.

2. Contracted services, including outside legal counsel.

3. Travel, lodging, and food expenses.

4. Fees required by the agency.

b. Reasonable attorneys' fees.

c. Court costs."

SECTION 1.(d) G.S. 115D-21.5 is repealed.

SECTION 1.(e) Article 2 of Chapter 115D of the General Statutes is amended by adding a new section to read:

"**§ 115D-21.10. Curriculum courses taught throughout year.**

Community colleges may teach curriculum courses at any time during the year, including the summer term. Student membership hours from these courses shall be counted when computing full-time equivalent students (FTE) for use in budget funding formulas at the State level."

SECTION 1.(f) Chapter 115D of the General Statutes is amended by adding a new Article to read:

"Article 2B.

"High School Programs.

"**§ 115D-30.1. 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 junior and senior high school students that lead to a career technical education certificate, diploma, or State or industry-recognized credential and academic transition pathways for qualified freshmen and sophomore high school students that lead to a career technical education certificate or diploma in one of the following:

a. Industrial and engineering technologies.

b. Agriculture and natural resources.

c. Transportation technology.

d. Construction.

e. Business technologies.

(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.

"**§ 115D-30.5. 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.

"**§ 115D-30.10. 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.

"**§ 115D-30.15. 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-30.1.

"**§ 115D-30.20. 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.

"**§ 115D-30.25. 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."

SECTION 1.(g) G.S. 115D-39, 115D-39.1, 115D-40.1, and 115D-40.5 are codified into Part 2 of Article 3 of Chapter 115D of the General Statutes, which shall be entitled "Tuition and Fees." The remaining sections of Article 3 of Chapter 115D of the General Statutes are codified into Part 1 of Article 3 of Chapter 115D of the General Statutes, which shall be entitled "Funding of Community Colleges."

SECTION 1.(h) Part 2 of Article 3 of Chapter 115D of the General Statutes is amended by adding new sections to read:

"**§ 115D-39.2. Pro rata tuition and uniform registration fees.**

In order to make instruction as accessible as possible to all citizens, the teaching of curricular courses and of noncurricular extension courses at convenient locations away from institution campuses as well as on campuses is authorized and shall be encouraged. A pro rata portion of the established regular tuition rate charged a full-time student shall be charged a part-time student taking any curriculum course. In lieu of any tuition charge, the State Board of Community Colleges shall establish a uniform registration fee, or a schedule of uniform registration fees, to be charged students enrolling in extension courses for which instruction is financed primarily from State funds.

"**§ 115D-39.5. Tuition waivers.**

(a) Allowed Tuition Waivers. – The State Board of Community Colleges shall not waive tuition and registration fees for any individuals, except the State Board may, as provided by general and uniform regulations, waive tuition and registration fees for the following:

(1) Persons not enrolled in elementary or secondary schools taking courses leading to a high school diploma or equivalent certificate.

(2) Courses requested by the following entities that support the organizations' training needs and are on a specialized course list approved by the State Board:

a. Volunteer fire departments.

b. Municipal, county, or State fire departments.

c. Volunteer EMS or rescue and lifesaving departments.

d. Municipal, county, or State EMS or rescue and lifesaving departments.

e. Law enforcement, fire, or EMS or rescue and lifesaving entities serving a lake authority that was created by a county board of commissioners prior to July 1, 2012.

f. Radio Emergency Associated Communications Teams (REACT) under contract to a county as an emergency response agency.

g. Municipal, county, or State law enforcement agencies.

h. Campus police agencies of private institutions of higher education certified by the Attorney General pursuant to Chapter 74G of the General Statutes.

i. The Division of Prisons of the Department of Adult Correction and the Division of Juvenile Justice of the Department of Public Safety for the training of full-time custodial employees and employees of the Divisions required to be certified under Article 1 of Chapter 17C of the General Statutes and the rules of the Criminal Justice and Training Standards Commission.

j. The Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians law enforcement, fire, or EMS or rescue and lifesaving tribal government departments or programs.

k. The Criminal Justice Standards Division of the Department of Justice for the training of criminal justice professionals, as defined in G.S. 17C-20(6), who are required to be certified under (i) Article 1 of Chapter 17C of the General Statutes and the rules of the North Carolina Criminal Justice Education and Training Standards Commission or (ii) Chapter 17E of the General Statutes and the rules of the North Carolina Sheriffs' Education and Training Standards Commission. The waivers provided for in this sub-subdivision apply to participants and recent graduates of the North Carolina Criminal Justice Fellows Program to obtain certifications for eligible criminal justice professions, as defined in G.S. 17C-20(6).

(3) Firefighters, EMS personnel, and rescue and lifesaving personnel whose duty station is located on a military installation within North Carolina for courses that support their organizations' training needs and are approved for this purpose by the State Board.

(4) Trainees enrolled in courses conducted under the Customized Training Program.

(5) Elementary and secondary school employees enrolled in courses in first aid or cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR).

(6) All courses taken by high school students at community colleges, in accordance with this section and Article 2B of this Chapter.

(7) Human resources development courses for any individual who (i) is unemployed, (ii) has received notification of a pending layoff, (iii) is working and is eligible for the Federal Earned Income Tax Credit (FEITC), or (iv) is working and earning wages at or below two hundred percent (200%) of the federal poverty guidelines.

(8) Courses providing employability skills, job-specific occupational or technical skills, or developmental education instruction to certain students who are concurrently enrolled in an eligible community college literacy course, in accordance with rules adopted by the State Board.

(9) Courses provided to students who are participating in a pre-apprenticeship or apprenticeship program that meets all of the following criteria:

a. Meets one of the following:

1. Is a registered apprenticeship program recognized by the United States Department of Labor.
2. Is a pre-apprenticeship program recognized and approved by the State agency administering the statewide apprenticeship program.

b. Has a documented plan of study with courses relating to a job-specific occupational or technical skill.

c. Requires the participants in the program to be North Carolina high school students when entering the program.

(b) Faculty and Staff. – The State Board shall not waive tuition and registration fees for community college faculty or staff members. Community colleges may, however, use State or local funds to pay tuition and registration fees for one course per semester for full-time community college faculty or staff members employed for a nine-, 10-, 11-, or 12-month term. Community colleges may also use State and local funds to pay tuition and registration fees for professional development courses and for other courses consistent with the academic assistance program authorized by the State Human Resources Commission.

(c) Annual Report. – Annually by February 1, the Community Colleges System Office shall report to the Joint Legislative Education Oversight Committee on the number and type of waivers granted pursuant to subsection (a) of this section."

SECTION 1.(i) G.S. 115D-41 is recodified as G.S. 115D-38.5.

SECTION 1.(j) G.S. 115D-43 is recodified as G.S. 115D-38.10.

SECTION 1.(k) G.S. 115D-44 is repealed.

PART II. CONFORMING CHANGES

SECTION 2.(a) G.S. 20-11(n) reads as rewritten:

"(n) Driving Eligibility Certificate. – A person who desires to obtain a permit or license issued under this section must have a high school diploma or its equivalent or must have a driving eligibility certificate. A driving eligibility certificate must meet the following conditions:

(1) The person who is required to sign the certificate under subdivision (4) of this subsection must show that he or she has determined that one of the following requirements is met:
   a. The person is currently enrolled in school and is making progress toward obtaining a high school diploma or its equivalent.
   b. A substantial hardship would be placed on the person or the person's family if the person does not receive a certificate.
   c. The person cannot make progress toward obtaining a high school diploma or its equivalent.

(1a) The person who is required to sign the certificate under subdivision (4) of this subsection also must show that one of the following requirements is met:
   a. The person who seeks a permit or license issued under this section is not subject to subsection (n1) of this section.
   b. The person who seeks a permit or license issued under this section is subject to subsection (n1) of this section and is eligible for the certificate under that subsection.

(2) It must be on a form approved by the Division.

(3) It must be dated within 30 days of the date the person applies for a permit or license issuable under this section.

(4) It must be signed by the applicable person named below:
   a. The principal, or the principal's designee, of the public school in which the person is enrolled.

b. The administrator, or the administrator's designee, of the nonpublic school in which the person is enrolled.
c. The person who provides the academic instruction in the home school in which the person is enrolled.
c1. The person who provides the academic instruction in the home in accordance with an educational program found by a court, prior to July 1, 1998, to comply with the compulsory attendance law.
d. The designee of the board of directors of the charter school in which the person is enrolled.
e. The president, or the president's designee, of the community college in which the person is enrolled.

Notwithstanding any other law, the decision concerning whether a driving eligibility certificate was properly issued or improperly denied shall be appealed only as provided under the rules adopted in accordance with G.S. 115C-12(28), ~~115D-5(a3),~~ 115D-10.70, or 115C-566, whichever is applicable, and may not be appealed under this Chapter."

SECTION 2.(b) G.S. 20-13.2(c1) reads as rewritten:

"(c1) Upon receipt of notification from the proper school authority that a person no longer meets the requirements for a driving eligibility certificate under G.S. 20-11(n), the Division must expeditiously notify the person that his or her permit or license is revoked effective on the thirtieth calendar day after the mailing of the revocation notice. The Division must revoke the permit or license of that person on the thirtieth calendar day after the mailing of the revocation notice. Notwithstanding subsection (d) of this section, the length of revocation must last for the following periods:

(1) If the revocation is because of ineligibility for a driving eligibility certificate under G.S. 20-11(n)(1), then the revocation shall last until the person's eighteenth birthday.
(2) If the revocation is because of ineligibility for a driving eligibility certificate under G.S. 20-11(n1), then the revocation shall be for a period of one year.

For a person whose permit or license was revoked due to ineligibility for a driving eligibility certificate under G.S. 20-11(n)(1), the Division must restore a person's permit or license before the person's eighteenth birthday, if the person submits to the Division one of the following:

(1) A high school diploma or its equivalent.
(2) A driving eligibility certificate as required under G.S. 20-11(n).

If the Division restores a permit or license that was revoked due to ineligibility for a driving eligibility certificate under G.S. 20-11(n)(1), any record of revocation or suspension shall be expunged by the Division from the person's driving record. The Division shall not expunge a suspension or revocation record if a person has had a prior expunction from the person's driving record for any reason.

For a person whose permit or license was revoked due to ineligibility for a driving eligibility certificate under G.S. 20-11(n1), the Division shall restore a person's permit or license before the end of the revocation period, if the person submits to the Division a driving eligibility certificate as required under G.S. 20-11(n).

Notwithstanding any other law, the decision concerning whether a driving eligibility certificate was properly issued or improperly denied shall be appealed only as provided under the rules adopted in accordance with G.S. 115C-12(28), ~~115D-5(a3),~~ 115D-10.70, or 115C-566, whichever is applicable, and may not be appealed under this Chapter."

SECTION 2.(c) G.S. 90-631(b) reads as rewritten:

"(b) A massage and bodywork therapy program operated by a North Carolina community college that is accredited by a regional accrediting agency, as defined in ~~G.S. 115D-6.2,~~ G.S. 115D-21.2, is exempt from the approval process, licensure process, or both, established by the Board. The college shall certify annually to the Board that the program meets or exceeds the

minimum standards for curriculum, faculty, and learning resources established by the Board. Students who complete the program shall qualify for licenses from the Board as if the program were approved, licensed, or both, by the Board."

SECTION 2.(d) G.S. 93A-4(a2) reads as rewritten:

"(a2) A certified real estate education provider shall pay a fee of ten dollars ($10.00) per licensee to the Commission for each licensee completing a postlicensing education course conducted by the school, provided that these fees shall not be charged to a community college, junior college, college, or university located in this State and accredited by a regional accrediting agency, as defined in ~~G.S. 115D-6.2~~ G.S. 115D-21.2 and G.S. 116-11.4, respectively."

SECTION 2.(e) G.S. 93A-38.5(e) reads as rewritten:

"(e) The Commission may establish a nonrefundable course application fee to be charged to private real estate education providers for the review and approval of a proposed continuing education course. The fee shall not exceed one hundred twenty-five dollars ($125.00) per course. The Commission may charge the private real estate education providers of an approved course a nonrefundable fee not to exceed seventy-five dollars ($75.00) for the annual renewal of course approval.

A private real estate education provider shall pay a fee of ten dollars ($10.00) per licensee to the Commission for each licensee completing an approved continuing education course conducted by the sponsor.

The Commission shall not charge a course application fee, a course renewal fee, or any other fee for a continuing education course sponsored by a community college, junior college, college, or university located in this State and accredited by a regional accrediting agency, as defined in ~~G.S. 115D-6.2~~ G.S. 115D-21.2 and G.S. 116-11.4, respectively."

SECTION 2.(f) G.S. 93E-1-7(b2) reads as rewritten:

"(b2) The Board shall not charge a course application fee, a course renewal fee, or any other fee for a continuing education course offered by a North Carolina college, university, junior college, or community or technical college accredited by a regional accrediting agency, as defined in ~~G.S. 115D-6.2~~ G.S. 115D-21.2 and G.S. 116-11.4, respectively, or an agency of the federal, State, or local government."

SECTION 2.(g) G.S. 93E-1-8 reads as rewritten:

"**§ 93E-1-8. Education program approval and fees.**

…

(b) The Board may by rule set nonrefundable fees chargeable to private real estate appraisal schools or course sponsors, including appraisal trade organizations, for the approval and annual renewal of approval of their qualifying courses required by G.S. 93E-1-6(a), or equivalent courses. The fees shall be one hundred dollars ($100.00) per course for approval and fifty dollars ($50.00) per course for renewal of approval. No fees shall be charged for the approval or renewal of approval to conduct appraiser qualifying courses where such courses are offered by a North Carolina college, university, junior college, or community or technical college accredited by a regional accrediting agency, as defined in ~~G.S. 115D-6.2~~ G.S. 115D-21.2 and G.S. 116-11.4, respectively, or an agency of the federal, State, or local government.

…

(d) Nonrefundable fees of one hundred dollars ($100.00) per course may be charged to schools and course sponsors for the approval to conduct appraiser continuing education courses and fifty dollars ($50.00) per course for renewal of approval. However, no fees shall be charged for the approval or renewal of approval to conduct appraiser continuing education courses where such courses are offered by a North Carolina college, university, junior college, or community or technical college accredited by a regional accrediting agency, as defined in ~~G.S. 115D-6.2~~ G.S. 115D-21.2 and G.S. 116-11.4, respectively, or by an agency of the federal, State, or local government. A nonrefundable fee of fifty dollars ($50.00) per course may be charged to current or former licensees or certificate holders requesting approval by the Board of a course for

continuing education credit when approval of such course has not been previously obtained by the offering school or course sponsor."

SECTION 2.(h) G.S. 95-25.5(n) reads as rewritten:

"(n) Nothing in this section prohibits qualified youths under 18 years of age from participating in training through their fire department, the Office of State Fire Marshal, or the North Carolina Community College System. As used in this subsection, the term "qualified youth under 18 years of age" means an uncompensated fire department or rescue squad member who is at least the age of 15 and under the age of 18 and who is a member of a bona fide fire department, as that term is defined in G.S. 58-86-2(4), or of a rescue squad described in G.S. 58-86-2(6). A qualified youth under 18 years of age under this subsection may be permitted to enroll in courses, including certification-eligible courses, in fire training at a community college on a specialized course list approved by the State Board of Community Colleges pursuant to ~~G.S. 115D-20(4)c.~~G.S. 115D-30.15(4)."

SECTION 2.(i) G.S. 115C-84.3(a)(3) reads as rewritten:

"(3) Institution of higher education courses, as provided in Article 16 of this Chapter or ~~G.S. 115D-20(4).~~Article 2B of Chapter 115D of the General Statutes."

SECTION 2.(j) G.S. 115C-238.55 reads as rewritten:

"**§ 115C-238.55. Evaluation of cooperative innovative high schools.**

The State Board of Education and the governing Boards shall evaluate the success of students in cooperative innovative high schools approved under this Part. 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 and graduated from the schools. 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 on the evaluation of these schools. The report shall be combined with the evaluation of and analysis of cost of students participating in the Career and College Promise Program required by ~~G.S. 115D-5(x),~~ G.S. 115D-30.5, and the Community Colleges System Office shall be responsible for submitting the combined report."

SECTION 2.(k) G.S. 115D-2(2) reads as rewritten:

"(2) The term "community college" is defined as an educational institution operating under the provisions of this Chapter and dedicated primarily to the educational needs of the service area which it serves, and may offer any of the following:

a. The freshmen and sophomore courses of a college of arts and sciences, authorized by ~~G.S. 115D-4.1;~~G.S. 115D-10.10.

b. Organized credit curricula for the training of technicians; curricular courses may carry transfer credit to a senior college or university where the course is comparable in content and quality and is appropriate to a chosen course of ~~study;~~study.

c. Vocational, trade, and technical specialty courses and ~~programs, and~~programs.

d. Courses in general adult education."

SECTION 2.(*l*) G.S. 115D-39(a1) reads as rewritten:

"(a1) In addition, federal law enforcement officers, firefighters, EMS personnel, and rescue and lifesaving personnel whose permanent duty station is within North Carolina and who do not otherwise qualify for tuition waivers under ~~G.S. 115D-5(b)(2a)~~ G.S. 115D-39.5(a)(3) shall also be eligible for the State resident community college tuition rate for courses that support their

organizations' training needs and are approved for this purpose by the State Board of Community Colleges."

SECTION 2.(m) G.S. 115D-41(a) reads as rewritten:

"(a) Community college contracts with local school administrative units shall not be used by these agencies to supplant funding for a public school high school teacher providing courses offered pursuant to ~~G.S. 115D-20(4)~~ Article 2B of this Chapter who is already employed by the local school administrative unit. In no event shall a community college contract with a local school administrative unit to provide high school level courses."

SECTION 2.(n) Article 6A of Chapter 115D of the General Statutes is repealed.

SECTION 2.(o) G.S. 116-201(b)(8) reads as rewritten:

"(8) "Private institution" means an institution other than a seminary, Bible school, Bible college or similar religious institution in this State that is not owned or operated by the State or any agency or political subdivision thereof, or by any combination thereof, that offers post-high school education and is accredited by a regional accrediting agency, as defined in ~~G.S. 115D-6.2~~ G.S. 115D-21.2 and G.S. 116-11.4, or the Transnational Association of Christian Colleges and Schools, or, in the case of institutions that are not eligible to be considered for accreditation, accredited in those categories and by those nationally recognized accrediting agencies that the Authority may designate;"

SECTION 2.(p) G.S. 116-280(3) reads as rewritten:

"(3) Eligible private postsecondary institution. – A school that is any of the following:

a. A nonprofit postsecondary educational institution with a main permanent campus located in this State that is not owned or operated by the State of North Carolina or by an agency or political subdivision of the State or by any combination thereof that satisfies all of the following:

1. Is either (i) accredited by a regional accrediting agency, as defined in ~~G.S. 115D-6.2~~ G.S. 115D-21.2 and G.S. 116-11.4, or the Transnational Association of Christian Colleges and Schools or (ii) was accredited by ~~SACSCOC~~ the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges on January 1, 2021, and, beginning January 1, 2021, was a member of the Transnational Association of Christian Colleges and Schools.

2. Awards a postsecondary degree as defined in G.S. 116-15.

b. A postsecondary institution owned or operated by a hospital authority as defined in G.S. 131E-16(14) or school of nursing affiliated with a nonprofit postsecondary educational institution as defined in sub-subdivision a. of this subsection."

SECTION 2.(q) G.S. 126-5(c2)(3) reads as rewritten:

"(3) Employees of community colleges whose salaries are fixed in accordance with ~~G.S. 115D-5~~ G.S. 115D-6.1 and G.S. 115D-20 and employees of the Community Colleges System Office whose salaries are fixed by the State Board of Community Colleges in accordance with G.S. 115D-3."

SECTION 2.(r) Section 6.9(b) of S.L. 2023-134 reads as rewritten:

"**SECTION 6.9.(b)** Of the recurring funds appropriated in this act to the Community Colleges System Office for the 2023-2025 fiscal biennium to support increasing program offerings for individuals with IDD pursuant to ~~G.S. 115D-44, as enacted by this section,~~ G.S. 115D-10.21, the System Office shall establish at least two statewide positions for program support, provide professional development training for college advising staff to assist students

with IDD for career pathway exploration and the identification of credentials leading to competitive employment, and explore funding sources to sustain programs for students with IDD."

PART II.5. VARIOUS STATUTORY CHANGES

SECTION 2.5.(a) G.S. 115D-10.17(e), as enacted by this act, reads as rewritten:

"(e) Of the funds appropriated in a fiscal year for the Customized Training Program, the State Board of Community Colleges may approve the use of up to ~~eight percent (8%)~~ fifteen percent (15%) for the training and support of regional community college personnel to deliver Customized Training Program services to business and industry."

SECTION 2.5(b) G.S. 115D-30.1(b), as enacted by this act, reads as rewritten:

"(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 ~~junior and senior~~ high school students that lead to a career technical education certificate, diploma, or State or industry-recognized credential.~~credential and academic transition pathways for qualified freshmen and sophomore high school students that lead to a career technical education certificate or diploma in one of the following:~~

~~a. Industrial and engineering technologies.~~

~~b. Agriculture and natural resources.~~

~~c. Transportation technology.~~

~~d. Construction.~~

~~e. Business technologies.~~

…

(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."

SECTION 2.5.(c) G.S. 115D-30.25, as enacted by this act, is amended by adding a new subsection to read:

"(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."

SECTION 2.5.(d) G.S. 115D-31.3(e) reads as rewritten:

"(e) Mandatory Performance Measures. – The State Board of Community Colleges shall evaluate each college on the following performance measures:

(1) Progress of basic skills students.

(2) Repealed by Session Laws 2016-94, s. 10.1, effective July 1, 2016.

(3) Performance of students who transfer to a four-year institution.

(3a) Success rate of students in credit-bearing English courses.

(3b) Success rate of students in credit-bearing Math or Science courses.

(4), (5) Repealed by Session Laws 2016-94, s. 10.1, effective July 1, 2016.

(5a) Progress of first-year curriculum students.
(6) Repealed by Session Laws 2012-142, s. 8.5, effective July 1, 2012.
(7) Curriculum student retention and graduation.
(8) Repealed by Session Laws 2012-142, s. 8.5, effective July 1, 2012.
(9) Attainment of licensure and certifications by students.

The State Board may also evaluate each college on additional performance measures."

SECTION 2.5.(e) The following provisions are repealed:

(1) Section 10.13 of S.L. 2015-241.
(2) Section 10.5 of S.L. 2016-94.
(3) Section 9.4 of S.L. 2018-5.
(4) Section 3J.19 of S.L. 2024-57.

SECTION 2.5.(f) This section applies beginning with the 2025-2026 academic year.

PART III. RESIDENCY LICENSES FOR CERTAIN NONPUBLIC EC TEACHERS

SECTION 3.(a) G.S. 115C-270.1 reads as rewritten:

"**§ 115C-270.1. Definitions.**

As used in this Article, the following definitions shall apply:

…

(1b) Individualized education program (IEP). – As defined in G.S. 115C-106.3.
(2) Professional educator. – An administrator, teacher, or student services personnel.
(3) Recognized educator preparation program or recognized EPP. – As defined in G.S. 115C-269.1(15).
(3a) Related services. – As defined in G.S. 115C-106.3.
(3b) Special education. – As defined in G.S. 115C-106.3.

…."

SECTION 3.(b) G.S. 115C-270.20(a) reads as rewritten:

"(a) Teacher Licenses. – The State Board shall adopt rules for the issuance of the following classes of teacher licenses, including required levels of preparation for each classification:

…

(5) Residency License or RL. – A one-year license, renewable twice, that meets both of the following requirements:
  a. Is requested by ~~the governing body of a public school unit~~ an eligible entity and accompanied by a certification of supervision from the recognized educator preparation program in which the individual is enrolled. For the purposes of this sub-subdivision, an eligible entity is one of the following:
    1. The governing body of a public school unit.
    2. A nonpublic school that meets all of the following:
      I. Meets the requirements of Part 1 or Part 2 of Article 39 of this Chapter.
      II. Is approved and monitored by the Department of Public Instruction to provide special education and related services pursuant to a student's IEP.
  b. The individual for whom the license is requested meets all of the following requirements:
    1. Holds at least one of the following:
      I. A bachelor's degree.
      II. An advanced degree.
    2. Has either completed coursework relevant to the requested licensure area or passed the content area examination relevant

to the requested licensure area that has been approved by the State Board.

3. Is enrolled in a recognized educator preparation program.
4. Meets all other requirements established by the State Board, including completing preservice requirements prior to teaching.

…."

SECTION 3.(c) This section is effective when it becomes law and applies to applications for residency licenses occurring on or after that date.

PART IV. EXTEND REVERSION DATE FOR SCHOOL SAFETY GRANT FUNDS

SECTION 4.(a) Section 7.36(*l*) of S.L. 2023-134 reads as rewritten:

"**SECTION 7.36.(*l*)** Nonrevert. – Notwithstanding any provision of law to the contrary, the nonrecurring funds appropriated to the Department of Public Instruction in the 2022-2023 fiscal year for the 2021-2023 School Safety Grants Program under Section 7.19 of S.L. 2021-180 and the nonrecurring funds appropriated by this act to the Department of Public Instruction for the 2023-2025 School Safety Grants Program shall not revert to the General Fund but shall remain available for the purposes for which they were appropriated until ~~June 30, 2025.~~June 30, 2027."

SECTION 4.(b) This section becomes effective June 30, 2025.

PART V. EFFECTIVE DATE

SECTION 5. Except as otherwise provided, this act is effective when it becomes law.

In the General Assembly read three times and ratified this the 26th day of June, 2025.

s/ Rachel Hunt
President of the Senate

s/ Destin Hall
Speaker of the House of Representatives

s/ Josh Stein
Governor

Approved 9:19 a.m. this 3rd day of July, 2025