



LEADING THROUGH CHANGE

Strategic Plan

2022-2026

State Board of Community Colleges

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The Honorable Terry Van Duyn

Jerry Vaughan

Sarah West

Ann Whitford



Purpose Statement

The North Carolina State Board of Community Colleges shall implement a four-year, goal-driven strategic plan that guides the decisions and actions of the Board in support of the 58 community colleges.



Beyond any question, the most significant achievement of this audacious adventure of the people of North Carolina, the most promising development and the most worthy of remembrance in our history is the opening of the door to universal education beyond the high school, the door to total education, the door to unlimited learning for all of the people through the comprehensive community college."

- DR. W. DALLAS HERRING



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OVERVIEW OF GOALS

1

Goal 1: Recruit and retain top talent to enable the North Carolina Community College System to educate and prepare the State's workforce. Faculty and staff provide the education and direct services that students and communities need. Recruiting and retaining top talent require investment, partnership, and workplace innovation.

2

Goal 2: Increase access and enrollment at North Carolina community colleges to meet the state's educational attainment goal and expand postsecondary opportunities. For North Carolina to meet its educational and economic goals, two million North Carolinians will need education and training beyond high school by 2030.

3

Goal 3: Provide resources inside and outside the classroom for all students to successfully enroll, persist, and complete a career program of study. College leaders cite youth disengagement, pandemic learning losses, student mental health challenges, and balancing college with work and family among a long list of significant challenges. Colleges need resources and strong partners to support their students.

4

Goal 4: Provide education, training, and credentials to develop the most competitive workforce in the nation. Community colleges must provide solutions to the talent needs caused by recent economic development success, ensure the economy includes all North Carolinians in its prosperity, and brace against future market disruptions.

5

Goal 5: Increase state funding, streamline the allocation formula, and implement practices to improve system effectiveness. The NCCCS will work with policy leaders to modernize the Community College System funding formula, improve IT infrastructure, and expand information sharing by linking educational data systems. Colleges should be incentivized to provide regional delivery of programs and services and avoid unnecessary duplication.

A CALL TO ACTION

A Message from the Chairman and President

Dear Friends:

The education landscape changed in March of 2020. The COVID-19 pandemic rocked the foundations of traditional education and required an immediate online response. Colleges were forced to quickly change program service delivery to meet student needs. Competitive forces intensified as all educational players saw the opportunities for expanded online markets. As a result of these factors, North Carolina's community colleges experienced declines in enrollment and student performance.

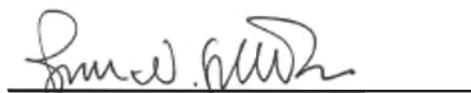
The State Board of Community Colleges saw the need to develop their next four-year strategic plan as a "Call to Action." This strategic plan is a response to the ramifications of COVID-19 that are still affecting college students. Success in answering this call and meeting the changing demands of a comprehensive community college system will require new ideas, more stakeholder involvement, and continued financial investment.

The pandemic changed how work is conducted, where people want to live, and how and where people interact with one another. The economy and the labor market have been volatile; an initial contraction followed by a period of rapid economic growth and demand for labor, accompanied by millions of workers retiring, resigning, changing jobs, or stopping out of the labor market. This growth has been complicated by global supply chain issues, uncertainty in the stock market, inflation, and labor shortages. America has experienced a period of social unrest, with particular focus on racial justice concerns and growing income inequality. Even as the economy has grown, many North Carolinians have continued to struggle with housing, food insecurity, healthcare challenges, and access to basic services.

North Carolina's community colleges have been squarely in the middle of these changes. Colleges have served as "economic first responders" working with community partners to meet the changing needs of students, communities, and businesses. Community colleges are forecasting and planning for the coming years. Change will continue to be constant, and the North Carolina Community College System will evolve, innovate, adapt, and provide support mechanisms to meet the needs of students, communities, and businesses across the State.

The State Board will focus attention and resources on five interlocking priorities to further strengthen the ability of the North Carolina Community College System to be the gateway to meaningful careers and serve as the state's engine for economic growth. The open-door philosophy heralded by Dallas Herring, the father of the NC Community College System, remains the foundation of the System. Keeping the doors of opportunity open to everyone will be essential to foster the talent necessary for continued prosperity.

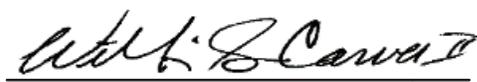
Sincerely,



Burr Sullivan

Chairman

State Board of Community Colleges



William S. Carver, II Ed.D.

Interim President

North Carolina Community College System



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Leading Through Change, a Call to Action

North Carolina community colleges have continuously demonstrated the ability to adapt to changes and be on the forefront of developing innovative strategies to meet the needs of businesses, individual communities, and most importantly, students. The North Carolina Community College System (NCCCS) remains the most affordable postsecondary education option in the state, despite decades of rising higher education costs.

North Carolina community colleges are also pioneers in virtual learning, work-based and simulated education, training, workforce preparation, and supporting economic development. The North Carolina Community College System remains grounded by the open-door philosophy, is well positioned to welcome students from increasingly diverse backgrounds, and provides proven pathways to reach educational and career goals.

In September 2021, the State Board of Community Colleges launched a strategic planning process that examined the challenges and opportunities facing the state and the system. After reviewing data and stakeholder input, the Board defined five goals focused on the most pressing priorities facing the North Carolina Community College System.

“Our community colleges represent all that is great about North Carolina. Our state’s focus on the future and the promise of our people shine through in the work of our colleges to prepare North Carolinians for the jobs of today and tomorrow. There is no better investment we can make in accelerating economic growth and mobility than to support this system and these 58 exceptional institutions.”

– MC BELK PILON

2020 I.E. Ready Award Winner
President & Board Chair, John M. Belk Endowment

In this document are the objectives and strategies that the Board will pursue to achieve these five goals. This plan provides the framework, while additional one-year action plans with specific action steps, timelines, and metrics will be developed to support the implementation of this plan. The State Board plans an aggressive implementation process that embeds these priorities in all planning activities, connects with and supports colleges' own strategic directions, and leverages the strength and innovation of individual community colleges to achieve the System's goals. The Board and System Office will continue to engage community college leaders, program experts, strategic stakeholders, business sectors and students in partnership and a cycle of continuous improvement.

A continued strength of the North Carolina Community College System is its ability to collaborate with workforce and economic development entities, other education sectors, businesses and industries, community



organizations, and government partners. The Community College System's priorities and strategies intentionally connect to the state's economic development and educational outcomes and the overarching goal for North Carolina to be "First in Talent."¹

An equally important driver is the state's educational attainment goal for North Carolina: to have two million working-age, career-ready individuals with a postsecondary degree or credentials by 2030. The North Carolina Community College System embraced this goal as its own through a State Board resolution approved in 2019.

The past four years have revealed that no agency can forecast all its challenges or opportunities. The North Carolina Community College System will work toward the goals in the 2022-2026 strategic plan. This is a living plan that will be adjusted as needed. The system will continue to be a nimble, responsive, and innovative catalyst serving North Carolina's students, businesses, and communities.

1 | NC Department of Commerce. (2021). *First in Talent: Strategic Economic Development Plan for the State of North Carolina*. <https://www.nccommerce.com/documents/first-talent-strategic-economic-development-plan-state-north-carolina>



MISSION STATEMENT

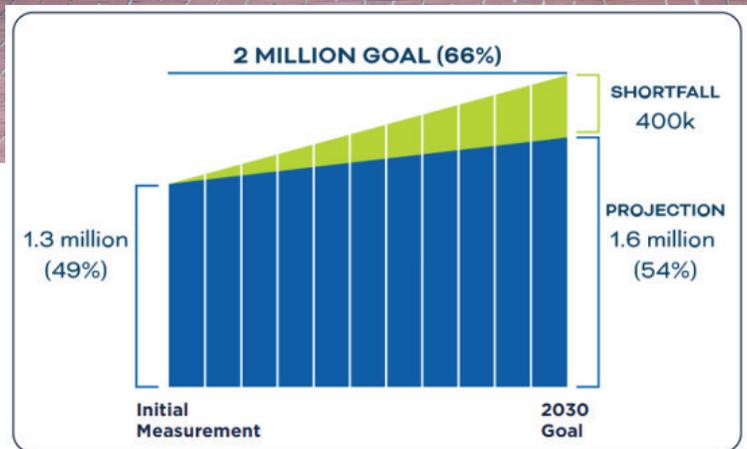
The mission of the North Carolina Community College System is to open the door to high quality, accessible educational opportunities that minimize barriers to postsecondary education, maximize student success, develop a globally and multi-culturally competent workforce, and improve the lives and well-being of individuals by providing:

(a) education, training, and retraining for the workforce, including basic skills and literacy education, occupational and pre-baccalaureate programs;

(b) support for economic development through services to and in partnership with business and industry; and

(c) services to communities and individuals which improve the quality of life.

Source: State Board of Community Colleges Code, 1A SBCCC 200.1: Mission of the Community College System



“To ensure North Carolina remains economically competitive now and into the future, in 2018, with bipartisan support in the General Assembly and a signature from the Governor, the state of North Carolina adopted one of the most ambitious goals in the nation – to have 2 million North Carolinians ages 25-44 to hold a high-quality credential or postsecondary degree by 2030.”

– myFutureNC

CRITICAL ROLES

of Community Colleges in North Carolina

The North Carolina Community College System was formally established in 1963. This was accomplished by combining Industrial Education Centers and junior colleges under one authority. The system grew to 58 colleges in an effort to maximize access to postsecondary education and training, reaching within 30 miles of virtually all North Carolinians. The North Carolina Community College System is made up of “comprehensive community colleges,” offering academic basic skills, career preparation, occupational courses, and job training. Each college develops innovative solutions to local challenges.

The primary offerings of community colleges in North Carolina are as follows:

- Curriculum instruction leading to academic credentials (certificates, diplomas, or degrees) and/or transfer to a four-year college or university
- Short-term workforce training (“Workforce Continuing Education”) to prepare individuals for various occupations and careers
- Instruction for adults to gain literacy skills or learn English as a second language
- Instruction to help adults earn a high school diploma, or (via assessments) a high school equivalency
- Opportunities that bridge K-12 and community college instruction:
 - Linked, seamless academic pathways in Career and Technical Education (CTE)
 - Dual enrollment of high school students in community college courses (Career and College Promise) and students based in traditional high schools or Cooperative Innovative High Schools (early colleges or other affiliated high schools)



- Economic development programs:

- Entrepreneurship training and counseling through the Small Business Center Network
- NCEdge Customized Training to prepare or retrain workers for business expansions, relocations, and productivity enhancements
- BioNetwork education and training programs for life sciences and biopharma companies



- Credential focused programs:

- Oversight of the state’s Registered Apprenticeship Program, ApprenticeshipNC
- Since 2021, collaboration with employers, state agency and nonprofit partners to establish industry-validated “NC Workforce Credentials” that can be earned through short-term training



- Community engagement ranging from providing healthcare to the community and sponsoring county Emergency Operations Centers to hosting special events, music festivals, and convening leaders to solve local challenges



CRITICAL ROLES

of the State Board and the System Office

The North Carolina General Assembly has delineated the purposes and major roles of the State Board of Community Colleges and the Community College System Office in North Carolina General Statutes.

§ 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 [and for eligible youth of any age serving in certain youth correctional facilities].

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-3. Community Colleges System Office; staff; reorganization authority.

(a) *The Community Colleges System Office shall be a principal administrative department of state government under the direction of the State Board of Community Colleges, and shall be separate from the free public school system of the State, the State Board of Education, and the Department of Public Instruction. The State Board has authority to adopt and administer all policies, regulations, and standards which it deems necessary for the operation of the System Office.*

In addition to the important administrative roles identified in North Carolina General Statutes, the System Office and the State Board play several critical roles for the System, described below.

- **State-level planning and leadership** – Through its strategic planning process, the State Board has used its planning and leadership role to develop a plan that is responsive to the challenges identified by college leaders and forward-looking in serving the state of North Carolina.
- **Advocacy** – The State Board is the chief advocate for the Community College System and works with presidents and local trustees to develop and promote a legislative agenda and engage in other forms of advocacy.
- **Convening** – Colleges are constantly developing creative and innovative solutions to local challenges. The State Board and the System Office together promote best practices, share innovations, and bring together collective wisdom to address critical local, regional, and state challenges.
- **Data and research** – The System Office collects data from all 58 colleges and partners with other education and workforce partners to track progress, evaluate programs, and identify both challenges and promising practices.
- **Technology and financial systems, services, and operational support** – the System Office provides the technology and financial systems and services that enable colleges to operate smoothly, obtain and manage funds, and provide instruction and support to students.



The only valid philosophy for North Carolina is the philosophy of total education; a belief in the incomparable worth of all human beings, whose claims upon the state are equal before the law and equal before the bar of public opinion; whose talents (however great or however limited or however different from the traditional) the state needs and must develop to the fullest possible degree. This is why the doors of the institutions in North Carolina’s system of Community Colleges must never be closed to anyone of suitable age who can learn what they teach. We must take the people where they are and carry them as far as they can go within the assigned function of the system.”

– DR. W. DALLAS HERRING

GOAL ONE

Faculty and Staff Recruitment and Retention

Goal 1: Recruit and retain top talent to enable the North Carolina Community College System to educate and prepare the state's workforce.

PRIMARY MEASURES OF GOAL ONE

- **Full-Time Faculty and Staff Salaries**
- **Full-Time Faculty Demographics**
- **Full-Time Faculty and Staff Institutional Retention**

The North Carolina Community College System relies on faculty and staff to power instruction, occupational training, small business development centers, student supports and other services. Providing high-quality, relevant instruction and advising is critical. College employees also connect students to financial assistance and other wraparound services. To develop and adjust programs, colleges must respond quickly to the changing needs of employers and the overall economy and leverage the power of instruction to meet broader community needs.

The State Board must be the primary advocate for budget support. Regional listening sessions were held by the State Board and System Office in conjunction with community college presidents and trustees during winter 2021-22. Difficulty with recruitment and retention of community college faculty and staff, especially because of salary, was the concern cited most frequently.

In March 2020, Community College System faculty and staff were called upon as never

before to immediately shift in-person courses to online platforms. Public uncertainty was the order of the day, with no COVID-19 cure or prevention measure in sight. In compliance with the CDC and other public health agencies, colleges moved courses online, with a small number of specified exceptions for public health, public safety, and workforce training that could only be provided face to face. Due to the ingenuity and hard work at the colleges and System Office, the open doors of the North Carolina Community College System never closed.

Community colleges across the state and employers across economic sectors are feeling the effects of the Great Resignation. This has resulted in higher-than-usual job turnover and lower labor force participation. The education sector is not immune to workforce volatility. While community colleges are working with employers to respond to industry's workforce shortages, continued turnover at the colleges directly undermines their response capacity.



Due to insufficient staffing, training programs and course sections have been postponed.

A survey by the College and University Professional Association for Human Resources from July 2022 found that more than 57% of higher education employees were likely to seek work elsewhere in the next year. Data from North Carolina community colleges showed that the portion of colleges retaining at least 85% of their full-time staff dropped from 88% in 2019-20 to 69% in 2020-21.

The Community College System has historically embraced legislative strategies aimed at increasing faculty and staff salaries. The 2022-25 NCCCS Legislative Agenda called for an 8% increase in employee salary over three years to bring compensation for faculty and staff in line with the projected average of our four neighboring states. Table 1 illustrates the funding disparity between faculty and staff in North Carolina compared to their regional and national peers.

According to data reported in the Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS), in 2020-21 North Carolina community colleges' full-time staff earned on average 84% of public universities' staff. More troubling, full-time faculty earned on average 58% of public universities' faculty.

Compensation is considered the number one challenge to recruitment and retention at community colleges. This is becoming increasingly urgent following the rise in salaries in high-demand fields since the pandemic. Recent inflationary pressures are also undermining any salary increases.

Human resources and employment are a function of individual community colleges. Statewide efforts in salary advocacy must be coupled with local decision making. The entire system benefits from a unified message and leveraging the scale of 58 colleges. Systemwide marketing and stakeholder partnerships must drive recruitment efforts and the attraction of talent.

TABLE 1:

Full-time Average Faculty and Staff Pay North Carolina, Southern Regional Education Board (SREB) States*, and the U.S.

Full-Time Avg. Salary	NC	SREB	US
Faculty	\$50,252	\$53,980	\$67,585
Staff	\$50,768	\$51,705	\$59,580

*AL, AR, DE, FL, GA, KY, LA, MD, MS, NC, OK, SC, TN, TX, VA, WV

GOAL ONE

Faculty and Staff Recruitment and Retention Objectives and Strategies

Objective 1.1: Address faculty and staff shortages through higher salaries and innovative talent sourcing.

Strategy 1.1.1: Advocate for a 7% increase in state funding in the 2023-25 biennium to bring community college employee salaries in line with the projected average of our neighboring states.

Strategy 1.1.2: Seek an additional 2% from non-state funding sources for employee retention, bonuses, and merit pay.

Strategy 1.1.3: Partner with employers to leverage industry talent for hard-to-fill positions.

Objective 1.2: Attract top talent to the North Carolina Community College System.

Strategy 1.2.1: Invest marketing funds in strengthening faculty and staff recruitment efforts across the System.

Strategy 1.2.2: Identify and promote effective recruitment strategies for colleges to tap diverse talent.

Objective 1.3: Establish North Carolina community colleges and the System Office as desirable employment destinations.

Strategy 1.3.1: Support annual professional development plans that enhance employee skill growth, career development and recognition.

Strategy 1.3.2: Develop a systemwide work environment team to promote innovative strategies for meeting college workforce needs, including scheduling flexibility.

Strategy 1.3.3: Increase retention of community college employees through enhanced service recognition, connection to mission, and opportunities for advancement.





GOAL TWO

Enrollment

Goal 2: Increase access and enrollment at North Carolina community colleges to meet the state's educational attainment goal and expand postsecondary opportunities.

PRIMARY MEASURES OF GOAL TWO

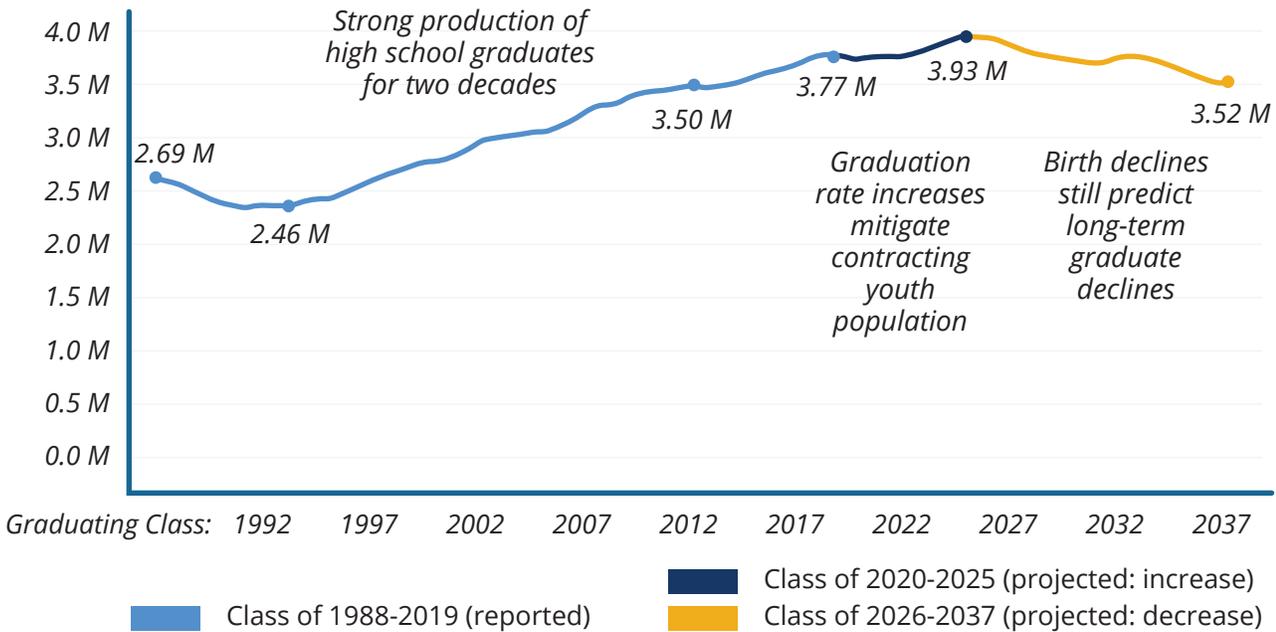
- **Headcount Student Enrollment (disaggregated)**
- **High School Dual Enrollment (disaggregated)**
- **Full-time Equivalent Enrollment (disaggregated)**

Strategies that increase student matriculation provide value to the state. Access and enrollment are the initial steps to certificate and degree completion, providing civic benefits, improving student earning and driving economic growth.

The enrollment-based funding formula directly affects the System's capacity to teach and support students. The Full Time Equivalent (FTE) funding measure supports access to community colleges for prospective students, bolsters the postsecondary education pipeline, and advances regional economies. Post-pandemic indicators along with demographic data are forecasting continued declines in enrollment and postsecondary attendance. As the number of high school graduates declines, increasing the recruitment of 18-24 year old students is critical. Enrollment declines beyond two years will force colleges to curtail programs and services.

FIGURE 1:

Slowing Growth in Number of U.S. High School Graduates, then Decline



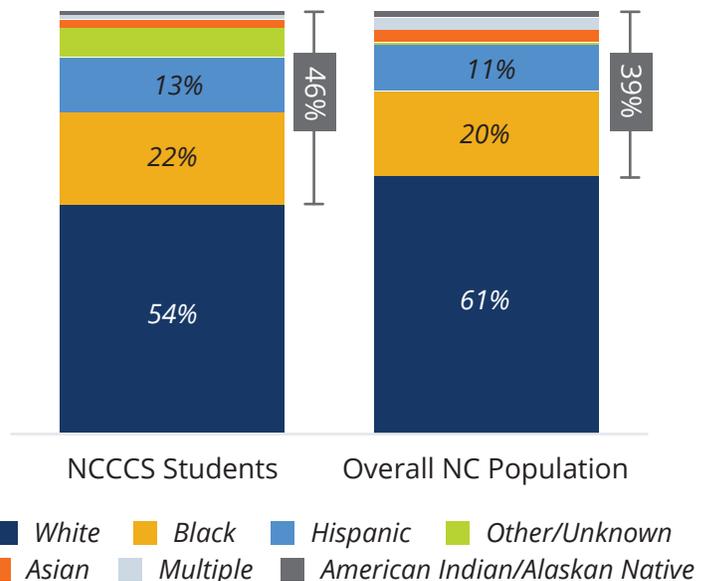
Source: Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education, *Knocking at the College Door*, 10th edition, 2020

Researchers from Carolina Demography noted in the February 2019 Leaky Pipeline report, “Transition to college is the largest loss point in the postsecondary pipeline, and the size of this loss is growing.” At a time when the state needs more individuals with education and training beyond high school, increasing support for this transition is a critical issue.

The North Carolina Community College System has a proud history of being a champion of the underserved. Statistics show that community colleges have a high concentration of students of color, first-generation students, low-income students, and adult learners balancing work and education. Community colleges also provide access to programs and services that enable English language learners and students with disabilities to acquire critical skills. Community colleges are often the best option for personal economic mobility, rewarding careers, and a portal to further education. In order to reach the state’s educational attainment goal, the System must continue to serve a diverse range of students.

FIGURE 2:

NCCCS Students More Diverse Than State Population



Sources: NCCCS (Total Student Enrollment, Fall 2021) and Carolina Demography (2020 U.S. Census)

Career pathways, along with work-based education and related training, contribute to the overall educational attainment in North Carolina and directly affect the economic potential of the state. According to Site Selection Magazine's 2022 Workforce Guide, "Workforce has been cited in Site Selection Magazine's annual survey of corporate consultants as the No. 1 factor in site selection decisions for several years in a row." Population loss in rural areas of North Carolina reduces the availability of traditional college-age students. A strong community college response in short-term training, especially focused on adults, will help reskill the local workforce and support rural economies.

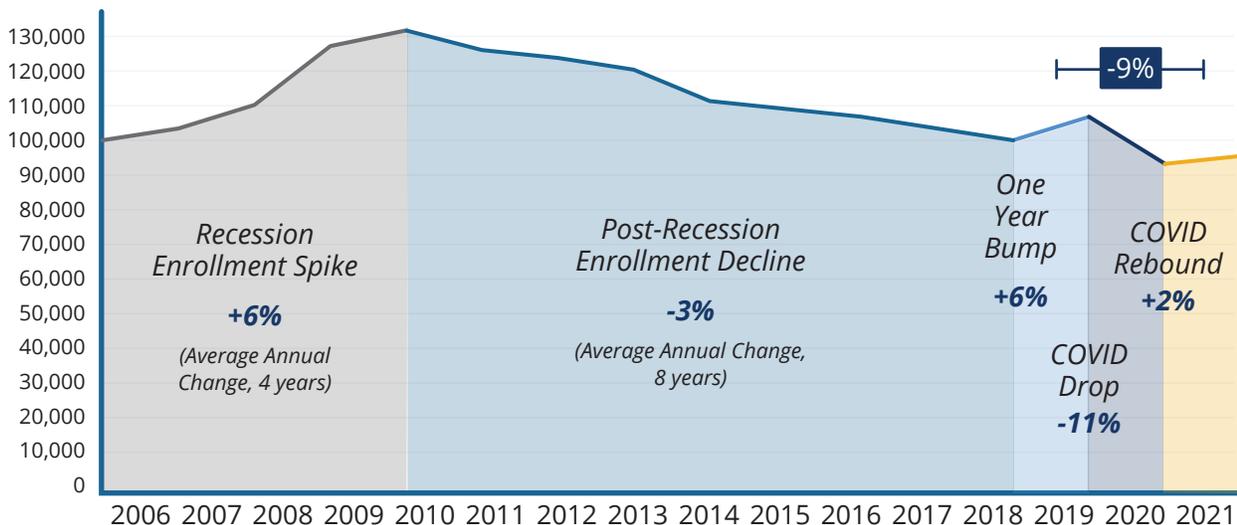
Annually thousands of community college students enroll in college transfer options. Strong community college enrollment is important for the university enrollment transfer business model and contributes to the state of North Carolina's attainment of bachelor's and higher degrees.

Enrollment Trends

In 2019, community colleges were realizing a large, across the board increase when the COVID-19 pandemic hit. Enrollment dropped and the typical relationship between the economy and community college enrollment, increasing enrollment and retraining when the economy is down, did not happen. Enrollment started to increase again in 2021, but enrollment remains 9% below pre-COVID levels.

FIGURE 3:

Trends in Total Full Time Equivalent (FTE) Enrollment



Source: North Carolina Community College System, Fall Enrollment Data

EXAMPLES OF NORTH CAROLINA'S OPEN DOORS

- More than 40% of NCCCS students are racial or ethnic minorities.
- 56% of students are adult learners.
- 41% of eligible-age students receive Pell Grants based on financial need.

Source: NCCCS, Fall 2021

COMMUNITY COLLEGE ENROLLMENT DRIVES BACCALAUREATE SUCCESS

- More than one in four undergraduate UNC System students are transfer students.
- 61% of UNC System transfer students came from a NCCCS institution.

Source: UNC System, Fall 2020

While much of the work of outreach, recruitment, and retention of students occurs at the college level, many factors, particularly population changes and the state of economy, drive enrollment trends. The State Board of Community Colleges has determined that an all-out systemwide effort must be mobilized to increase student access, enrollment, and completion.

Recent survey data shows that students consider a wide range of factors as they make the decision to enroll or re-enroll. To meet the goals of the System and the state, NCCCS's enrollment approach must be multifaceted.



FIGURE 4:

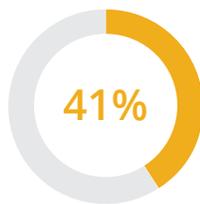
Factors Student Cite as Likely to Increase Their Enrollment

Percent who said the factor would make them 'extremely' or 'very likely' to enroll

Flexible Schedule



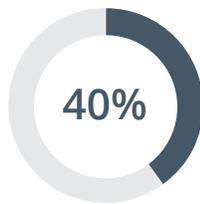
Work-Based Learning



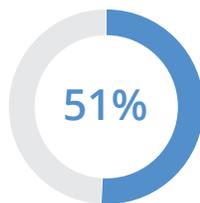
Credit for Prior Learning



Confidence in Career Advancement



Financial Aid



Source: Strada Education Network, Spring 2022 Reconnect Survey.



GOAL TWO

Enrollment Objectives and Strategies

Objective 2.1: Increase marketing and outreach to prospective students and their influencers.

Strategy 2.1.1: Develop and utilize marketing strategies to increase enrollment. Increase emphasis on the enrollment of underrepresented and non-traditional students.

Strategy 2.1.2: Invest in each North Carolina Community College to develop and actively use a Strategic Enrollment Management Plan. Plans should address student recruitment, retention, and completion.

Objective 2.2: Increase enrollment by focusing on career opportunities and the value proposition of community college education and occupational training.

Strategy 2.2.1: Increase career awareness and develop tools to communicate the personal and statewide return on investment derived from community college education and short-term training.

Strategy 2.2.2: Expand apprenticeships and other paid work-based learning opportunities by informing and encouraging community college students to participate in work experience, apprenticeships, and other learn-and-earn opportunities.

Strategy 2.2.3: Invite employers to campus and sponsor opportunities to build relationships with students and hiring managers. Promote career support and entrepreneurship services.

Objective 2.3: Streamline and strengthen the pathways to community colleges and careers.

Strategy 2.3.1: Intentionally develop internal and external educational partnerships to improve student workforce pipelines and simplify education and training pathways.

Strategy 2.3.2: Expand the use of Career Coaches to include the remaining North Carolina community colleges.

Strategy 2.3.3: Increase dual enrollment opportunities and expand Career and College Promise (CCP) participation.

Objective 2.4: Increase the recruitment and retention of adult learners.

Strategy 2.4.1: Partner with business, industry, and community-based organizations to identify and promote short-term, high-demand programs of study. Employ effective instructional practices that promote credentialing and career advancement.

Strategy 2.4.2: Develop accelerated program models to decrease the time to completion. Develop and maintain a database of accelerated and short-term offerings.



GOAL THREE

Student Success

Goal 3: Provide resources inside and outside the classroom for all students to successfully enroll, persist, and complete education or training in a chosen career path.

PRIMARY MEASURES OF GOAL THREE

- **Curriculum Course Success Comparisons across Demographic Groups**
- **Student Curriculum Persistence**
- **Credit-Level Math and English Completion**
- **Basic Skills Student Progress**

The aim of community colleges is student success; helping all students reach their education and career goals by identifying and reducing barriers. This is critical for students to gain access to family-sustaining wage jobs. As North Carolina's economy grows, the vast majority of new jobs requires education beyond high school. The state's educational attainment goal, two million North Carolinians with postsecondary credentials by 2030, sets the target, and community colleges are critical to meeting that goal.

To reach the goal, students need better supports and clear connection to employability. A survey conducted by the North Carolina Comprehensive Community College Student Government Association (N4CSGA) identified costs and balancing college with work as the main factors impeding students' ability to succeed. Concern about employability after college was also referred to frequently. When students have a clear understanding about career goals and aspirations, it is a primary motivating factor for success.

In regional listening sessions, community college presidents and trustees talked about challenges facing students. The majority of students are enrolling part-time in an effort to balance college, work, life, and family responsibilities. Students have experienced gaps in learning as a result of the pandemic. Increases have been seen in students with mental health challenges, with more than 50% of community college and four-year students meeting the criteria for one or more mental health problems, according to a recent national study.²

In addition to impacts on learning, the pandemic exacerbated cost and other challenges for students. Federal funding was used to address cost and technology barriers through programs such as the Governor’s Emergency Education Relief (GEER) Scholarship Program, Longleaf Commitment scholarships, and investments in rural broadband. These investments have provided critical support mechanisms, but additional investment advocacy will be crucial to meet continuing student needs.

North Carolina Community College System data have indicated gaps in student performance and completion. Success metrics for white students and students of color, especially minority male students, show troubling disparities. New approaches are being piloted by colleges in an effort to mitigate these disparities, with a growing recognition that colleges will need to adapt their support services and classroom strategies to support all students through completion.

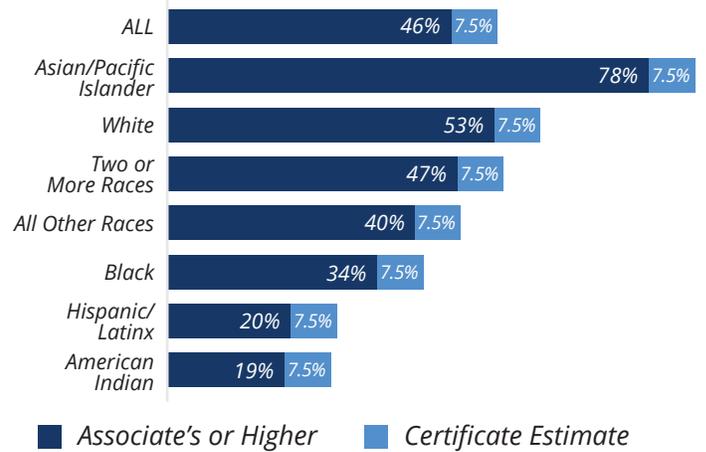
SIGNIFICANT AND GROWING STUDENT MENTAL HEALTH NEEDS

More than 50% of community college and university students aged 18-22 met criteria for mental health needs in the national Healthy Minds Study conducted in 2016-2019.

“Financial stress was a strong predictor of mental health outcomes, and cost was the most salient treatment barrier in the community college sample.”

FIGURE 5:

NC Educational Attainment by Race/Ethnicity Ages 25-44 (2019)

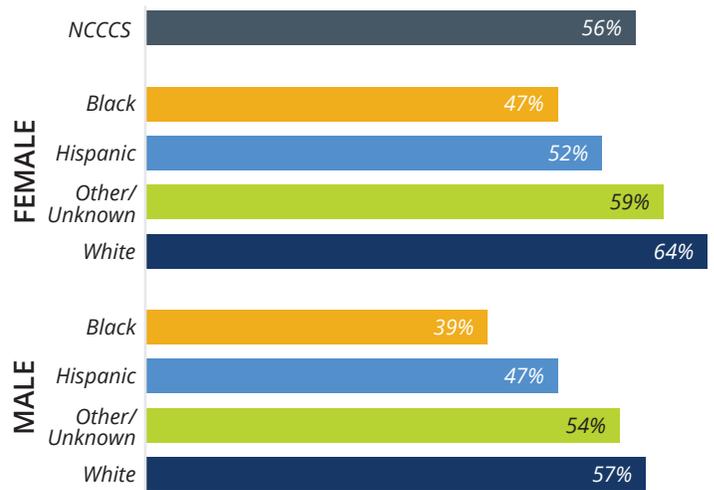


Source: American Community Survey (2019), from myFutureNC, 2021 Educational Attainment Report

FIGURE 6:

Graduation, Transfer, or Continued Enrollment after Four Years

Success rate by sex and race/ethnicity. NCCCS, Fall 2017 Cohort



Source: NCCCS Data Dashboards, Curriculum Completion (PM5)

2 | “Mental Health Conditions Among Community College Students: A National Study of Prevalence and Use of Treatment Services,” *Psychiatric Services*. American Psychiatric Association, Washington, DC: 2021 Oct 1; 72(10): 1126-1133.

GOAL THREE

Student Success Objectives and Strategies

Objective 3.1: Adopt a NCCCS framework for inclusive excellence to be embedded in policies and practices to reduce attainment gaps and cultivate a culture of belonging.

Strategy 3.1.1: Create a taskforce to identify strategies to mitigate barriers to student success, increase college completion, and reduce educational attainment gaps.

Strategy 3.1.2: Identify and deliver professional development for student support services that reduce the main barriers to completion facing students, especially underrepresented students.

Strategy 3.1.3: Incentivize excellence by disaggregating student performance data and rewarding colleges that excel in supporting diverse students in achieving positive outcomes.

Objective 3.2: Promote excellence in teaching and address the academic needs of learners.

Strategy 3.2.1: Provide research-based teaching strategies that promote student learning and foster academic resilience.

Strategy 3.2.2: Promote flexibility in teaching modalities and class scheduling to meet the needs of students. Evaluate and promote successful strategies as part of the System Conference.

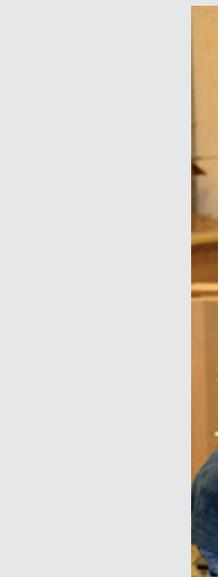
Strategy 3.2.3: Provide programming that offers all students the interventions, advising, and support needed to succeed academically.

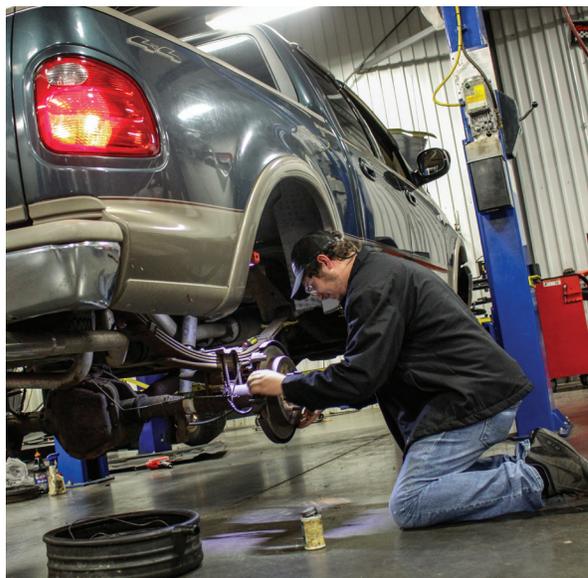
Objective 3.3: Promote a safe, healthy, and resilient learning environment.

Strategy 3.3.1: Expand community collaboration with government and educational partners, non-profits, and businesses to connect all students with the wraparound services to support success and completion.

Strategy 3.3.2: Pursue statewide funding for wraparound services and support to advance greater student success and completion, including:

- *Increased funding for student access to mental and physical health services*
- *Expansion of transportation and commuter assistance*
- *Increase in the childcare allotment in the legislative budget*
- *Promotion of strategies surrounding healthy diets and alleviation of food insecurity*





GOAL FOUR

Economic and Workforce Development

Goal 4: Provide education, training, and credentials to develop the most competitive and agile workforce in the nation.

PRIMARY MEASURES OF GOAL FOUR

- **Total Enrollment: Curriculum Career and Technical Education and Workforce Continuing Education (FTE, Headcount)**
- **Businesses and students served through Economic Development Programs:**
 - **ApprenticeshipNC**
 - **NCEdge Customized Training**
 - **Small Business Center Network**
 - **Work-Based Learning Courses**
- **Curriculum Career and Technical Education Graduates and Earnings**



North Carolina community colleges are engines for economic development, career attainment, economic mobility, and entrepreneurship.

The North Carolina Community College System, in keeping with its mission, will continue to:

- Meet employment workforce needs
- Develop talent and validate competencies
- Increase economic mobility and career advancement

The primary training challenge for North Carolina Community Colleges is keeping up with the workforce development needs of new and current employers.

“ *The ability to find high-quality employees is essential to a business's success. It is also what enables individuals and communities to advance their economic situation – making it the single most important issue to ensure North Carolina's competitiveness.*

– NC DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

First in Talent: Strategic Economic Development Plan for the State of North Carolina

Since 2021, North Carolina has experienced an increase in business relocations and expansions, creating thousands of manufacturing and distribution jobs, as well as multiplier effects in other industries such as retail. Major announcements in specific industries such as IT and the life sciences are reflected among the economic development “big wins” in 2021 – more than 3,800 jobs announced collectively by IT companies Apple, Gilead Science, and Victra, and more than 2,300 jobs announced collectively by six life sciences companies, including Fujifilm Diosynth Biotechnologies, Amgen, and Thermo Fisher Scientific.³ In the electric car sector, Toyota announced \$3.79 billion in investments in NC between December 2021 and August 2022, and the Vietnamese auto manufacturer VinFast announced \$2 billion in investments.

Existing businesses are not immune and have been searching for talent. In addition to the spike in demand for labor in many industries after the early waves of COVID-19 sharply reduced demand, there has been a pronounced churn in the job market during what has been termed “The Great Resignation” or “Great Reconsideration.”

As captured in a U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics headline, “Job openings and quits reach record highs in 2021, layoffs and discharges fall to record lows.”⁴ A summer 2022 survey of workers across various industries found that work demands are up, happiness is down, and almost 1/3 of surveyed workers are actively thinking about or trying to leave their job.⁵

Every statewide industry association attending a 2022 meeting of the NCCCS Council of Associations for Engagement expressed concern about worker shortages. The labor market was already tight prior to the pandemic based on business cycle factors, and the pandemic intensified worker shortages in many industries.

3 | NC Department of Commerce – Labor & Economic Analysis
 4 | U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, June 2022
 5 | KPMG, *Looking for More*, August 2022

SUCCESS IN ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ADDS TO DEMAND FOR WORKERS

24,224

Jobs announced in 2021 for economic development projects in NC – a record high.

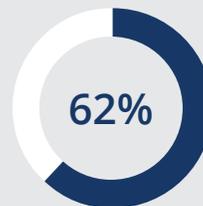
21,457

Jobs announced in 2022 as of early September – 1/3 more than had been announced by the same point in 2021.

Source: NC Dept. of Commerce

THE “GREAT RECONSIDERATION” IS UNDERWAY

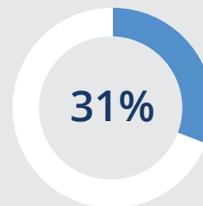
Worker Survey Responses



Say demands of job increased



Say happiness at work has decreased



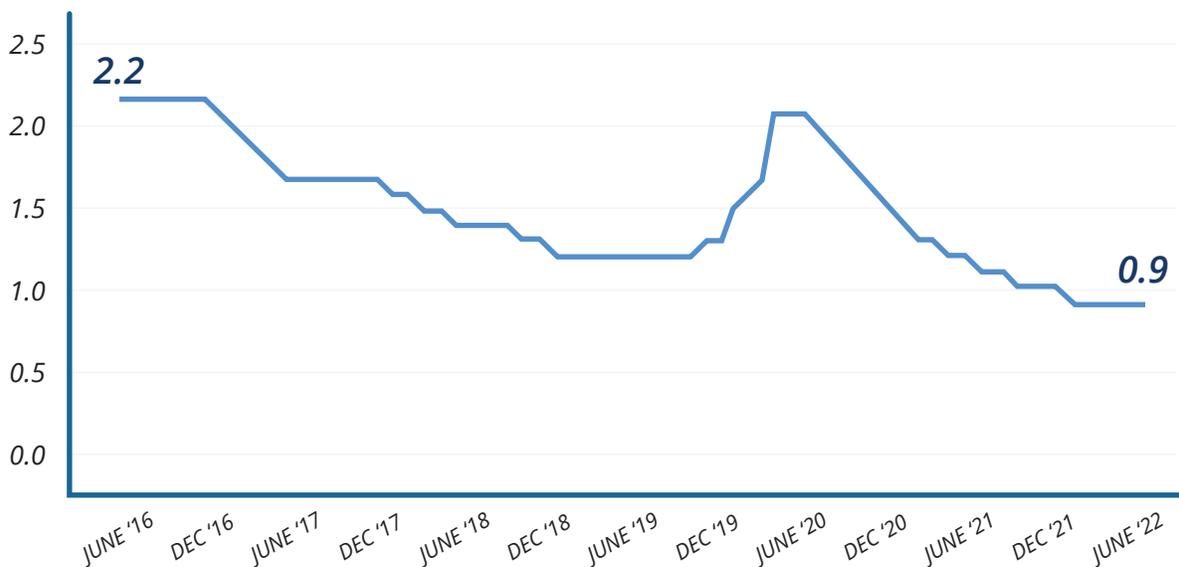
Are actively thinking or looking to leave

Source: *Looking for More*, KPMG: August 2022

FIGURE 7:

Tight Labor Market – Few Jobseekers per Job Opening, June 2016 – 2022

Ratio of Jobseekers to Jobs: North Carolina, June 2016 – June 2022



Source: NC Department of Commerce Labor & Economic Analysis Division

Community colleges will increase collaborations with all workforce partners to expand and adjust employment preparation opportunities. One area where colleges will need to focus attention is short-term credentialing. As national organizations have touted the importance of addressing the underproduction of “middle-skills” education and training (National Skills Coalition) and helping students and educators understand the value of “non-BA good jobs” (Georgetown University Center on Education and the Workforce) stackable, short-term credentials have gained attention.

The Lumina Foundation has led national thinking about setting specific education goals since 2008, and its current strategic plan identifies short-term credentials and associate degrees as the areas with the greatest need for growth. This aligns with survey data from the Strada Education network that found survey respondents during the pandemic particularly interested in programs that can be completed in weeks and months rather than years.

The community college response, in terms of career preparation, must be targeted, relevant, and focused. This involves working with employers to define skillsets and credentials. It also means supporting colleges to develop and adopt strategies that help students earn credentials quickly, including competency-based education that allows students to determine the pace of learning and provides credit for knowledge gained from experience.

Preparing students for meaningful careers allows individuals to unlock earning potential, realize a higher standard of living, and experience true economic mobility. Colleges must be intentional about reaching low-income and the underserved students, and must help guide all students to rewarding careers or small business opportunities. North Carolina community colleges play a critical role in achieving the aims in the state’s economic development plan, *First in Talent*, beginning with the first goal, “Prepare North Carolina’s workforce for career and entrepreneurial success.”

North Carolina faces many challenges, but there is reason for optimism. In August and September 2022, the North Carolina Community College System secured more than \$20 million in federal grant funding for apprenticeships and life sciences education and training, with a focus on expanding access for underserved communities.

Even as the state recovers from the economic and educational impacts of the pandemic, North Carolina's economic development successes continue.

NEW FEDERAL INVESTMENTS IN NC COMMUNITY COLLEGE SYSTEM

\$4 MILLION

from the U.S. Department of Labor for ApprenticeshipNC for use over four years to continue to expand Registered Apprenticeships, expand the industries that sponsor apprenticeships, and build partnerships with HBCUs and the Latinx community.

\$16.4 MILLION

of Economic Development Administration Build Back Better funding over three years for "NC BioBetter" to recruit and retain students from excluded populations and recruit faculty and train them on current biomanufacturing processes.





GOAL FOUR

Economic and Workforce Development Objectives and Strategies

Objective 4.1: Cultivate a robust pipeline of highly skilled workers that meets the needs of employers and helps grow the economies of all prosperity zones.

Strategy 4.1.1: Engage with the business community to create a diverse and skilled workforce.

Strategy 4.1.2: Embed community colleges in economic development councils and other local economic development organizations, and collaborate with workforce partners for strategic talent development for new and expanding industries.

Strategy 4.1.3: Enhance the partnership with the NC Department of Commerce to ensure colleges have the data they need to stay aligned with emerging employment trends.

Strategy 4.1.4: Support key production sectors critical to new and existing businesses in rural areas of North Carolina.

Strategy 4.1.5: Promote, foster, and guide entrepreneurship through the Small Business Center Network (SBCN).

Objective 4.2: Respond to employment preparation opportunities with instruction focused on relevant skills, credential attainment, and competency development.

Strategy 4.2.1: Cultivate existing talent, develop new partnerships with industry associations, and align education and training to the skills required by employers.

Strategy 4.2.2: Emphasize education and training that promotes industry-recognized competencies that helps achieve the goal of two million North Carolinians with a postsecondary credential of value by 2030.

Strategy 4.2.3: Support colleges that pilot competency-based education pathways for students to accelerate their journey from education to a job using self-paced mastery models.

Objective 4.3: Increase access to the training, education, and wraparound services needed by students to achieve their career goals and upward mobility.

Strategy 4.3.1: Take the steps necessary to be a national leader in diversity and inclusion and leverage outreach among partners to reach low-income and underserved populations.

GOAL FIVE

System Funding and Effectiveness

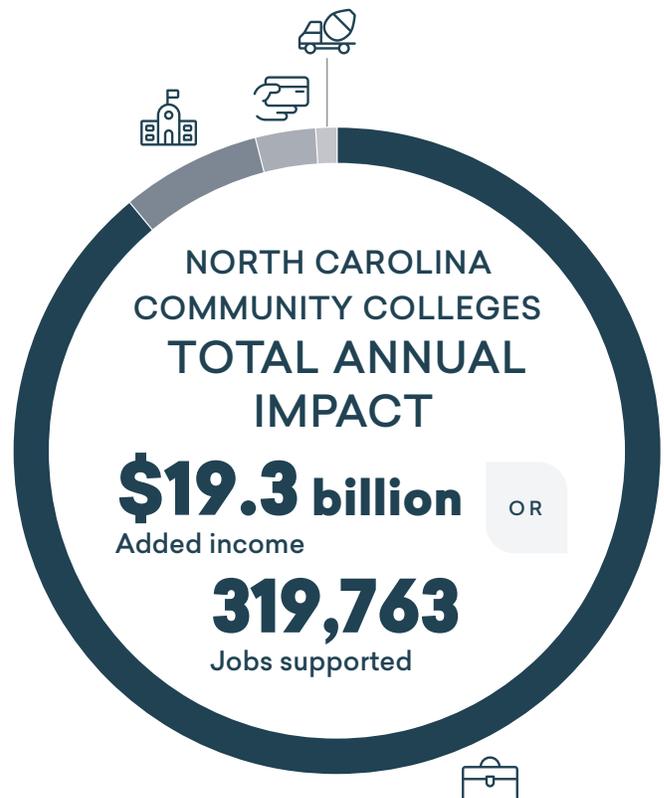
Goal 5: Increase state aid funding allocations, streamline the allocation formula, and implement practices to improve system effectiveness.

PRIMARY MEASURES OF GOAL FIVE

- **Legislative Funding**
- **Program Collaboration Across Colleges: Students Served through College Program Collaboration (Instructional Service Agreements)**
- **Student Support Investment (per Full-Time Equivalent)**
- **Future Surveys of System Office Services**

The North Carolina Community College System generates a significant return on investment for the state of North Carolina. The final goal in the strategic plan addresses strategic new investments, adjustments to the current funding model, modernization of IT and data systems, and enhanced marketing and communications to increase system effectiveness. Increases in the budget allocation will support colleges' needs and will be pursued alongside functional improvements to the system and budget efficiencies.

According to a December 2021 report by Emsi Burning Glass,⁶ the investment in the 58 colleges generates a return of \$19 billion for the state economy. The study finds that for every dollar the state invests in North Carolina's community colleges, \$7.50 is gained in added income and social savings. The colleges also generate nearly double the revenue the state invests. In total, taxpayers realize \$1.90 in added tax revenues and public sector savings for every \$1 invested in North Carolina community colleges.



6 | State and college reports can be found at <https://bigroifornc.org/>

The return on investment to North Carolina that the Community College System provides is what drives our legislative budget request. The current investment in faculty and staff pay has not been sufficient to stem high turnover. Inflationary pressure will require an even greater investment in compensation. Sustained funding is vital given that colleges have been temporarily buoyed by a period of higher-than-expected state revenue and federal COVID investments. Unified advocacy for the System's legislative agenda outlining the community college return on investment is critical.

The community college system funding formula has been modified many times in response to changing economic conditions. Community college leaders clearly communicated that now is the time for another series of updates in order to keep the formula aligned with state and college needs. One recommended update to the funding model is to create financial incentives for regional program collaboration. Collaborative strategies will improve services and efficiency and partnerships between two or more colleges will allow for expanded access to programs for students and businesses. Labor market alignment built around collaboration and regional hubs will leverage efficiencies and avoid duplication.

The agency IT infrastructure is rapidly approaching the end of its lifecycle, which threatens college functionality. Increased virtual learning, bandwidth requirements, cloud migration, use of mobile devices, and cyberattacks will only increase the need to replace a 20-year-old operating system. Community college faculty and staff increasingly rely on technology applications to teach, identify students to target for interventions or credential attainment outreach, support and guide students, and respond to employers. The State Board fully understands the requirements necessary to address student and employer needs, and data management and integration that drive new IT solutions.

N.C. Community Colleges:



Like IT, marketing and communications have a function in all areas of the strategic plan. To recruit top-notch employees and increase student enrollment, the Community College System relies on bold marketing and promotion of instruction aligned to employers' workforce needs and good careers. Student success relies on students understanding the wide array of programs, pathways, and support available to them. Problem-solving for a more effective system relies on communication across colleges and between the colleges and System Office.

Effectively addressing significant challenges will require more resources. The community colleges and System Office will need to work together to identify solution-driven services that increase efficiency and promote regional collaboration. Colleges know their communities best and the local connection will not be taken for granted. The System Office will continue to solicit collective input in order to adjust and innovate, better serving students, colleges, and the state of North Carolina.

FIGURE 8:

Service Level (Local, Regional, or State)

State	Enterprise Resource Planning System
Regional	Cloud Infrastructure Cybersecurity
Local	Campus-based Technical Support Teams

GOAL FIVE

System Funding and Effectiveness Objectives and Strategies

Objective 5.1: Continually advocate for investment in the North Carolina Community College System that reflects the value of all employees and the students and businesses served.

Strategy 5.1.1: Pursue full funding for the NCCCS 2022-2025 legislative agenda.

Objective 5.2: Modernize and realign the Community College System's funding formula.

Strategy 5.2.1: Review and adjust course tier funding levels to achieve parity between curriculum and continuing education programs.

Strategy 5.2.2: Pursue a recurring source of funding for the High-Cost Workforce Program Start-Up Fund.

Strategy 5.2.3: Create incentives for regional collaboration by increasing funding for programs offered through multi-college partnerships.

Strategy 5.2.4: Realign the definition of a full course load from 16 to 12 contact hours to align with the UNC System and federal financial aid programs.

Objective 5.3: Align System Office support to colleges' needs.

Strategy 5.3.1: Redefine System Office support for colleges by implementing strategies that improve functional services based on college size and requirements. Identify services that are most effectively provided statewide, regionally, or at the college level.

Strategy 5.3.2: Build on existing initiatives to identify and implement new approaches to support rural colleges and students.

Strategy 5.3.3: Implement new communications and statewide marketing strategies.

Objective 5.4: Provide the North Carolina Community College System with data and technology systems that provide best-in-class support for core business functions.

Strategy 5.4.1: Adopt an Enterprise Resource strategy for an effective IT system that drives positive student outcomes and meets college requirements.

Strategy 5.4.2: Develop a data management and integration plan for the NC Community College System to enhance research and reporting capacity.

Strategy 5.4.3: Provide a cybersecurity response plan, leadership, prevention strategies, and college support.

PROMOTING THE "OPEN DOOR BRANDS"

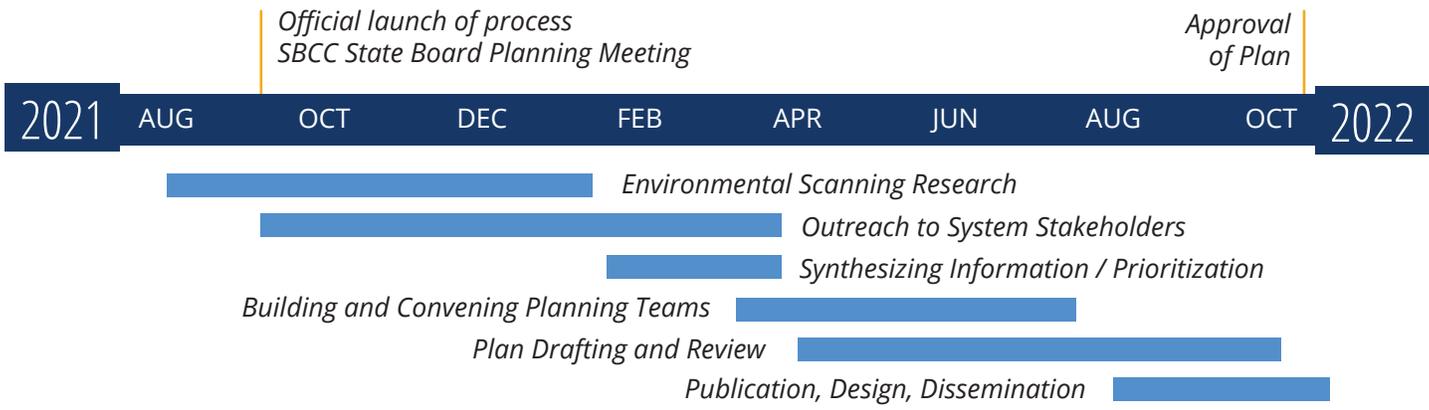
The doors of the 58 North Carolina Community colleges are open to all and provide North Carolinians with a broad range of essential services. Early Colleges, Small Business Center Network, ApprenticeshipNC, Adult Basic Education, BioNetwork, and Customized Training are just a few of the "Open Door Brands" that are part of the North Carolina Community College System. Getting the word out to individuals, families, businesses, and other partners is critical to ensuring that NCCCS is able to expand opportunities for the people of this great state.



APPENDIX

Strategic Planning Process

The North Carolina Community College System launched its strategic planning process in September 2021 at the annual State Board Planning Meeting. In order to develop the plan, the Board pursued an extensive fact-finding review. The State Board of Community Colleges, the System Office, and leaders across the community colleges engaged in comprehensive environmental scanning, planning, and prioritization.



Environmental Scanning

A major aspect of community college system strategic planning is scanning the community college landscape, the larger environment, and understanding the significance of the demographic, economic, and societal factors. This included an examination of challenges and opportunities facing community colleges and stakeholders' perceptions of system strengths and weaknesses.

Review of Research and College Plans

The State Board and System Office reviewed demographic and internal System data at the September 2021 State Board Planning Meeting. Dr. Jim Johnson with the University of North Carolina Kenan Institute of Private Enterprise presented on where we are as a state and an economy. Dr. Johnson referenced the “gale-force winds of demographic change ahead”⁷ that have implications for the educational pipeline, supply of labor, diversity of the state, and population shifts. System Research and Performance Management personnel presented on the [“State of the System.”](#) addressing postsecondary landscape, enrollment trends, curriculum instruction, student progression, and overall success measures.

System Office research staff provided updates to the Strategic Planning Committee and the full State Board of Community Colleges over the past year (on topics including enrollment trends) related to the development of the strategic plan. Research staff of the Department of Commerce’s Labor & Economic Analysis Division also presented to the Strategic Planning Committee in January 2022 on “COVID and North Carolina’s Labor Market.”

In order to understand the priorities of the 58 community colleges, System Office staff collected and summarized the themes from individual college strategic plans and Quality Enhancement Plans (QEP). The QEP outlines the top issue or set of issues a college tackles for institutional improvement, required as part of the accreditation process.

The System Office also supported a survey of students conducted by the NC Comprehensive Community College Student Government Association (N4CSGA). The findings concerning student needs helped formulate and prioritize which strategic issues to address.



7 | Johnson, Dr. James H. Jr., et al., *Business Alert! Gale Force Demographic Wind Gusts Ahead* (Kenan Institute White Paper). Kenan Institute for Private Enterprise, University of North Carolina: August 2021.

Stakeholder Engagement

The State Board of Community Colleges embarked on a process to collect statewide input. The process included an analysis of System strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats (SWOTs). Also, key definitions of outcomes and success were explored during the September 2021 State Board Planning Meeting. The State Board then initiated the outreach process.

The outreach process included the following:

- Regional listening sessions with community college presidents, trustees, and other college representatives.
- Planning exercises and discussions with subject-matter experts, through community college association meetings and listening events.
- Focus groups, planning, and discussions with other key audiences, including students, businesses, workforce representatives, and community partners.

Between December 8, 2021 and February 14, 2022, through eight regional listening sessions, the State Board of Community Colleges' members gained a better understanding of community colleges' challenges and solutions. Each community college was invited to bring a team of five, including the college president, chair and vice-chair of the board of trustees, other leaders or staff, and a student representative. The meetings were organized by Community College Trustee Regions and were configured to include the state's eight Prosperity Zones. Due to the rapid rise in COVID cases during winter 2021-22, seven meetings were conducted virtually.

From fall 2021 to spring 2022, strategic planning staff tapped specific expertise within the Community College System through a variety of meetings and sessions with community college associations. Associations engaged through this process included: Student Development Administrators Assoc. (SDAA), Chief Academic Officers, New Senior Administrators, Adult

Educators Assoc. (Workforce Continuing Education and Basic Skills staff at the Adult Educators conference), and the Community College Planning and Research Organization (CCPRO). Various data gathering approaches were used with the groups, ranging from SWOT analyses, visioning exercises, and general discussions. Internally, the System Office leadership team was utilized to discuss overall System issues and provide input.

As input was collected from within the Community College System, outreach continued with the students, business, and community partners. The N4CSGA sponsored focus groups at its February 2022 Spring Division Meeting to allow strategic planning staff to document students' needs and perspectives. The Council of Associations for Engagement (CAFÉ), a group of statewide industry associations, discussed challenges, opportunities, and needs from the Community College System. Input sessions were also held with the NC Workforce Development Directors Council and Hispanic Latino Outreach Coalition.

Prioritizing and Plan Development

Prioritizing by the SBCC Strategic Planning Committee: March 2022

The Strategic Planning Committee of the State Board reviewed examined stakeholder college and partner input to identify focused priorities. This process resulted in the development of the five themes:

- Faculty and Staff Recruitment and Retention
- Enrollment
- Student Success for All
- Economic and Workforce Development
- System Funding and Effectiveness

Development of Aims by Planning Teams: April through July

Planning teams were formed around the themes of the strategic plan and convened to develop suggested plan goals, objectives, tactics, and metrics. Each planning team was co-chaired by a community college president and System Office senior team leader, and included a State Board member, second community college president, subject matter experts, and relevant partners. Some planning teams also required student, business, education, workforce, and other partner involvement.

Review by the State Board of Community Colleges: July through October

The State Board of Community Colleges, through its Strategic Planning Committee and full board processes, reviewed the draft goals, objectives, and strategies culminating in a strategic plan draft. Suggestions were offered for the plan publication, and the State Board actively worked on board governance structure to support effective implementation of the plan. The State Board of Community Colleges approved the strategic plan at its October 2022 State Board meeting.

Plan Implementation and Revisions

The State Board of Community Colleges will develop one-year action plans to implement the 2022-2026 strategic plan. These will incorporate the tactics and ideas offered by the planning teams. Annual State Board planning meetings will be used for development of the annual action steps. The use of metrics tied to the strategic plan and progress metrics and deliverables at the action plan level will allow the State Board to review plan progress at both the strategic and tactical levels. Identified metrics will be used to assess quarterly progress of tactics, plus regular outcome metrics that can be tracked within the strategic plan timeframe.

In 2024, the State Board will review the plan and update, as necessary, to reflect the shifting priorities needed to address the changing community college environment. The State Board of Community Colleges embraces the concept of this strategic plan as a “living plan.” Updates will allow for adjustments in business conditions, changes in the political climate, and challenges facing students in a post-pandemic learning environment.





ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The North Carolina Community College System's 2022-2026 Strategic Plan would not have been possible without the engagement and input from students, business leaders, internal System stakeholders, and partners. Below are the lists of the formal planning teams that met to offer input for the plan objectives, strategies, tactics, and metrics. Additionally, the North Carolina Community Colleges Foundation, the North Carolina Association of Community College Presidents, and many other community college associations offered their expertise and input. Multiple System Office divisions supported planning meetings and helped ensure an inclusive and open process.

Links to Community College Plans, College and Student Input



[Summary Table of the 58 Community College Strategic Plans and Quality Enhancement Plans \(QEPs\)](#)



[Summary of Findings from Regional Listening Sessions with Community College Presidents and Trustees](#)



[Presentation on N4CSGA Student Survey and Focus Group Findings](#)



Strategic Planning Teams

Faculty and Staff Recruitment and Retention

Team Co-chairs:

President John Gossett, Asheville-Buncombe Technical Community College
Dr. Kimberly Gold, NCCCS

Team Members:

The Honorable Terry Van Duyn, State Board of Community Colleges
President Tracy Mancini, Carteret Community College
Chreatha Alston, Sandhills Community College
John Etheridge, President, NC Community College Faculty Association
Alex Fagg, NCCCS
Shakeyia Hazell, NCCCS
Arness Krause, Vice President-External, NC Community College Faculty Association
Steve Martin, Carteret Community College
Stephen Matheny, Isothermal Community College
Karen Tikkanen, NCCCS
Penny Wacaster, McDowell Technical Community College

Team Coordinator:

Anne Bacon, NCCCS

Team Assistant:

Kelly Barretto, NCCCS



NCCCS = North Carolina Community College System



Enrollment

Team Co-chairs:

President Pamela Senegal, Piedmont Community College
Dr. Levy Brown, NCCCS

Team Members:

Chairman Burr Sullivan, State Board of Community Colleges
President Laura Leatherwood, Blue Ridge Community College
LaTasha Bradford, N4CSGA (North Carolina Comprehensive Community College Student Government Association)
Brenda Burgess, NCCCS
Sharon Gladwell, NCCCS
Grant Godwin, North Carolina Community Colleges Foundation
Patrick Holyfield, Stanly Community College
Natasha Lipscomb, Rowan-Cabarrus Community College
Lorena Patterson, Hispanic Latino Action Coalition
Andrea Poole, NC State Education Assistance Authority
Barry Priest, SDAA (Student Development Administrators Association) and Bladen Community College
Abdul Sm Rasheed, Vance-Granville Community College
John Saporilas, Wake Technical Community College
Amy Policastro Schroeder, North Carolina Department of Public Instruction

Team Coordinator:

Dr. Monty Hickman, NCCCS

Team Assistant:

Alex Doles, NCCCS

Student Success for All

Team Co-chairs:

President Janet Spriggs, Forsyth Technical
Community College

Dr. James “JW” Kelley, NCCCS

Team Members:

Dr. Shirley Carraway, State Board of Community
Colleges

President Gene Smith, Brunswick Community
College

Tawanda Foster Artis, NCCCS

Dr. Levy Brown, NCCCS

Scott Byington, Central Carolina Community
College

Dr. Lisa Eads, NCCCS

Dr. John “JJ” Evans, NCCCS

Dr. Eric Fotheringham, University of North
Carolina System

Dr. Lane Freeman, NCCCS

Dr. Heather Hill, Central Piedmont Community
College

Michelle Lair, NCCCS

Jennifer McLean, NCCCS

Gilda Rubio-Festa, NCCCS

Sneha Shah-Coltrane, North Carolina
Department of Public Instruction

Nathan Vasquez, N4CSGA

Team Coordinator:

Delores Ali, North Carolina Student Success
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Team Assistant:

Tiffany Howell, NCCCS

Economic and Workforce Development

Team Co-chairs:

President Shelley White, Haywood Community
College

Dr. Bruce Mack, NCCCS

Team Members:

Sarah West, State Board of Community Colleges

President Maria Pharr, South Piedmont
Community College

Rebecca Axford, Raleigh-Durham JATC

Ginger Brick, Workforce Development Board
Directors Council

Kathryn Castellones, NCCCS

Cecilia Holden, myFutureNC

Nate Humphrey, NCCCS

Dr. Annie Izod, NCWorks

John Loyack, Economic Development

Partnership of North Carolina (EDPNC)

Chet Mottershead, N.C. Department of

Commerce, Division of Workforce
Solutions

John Nelms, N.C. Economic Developers
Association

Gary Salamido, N.C. Chamber

Kristie VanAuken, N.C. Department of Public
Instruction

Dr. Robert (“Bob”) Witchger, NCCCS

Team Coordinator:

Dr. Matthew Meyer, NCCCS

Team Assistant:

Jerrie Farmer, NCCCS

System Funding and Effectiveness

Team Co-chairs:

President Dale McInnis, Richmond Community
College

Dr. Patrick Crane, NCCCS

Team Members:

Ann Whitford, State Board of Community
Colleges

President Lawrence Rouse, Pitt Community
College

Brandy Andrews, NCCCS

Bruce Cole, Cleveland Community College

Alex Fagg, NCCCS

Patrick Fleming, NCCCS

Dorrine Fokes, NCCCS

Judykay Jefferson, NCCCS

Stephanie Lake, NCCORD and Wake Technical
Community College

Kevin Leonard, North Carolina Association of
County Commissioners

Carol Ann Lydon, CCPRO and Southeastern
Community College

Dr. Bill Schneider, NCCCS

Team Coordinator:

Anne Bacon, NCCCS

Team Assistant:

Gracie Davis, NCCCS

Plan Leadership and Support

State Board of Community Colleges Strategic Planning Committee

Ann Whitford, Chair
Wade Bryan Irwin, Jr., Vice Chair
LaTasha Bradford
Dr. Grant Campbell
Dr. Shirley Carraway
Hari Nath
The Honorable Mark Robinson
Ray Trapp
Sarah West



System Office Senior Team

Dr. William S. Carver, Interim President
Dr. Kimberly Gold, Chief of Staff and Executive Vice President
Brandy Andrews, Vice President and Chief Financial Officer
Dr. Levy Brown, Senior Vice President, Academic and Student Services, Chief Academic Officer
Dr. Patrick Crane, Vice President of Strategic Initiatives
Alex Fagg, Director of Government Relations
Patrick Fleming, Senior Vice President, Technology Solutions & Distance Learning, Chief Information Officer
Tawanda Foster Artis, General Counsel
Sondra Jarvis, Director, State Board Affairs
Dr. Bruck Mack, Vice President, Economic Development

Strategic Planning Committee Staff

Dr. Patrick Crane, Vice President of Strategic Initiatives
Anne Bacon, Director of Strategic Planning and Policy
Dr. Bill Schneider, Associate Vice President of Research and Performance Management
Kelly Barretto, Executive Assistant to the President and Chief of Staff

System Office Support

Dolores Quesenberry, Director of Communications, ApprenticeshipNC
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NC COMMUNITY COLLEGES

CREATING SUCCESS

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