

STATE BOARD OF COMMUNITY COLLEGES
Allocation for Finish Line Grants
July 1, 2022 - September 30, 2023

Request: The State Board of Community Colleges is requested to approve the allocation of \$3,750,000 to support the Finish Line Grants program. This will include \$3,113,500 for emergency grants for students, \$524,000 to support college program implementation and outreach, and \$112,500 for the System Office to administer the program.

The Finish Line Grant program has been managed by the Department of Commerce and operated as a partnership between community colleges and local workforce development boards since 2018. With State Board approval, the administration of this program will shift from the Department of Commerce to the North Carolina Community College System (NCCCS).

Strategic Plan Reference:

Theme: Student Interest and Access

Goal #1: Increase the percentage of North Carolinians, particularly within underserved populations, pursuing and easily accessing education or training through North Carolina community colleges.

- Objective 1.3: Identify and reduce access barriers for all prospective students, particularly among underserved populations.
 - Strategy 1.3.1: Improve and augment existing financial assistance programs and services to better assist students with educational costs, particularly costs beyond tuition and fees (e.g., books, transportation, childcare, etc.).

Background: On July 12, 2018, Governor Cooper announced the Finish Line Grants program to help community college students complete their education when facing unforeseen challenges. Initially funded with \$7 million federal funding (Governor's Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act WIOA Discretionary Fund), the program provides community college students that are 50% of the way to completing a credential with emergency aid up to \$1,000 per semester for an unanticipated financial hardship. The program has operated as a partnership between community colleges and workforce development boards where eligible students enroll in the workforce system and workforce boards pay for allowable expenses (no funds go directly to students). In the current arrangements, students apply for aid at the college, but are then referred to a local workforce board that determines final eligibility and pays the emergency costs on the student's behalf. The local workforce boards are responsible for paying the student's emergency expense (for example, paying a garage for an auto repair or medical provider for a medical emergency) and for reporting data to the Department of Commerce. As of June 30, 2022, 8753 students had received \$4.8 million in emergency aid through this program.

A process evaluation of the Finish Line Grant program was conducted by the North Carolina Office of State Budget and Management's Office of Strategic Partnerships in 2021 and 2022.

After conducting interviews with students, staff at community colleges, and local workforce boards, they developed a set of recommendations for streamlining the program and simplifying the awarding grants to students. One of the elements of the program identified in the report as a barrier for some students is that in the current model, students are required to complete applications and provide documentation at both the community college and the local workforce board. By changing the source of funds and moving the program to the NCCCS the requirement to register with the workforce system is removed. This will simplify the program and should help students receive emergency aid more quickly.

Rationale: The current funding source for the Finish Line Grant program, Governor’s Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act WIOA Discretionary Fund, is being redirected to meet other state needs. The Governor’s Office has identified a new funding source, Emergency Assistance to Non-Public Schools (EANS), to continue to fund the Finish Line Grant Program. With the change in funding source, the requirement that students register with the workforce system, is removed. This will streamline the process for students to receive emergency aid through this program.

The Office of the Governor will award \$3,750,000 to NCCCS to provide resources to community colleges to help students complete their degrees or credentials when their education has been or is at risk of being interrupted by the pandemic and its lingering effects. A minimum of \$3,113,500 must be used for emergency financial assistance for eligible students. To be eligible students must be enrolled in a North Carolina community college, in good academic standing as defined by the college, and have completed at least 50% of their degree or credential program. These grants may help cover cost such as transportation, childcare or dependent care, housing assistance, utility bills (including internet), medical needs, accommodations for individuals with disabilities, and assistance with tuition, fees, or books. Each community college that participates in the Finish Line Grant program will receive a budgeted award of \$20,000 plus additional funding based on 2022-23 budget FTE. If a college does not participate in the program, their available funds will be redistributed to participating colleges.

NCCCS may use up to \$524,000 for student outreach, marketing, program implementation and grant administration. NCCCS may also charge as an expense up to \$112,500 to effectively administer this program consistent with federal cost principles in 2 C.F.R. part 200, subpart E of the Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards (Uniform Guidance). Staff will bring an item to a future Board meeting with recommendations for the use of \$524,000 to support program implementation and outreach.

The agreement between the North Carolina Community College System and the North Carolina Pandemic Recovery Office (NCPRO) allows for the distribution of \$3,113,500 in grant funds to colleges and the use of up to \$112,500 to administer the program. Administrative funds will be used to hire a time-limited temporary employee to serve as Finish Line Grant program administrator at the System Office. Recommended college allocations are included in Table 1.

Table 1: Recommended Finish Line Grant College Allocations

COMMUNITY COLLEGES	2022-23 CU BFTE	Base Amount	CU FTE Amount	Total Amount
Alamance CC	3,271	\$20,000	\$36,602	\$56,602
Asheville-Buncombe TCC	4,943	20,000	55,311	75,311
Beaufort County CC	1,371	20,000	15,341	35,341
Bladen CC	1,077	20,000	12,051	32,051
Blue Ridge CC	2,100	20,000	23,498	43,498
Brunswick CC	1,383	20,000	15,475	35,475
Caldwell CC & TI	3,062	20,000	34,263	54,263
Cape Fear CC	7,432	20,000	83,162	103,162
Carteret CC	1,450	20,000	16,225	36,225
Catawba Valley CC	3,560	20,000	39,835	59,835
Central Carolina CC	4,117	20,000	46,068	66,068
Central Piedmont CC	14,310	20,000	160,125	180,125
Cleveland CC	2,246	20,000	25,132	45,132
Coastal Carolina CC	3,319	20,000	37,139	57,139
College of The Albemarle	2,016	20,000	22,558	42,558
Craven CC	2,301	20,000	25,748	45,748
Davidson-Davie CC	3,109	20,000	34,789	54,789
Durham TCC	3,938	20,000	44,065	64,065
Edgecombe CC	1,359	20,000	15,207	35,207
Fayetteville TCC	8,825	20,000	98,749	118,749
Forsyth TCC	6,489	20,000	72,610	92,610
Gaston College	4,062	20,000	45,453	65,453
Guilford TCC	8,637	20,000	96,646	116,646
Halifax CC	769	20,000	8,605	28,605
Haywood CC	1,150	20,000	12,868	32,868
Isothermal CC	1,757	20,000	19,660	39,660
James Sprunt CC	1,142	20,000	12,779	32,779
Johnston CC	3,358	20,000	37,575	57,575
Lenoir CC	2,075	20,000	23,219	43,219
Martin CC	632	20,000	7,072	27,072
Mayland CC	654	20,000	7,318	27,318
McDowell TCC	955	20,000	10,686	30,686
Mitchell CC	2,265	20,000	25,345	45,345
Montgomery CC	724	20,000	8,101	28,101
Nash CC	2,148	20,000	24,036	44,036
Pamlico CC	310	20,000	3,469	23,469
Piedmont CC	974	20,000	10,899	30,899
Pitt CC	6,362	20,000	71,189	91,189
Randolph CC	2,005	20,000	22,435	42,435
Richmond CC	1,823	20,000	20,399	40,399
Roanoke-Chowan CC	475	20,000	5,315	25,315
Robeson CC	1,763	20,000	19,727	39,727
Rockingham CC	1,362	20,000	15,240	35,240

**Attachment FC 02
(REVISED 08/20/2022)**

Rowan-Cabarrus CC	4,993	20,000	55,870	75,870
Sampson CC	1,558	20,000	17,434	37,434
Sandhills CC	3,239	20,000	36,243	56,243
South Piedmont CC	2,099	20,000	23,487	43,487
Southeastern CC	1,109	20,000	12,409	32,409
Southwestern CC	1,933	20,000	21,630	41,630
Stanly CC	1,831	20,000	20,488	40,488
Surry CC	2,388	20,000	26,721	46,721
Tri-County CC	920	20,000	10,295	30,295
Vance-Granville CC	2,235	20,000	25,009	45,009
Wake TCC	17,629	20,000	197,263	217,263
Wayne CC	2,589	20,000	28,970	48,970
Western Piedmont CC	1,566	20,000	17,523	37,523
Wilkes CC	2,022	20,000	22,626	42,626
Wilson CC	1,389	20,000	15,543	35,543
TOTAL	174,580	\$1,160,000	\$1,953,500	\$3,113,500

Fund Source and Availability: Funding is contingent upon the award and signed NCPRO agreement of Emergency Assistance to Non-Public Schools (EANS) funds of \$3,750,000. The award period is July 1, 2022, through September 30, 2023. The Governor’s Office is planning to award additional federal funds to support the Finish Line Grant program for a second year, through September 30, 2024, as funds become available.

Contact:

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