

**STATE BOARD OF COMMUNITY COLLEGES**  
**North Carolina Competency-Based Education Incubator (NC-CBE Project)**  
**FY 2017-18**

**Request:** The State Board is asked to approve \$125,000 in Perkins Career and Technical Education Leadership Funds to support Phase III of the North Carolina Competency-Based Education Incubator (NC-CBE Project).

**Background:** The institutional partners of the NC-CBE Project are Central Piedmont Community College, Forsyth Technical Community College, Stanly Community College, Wake Technical Community College, and the North Carolina Community College System. The goal of the NC-CBE Project is to build a sustainable and scalable AAS model for the NC Community College system that will provide students across the state with an affordable way to:

- get credit for what they already know;
- build on their knowledge and skills at their own pace;
- earn high-quality, industry-validated degrees and credentials;
- get a new job or advance along a career pathway; and
- earn a fair wage to support themselves and their family.

On July 17, 2016, the State Board of Community Colleges approved \$125,000 of Perkins Leadership funds and \$500,000 in State funds for Phase II during 2016-17. Unexpended federal funds of \$47,878 are available for carry forward. The System Office has requested approval to carry forward the unexpended state appropriation of \$197,687.

**Rationale:** Institutions of higher education in North Carolina, and across the nation, are under pressure to reduce costs, increase completion rates, maintain open access, and ensure all graduates have the skills our industry partners' demand. These pressures have created a considerable and growing interest in new and creative approaches that can reduce costs, increase accessibility, and improve student success while ensuring quality of instruction. Competency-Based Education (CBE) is an innovative educational delivery model in higher education that has shown great promise to meet these demands.

CBE programming on NCCCS campuses is limited and inconsistent across degree programs. There is currently no standardized process for colleges to implement CBE programming to fill students' knowledge and training gaps toward certification/licensure, or continued education and advanced degrees. The NC-CBE Project has been leading NCCCS efforts to develop a consistent approach to CBE tailored to community colleges since 2015.

**Accomplishments – Phase I and II (2015-17):** With support from National CBE experts, NC-CBE Project participants have engaged in strategic planning and consensus building activities leading to development of instructional resources, best practice guidelines, and strategies for managing a CBE program. Primary deliverables of the Project include the following:

- Faculty defined over 300 information technology competency and sub-competency statements reflecting NCCCS-approved learning outcomes, locally defined learning objectives, and two (2) nationally recognized frameworks - the Department of Labor's (DOL) Competency Building Blocks Model Framework and the Lumina Foundation Degree Qualifications Profile (DQP). Over 120 of these competencies are applicable to all CTE programs, ready for immediate adoption and scaling.
- A shared digital learning environment and interoperability plan for CBE was researched and developed. The team worked through a formal Request for Proposal process to secure a Learning Management System specific to competency-based education. Over 20 faculty, instructional administrators, and information technology service representatives participated in this process. NC-CBE Project leads anticipate a contract will be signed FY2016.
- Project Leads presented on the NC-CBE Project at several state-level conferences including the annual NCCCS Conference, a quarterly NC Presidents' Association meeting, and the 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual UNC-GA CBE Summit.
- NC-CBE Project representatives participated in a multi-institutional, multi-state initiative led by UNC-GA focused on exploring SACS COC policy and procedures for competency-based education. In May 2017, a draft policy was submitted to SACS COC for review.
- Professional development activities for faculty and staff were developed and implemented to develop CBE resources. Project Leads from CPCC organized and conducted over 20 local webinars and meetings, and facilitated collective participation in relevant state and national conferences.
- Project Leads developed a management plan, budget, and revised learning & business plan (*Design Elements Guide, Timeline, and Proposal*) to guide our work through 2018.
- As of June 2017, there were over one hundred active NC-CBE Project participants, including representatives from Academic Leadership, Faculty, Business and Finance, Information Technology Services, Institutional Research, Advising, Financial Aid, and Registrar across all partner colleges and the NCCCS.

**Fund Source and Availability:** Funds are available from the Carl D. Perkins, Career and Technical Education Grant, State Leadership funds.

**Time Period:** The allocation period is July 1, 2017 through June 30, 2018.

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