

STATE BOARD OF COMMUNITY COLLEGES
Allocation of Title II Adult Education and Family Literacy Act (AEFLA) Funds for Digital Literacy
Training Pilot, Phase 2
FY 2020-21

Request: The State Board of Community Colleges is requested to approve an allocation of \$185,000 from Title II, Adult Education and Family Literacy Act (AEFLA) State Leadership funds to support Phase II of the Digital Literacy Training Pilot to 5 colleges who participated in Phase I. The purpose of this funding is to support the piloting of digital skills training models developed in Phase I.

Strategic Plan Reference(s):

Theme: Student Interest and Access

GOAL: Increase the percentage of North Carolinians, particularly within underserved populations, pursuing and easily accessing education or training through North Carolina community college.

1. Objective 1.3: Identify and reduce access barriers for all prospective students, particularly among underserved populations.

Theme: Economic and Workforce Impact

GOAL: Increase the percentage of North Carolinians, particularly within underserved populations, pursuing and easily accessing education or training through North Carolina community college.

2. Objective 1.3: Identify and reduce access barriers for all prospective students, particularly among underserved populations.

Background: The goal of College and Career Readiness (CCR) is to provide instruction and services to adults that lead to or facilitate transition to job training or credentials that earn family sustaining wages. The COVID-19 pandemic impacted our state's economy with high unemployment in all sectors but especially in low paying jobs. In April, about half of lower income Americans reported job loss. COVID-19 impact varies by race and ethnicity. It has disproportionately impacted Black and Hispanic Americans more than others. COVID-19 has magnified our inequity fault lines in many areas, but especially in the digital divide. Access to reliable internet connection, devices, and having the skills to navigate online platforms are essential for participation in all areas of modern life, and these skills will be essential in the COVID-19 recovery.

The CCR unit will focus on building NC CCR program capacity to implement digital literacy instructional programs to improve digital inclusion in North Carolina.

In Fall 2020, the CCR unit of NCCCS supported Phase I of a two-phase Digital Literacy raining project. Through State Board action in July and October 2020, the NC 2020 COVID-19 Recovery Act (Session Law 2020-04) and Title II funds were allocated to a cohort of six adult education providers (5 colleges and 1 community-based organization) representing varying NC regions and program size. These programs were assigned the task to research and recommend curriculum models that would improve the digital skills needed for online academic success and to access workforce development services. In Phase I, the project team developed curriculum and program models to support adult education students' digital skills acquisition with the intent for a Phase II implementation in spring 2021

Rationale: The CCR supported Phase I of Digital Literacy Training curriculum development. This request supports Phase II – implementation of Digital Literacy training. This is in keeping with the goal of building NC CCR programs' capacity to offer digital skills training to improve equitable access and inclusion to academic or job training programs.

These funds will support staff and faculty to continue their research and piloting of a digital skills framework that can be disseminated across NC programs. Funds will be used to support course instruction, digital literacy project development, digital navigator professional development and training, data tracking, and statewide dissemination.

Research based professional development supports the mentor-based model for professional development. This approach creates a supportive and collaborative environment. Using this approach accelerates teacher effectiveness and increases student achievement. The CCR program at Coastal Carolina Community College has the expertise and capacity to lead and provide mentoring for the Phase II Digital Literacy Training project. They will support the overall management of the digital literacy project as its lead provider. Coastal Carolina's CCR department has the programmatic ability to fulfill the objectives for which the funds are allocated, as the program serves 900 adult learners annually. Additionally, this provider has a documented record of accomplishments for providing innovative programs such as its military academic training programs aboard Camp Lejeune and Camp Johnson. They also made a quick pivot to offering instruction completely online during the onset of the Covid-19 pandemic. Coastal Carolina's CCR program maintains strong collaborations with community agencies and Workforce Onnovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) partners serving the basic skills deficient population of Onslow County. During the 2019-20 program year, Coastal Carolina CCR exceeded the federal performance measures by earning an overall Measurable Skill Gains (MSG) percentage of 49.3%, the second highest in the state. Their exceptional performance in Phase I makes them an excellent choice to lead Phase II of the project.

The project funds five community colleges. The community based organization from Phase I is leading another digital literacy project for English language learners and therefore is not included in this request.

Deliverables:

Lead Provider (Coastal Carolina Community College) agrees to the following deliverables:

1. Manage and provide oversight of Phase II of the Digital Literacy Training Project,
2. Develop and provide virtual training for implementation of the contextualized digital literacy course,
3. Develop and provide virtual training for digital navigator professional development,
4. Implement the Digital literacy curriculum developed during Phase I,
5. Connect with workforce board partners,
6. Compile, organize, and present end-of-year reports to include best practices, a model for implementation and student data on success, retention, and completion,
7. Submit information in the Digital Literacy Training Project online repository, and
8. Prepare end-of-year presentation and report.

Digital Literacy Training Participants

1. Participate in all professional development activities provided by the lead provider and System Office staff,
2. Identify and train a digital navigator for this project,
3. Implement the Digital literacy curriculum developed during Phase I,
4. Complete an end-of-year report to include best practices, a model for implementation and student data on success, retention and completion and submit to Coastal Carolina Community College, and
5. Participate in end-of-year presentation organized by Coastal Carolina Community College.

Funding Amount and Time Period: The \$185,000 request is for the period of February 19 through June 30, 2021.

Fund Source and Availability: Funding is available from the Title II Adult Education and Family Literacy Act State Leadership funds.

Colleges	Allocation
Coastal Carolina Community College (Lead Provider)	\$85,000
Lenoir Community College	\$25,000
Piedmont Community College	\$25,000
Sampson Community College	\$25,000
Wilkes Community College	\$25,000
Total	\$185,000

Contact(s):

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