

STATE BOARD OF COMMUNITY COLLEGES
Asheville-Buncombe Technical Community College Request
for Multi-Campus Center Approval

Request: Asheville-Buncombe Technical Community College (A-B Tech) requests that the State Board grant preliminary approval to designate the Woodfin location (A-B Tech Emergency Services Center) as a multi-campus center (MCC). This site is located at 20 Canoe Lane, Woodfin, North Carolina. By granting preliminary approval, the State Board agrees to include the MCC funding (approximately \$513,000) for this location in its 2017 budget requests submitted to OSBM, if the site is not addressed by the General Assembly during the upcoming session. Final State Board approval is contingent on the General Assembly appropriating additional MCC funds for the location.

Background: In the Fall of 2011, the Hemlock Building that housed A-B Tech's Emergency Services Division (ESD) at the Main Campus (340 Victoria Road, Asheville) was discovered to have lead contamination, which required evacuation of the building. As a result, the College temporarily relocated the ESD programs and courses to the A-B Tech Enka Campus. Between late 2011 and 2014, Emergency Service (ES) classes not only were held at the Enka Campus, but also on the main campus, local high schools, and fire and police departments. With the opening and relocation of ES programs to the Woodfin site, this site has now become the official "home" for ESD faculty and staff.

The Emergency Services Center (ESC) is sited on 35 acres of property located between downtown Asheville and Weaverville near the Town of Woodfin. The site is approximately nine (9) miles from the main campus. The Buncombe County Commissioners commissioned the ESC for construction in two phases in 2009. Construction was completed on both phases in 2014. As such, the Woodfin location is and will continue to be an education and training collaboration between the County of Buncombe ("County") and A-B Tech ("College").

The ESC at Woodfin includes a driving course for emergency vehicles, a fire-training tower, live burn buildings (high rise, residential, shelter, prison cells) and props, an apparatus building, and educational classroom space. The education building is a two-story, 48,752 square foot facility, housing classrooms, labs (pharmacy, cardiac, trauma, airway, and flex-labs), and office spaces. The County and College worked jointly on the planning, programming and construction of all facilities at the ESC. The County of Buncombe still owns the property, but the ESC is managed and operated by A-B Tech. The County and College have executed a 20-year usage agreement with the option to renew for an additional term.

A-B Tech took occupancy of the Woodfin ESC location in August of 2014. The College began offering continuing education courses there in the fall of 2014. A full complement of ES curriculum courses began in January 2015. A full complement of general education courses is scheduled at the site for fall 2016.

Rationale: A-B Tech provided the following justification for MCC designation for the Emergency Services Center of Asheville-Buncombe Technical Community College at Woodfin.

1. An adequate population base must exist to support the multi-campus operation.

Because of the unique curriculum and continuing education instruction offered at the ESC (Fire, Law Enforcement, E.M.S, Criminal Justice) amidst the Appalachian Mountains of western North Carolina, the College believes it is important to consider not only the population of Buncombe County, but also of the Asheville Metropolitan Statistical Area (A-MSA). The A-MSA includes Buncombe, Haywood, Henderson and Madison counties. The total population of the A-MSA grew from 425,465 in 2010 to 442,316 in 2014, an increase of 16,851 (+3.96 percent in just four years). Buncombe County alone represents 56.7 percent of the total MSA population. The North Carolina Department of Commerce (NCDOC) estimated that the July 2014 "Certified Population Estimate" for Buncombe County was 251,275, and was projected to grow to 266,779 by 2019 (+15,504). Conclusively, there is sufficient population within Buncombe County, the Asheville MSA, and the western region to support and be supported by emergency services education and training at the Woodfin ESC.

In terms of educational attainment level, according to the NCDOC, 90 percent of the population in Buncombe County has a high school diploma, while only 35 percent has a Baccalaureate Degree (2015 data). This creates a total population of adults to whom A-B Tech can offer curriculum and continuation education services and training at the A.A.S., Certificate and Certification levels at the Woodfin site.

2. Programs and services provided are based on appropriate student demand and needs.

While the ESC has been open to A-B Tech only since the fall of 2014, the College offers a good and diverse sampling of credit and non-credit classes that are in addition to emergency services classes. These classes include:

Curriculum: Anatomy & Physiology, Ethics and Community Relations, Building Construction, Critical Thinking, Quantitative Literacy, General Psychology, Pharmacology, Hydraulics & Water Distribution, and Success & Study Skills.

Continuing Education: CPR Recertification, Supervision & Management; Personnel Development, and NIMS: IC 300 & 400.

Students have the ability to take courses and complete an Associate in Applied Science Degree in Criminal Justice Technology, Emergency Medical Services, Emergency Medical Science Bridge, and Fire Protection Technology. In addition, because of the unique nature of the buildings on campus (fire tower, burn buildings, driving course), this campus serves as a regional training and continuing education center for B.L.E.T.

Heretofore, the emergency services community had to travel long distances for the clinical portion of their credential and for in-service training for ES professionals. That inconvenience and additional cost is eliminated with the opportunities available at Woodfin.

In terms of employment, NCDOR estimates (July 2015) that 27 percent of the population in Buncombe was employed in Professional/Technical, Health Care/Social Assistance, or other public services. These demographics benefit and match the kind of education and training offered by A-B Tech at the ESC - Woodfin.

3. Programs and services provided through multi-campus centers comply with the *Criteria for Accreditation* of the Commission on Colleges of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools.

After providing documentation sufficient to meet its required criteria, Asheville-Buncombe Technical Community College - Woodfin Emergency Services Center received recognition and approval from the SACSCOC. A copy of the official letter from SACSCOC has been provided to the System Office for its files.

4. Adequate county government maintenance and operation of physical plant support is available.

A-B Tech has enjoyed consistently strong support from the Buncombe County Commissioners. For three consecutive fiscal years (2014/15 - 2016/17) the County has appropriated \$6.064 million to A-B Tech, notwithstanding any year-end fund balance the College is allowed to retain and carry forward. In addition, with respect to the Emergency Services Center, the county has appropriated the following funds in increasing amounts for the three-year period 2013/14 through 2015/16 for the operations thereof:

2013/14	\$225,763
2014/15	\$556,866
2015/16	\$815,255

The consistent annual appropriation to A-B Tech and an increasing appropriation specifically targeted to the ESC over a three fiscal year period is demonstrable evidence of the County Commissioners' intent to support both education and training programs and the maintenance and operations of the physical plant.

5. An instructional program and services plan has been developed which includes appropriate details concerning program mix, staffing and instructional support functions.

Instructional Program:

Curriculum

As a requirement of SACSCOC, the College was required to develop and provide an instructional program and services plan, including details surrounding program mix, staffing and instructional support. The administration of programs follows the College's organizational structure. The appropriate A-B Tech department chairperson hires faculty that teach courses at the site. The chairperson provides supervision and collaborates with faculty to ensure that course and program objectives and outcomes are met. The chairperson reports to the appropriate division dean, who reports to the Vice President for Instructional Services. The dean, department chairs, and full-time faculty are all housed at the Woodfin site to provide direct supervision of the programs. Administrative assistants are housed on-site to provide support to faculty, staff and students.

Courses required to complete the four (4) Associate in Applied Science Degrees and two (2) Certificates are offered at this location. The "Faculty Roster Form" submitted to SACSCOC documented that all faculty members teaching in the programs are qualified to do so. The Roster includes eight (8) full-time and fourteen (14) part-time faculty members. The College has demonstrated to SACSCOC that each degree and certificate program offered at this location meets accepted standards for content and course length.

Continuing Education

The North Carolina State Highway Patrol uses the facility for required continuing education training hours. Partnerships, such as the Critical Care program with the University of Maryland, Baltimore, draws students from across the region, nation and even internationally. Industry partners include Mission Health, Biltmore Company, and Borg Warner – all dedicated to providing emergency response skills to their employees. Continuing education offerings planned for the future include emergency water management control, a national fire prevention course, and commercial interdiction and trafficking courses. Within the next year, the Buncombe County Firing Range will be open within the facility. A-B Tech will conduct all courses related to in-service firearm and recertification.

Instructional Support & Services:

The following instructional support and student services are provided to students at the Woodfin location:

Academic Advising & Registration: Academic advising services are available to assist students with selecting an academic program, and registering for classes. Students are

able to meet with advising staff at the Woodfin location by appointment. In addition, full-time faculty serve as academic advisors for students in their respective programs. Faculty conduct advising both within classes and in their offices. Students register for classes on-line through Web Advisor, and may use computers in the Woodfin Library Computer Room.

Business Office Functions: A-B Tech processes student payments, including tuition, fees and books. This site accepts checks and credit cards (through a payment kiosk). Students may also pay on-line through the wireless connection at Woodfin.

Career Services: Given the nature of the ES programs offered at Woodfin, faculty often serve as career coaches/advisors for students. In addition, given the presence of Buncombe County Public Safety personnel at Woodfin, students interact with prospective employers and their employees throughout their studies.

Computer Access: A computer lab is available for student use. Wireless Internet access is available throughout the facility. With final approval as a MCC, A-B Tech would plan to add a part-time technology support analyst who would be responsible for maintaining site technology.

Counseling: Counseling is available by appointment. Students may opt to meet with a counselor at the Victoria Road location, or the counselor can arrange to meet the student at Woodfin. The Woodfin site has a private office for student use when meeting with a counselor. With final approval as a MCC, A-B Tech would plan to add an additional student services advising capacity at the campus.

Financial Aid: Financial Aid assistance is available by appointment at Woodfin, or students may access financial aid assistance through interactive technology between Woodfin and the Victoria Road campus. The Woodfin site has a private office, including a computer, with both audio and video capacity for student use when meeting with a Financial Aid Advisor. The College regularly sends an F.A. Advisor to Woodfin to meet with students. With final approval as a MCC, A-B Tech would plan to add a part-time financial aid professional to handle administration of complex federal aid programs that cannot be assigned to a student services generalist. This person would also advertise and manage College scholarships for students at the site.

Food Service & Vending: The Woodfin site has a Student Break Room, including a kitchen where students may store items requiring refrigeration. Microwave ovens are available for student use. In addition, the college contracts with vending services to include both snacks and light meals.

ID Cards: Students may obtain ID cards at Woodfin from the Administrative staff.

Library: Woodfin includes a Library Resources Center (LRC). The Library Resource room includes eight (8) computer stations to facilitate access to electronic resources. The LRC provides an on-line portal to services through the LibGuides (electronic research guides) created for the programs at Woodfin. LRC services also include Virtual Library Cards, free home delivery of books, inter-library loan services, on-line library orientation, and program-specific resources (books, media, and links to databases).

Locker Rooms & Showers: Given the unique nature of ES instructional programs, both male and female locker rooms are available.

Parking: Parking decals are available at this site.

Testing / Assessment: College placement testing is available by appointment. This site also assists with proctoring exams.

Tutoring Services: The College offers tutoring services for students in English and mathematics. With final approval as a MCC, A-B Tech would plan to add two tutors/lab technicians to staff open computer labs and offer general tutoring in English and mathematics. Tutorial services are also available on-line.

Textbooks: Students may purchase textbooks for courses offered at the site from the A-B Tech Administrative Assistants.

As is documented in the application to SACSCOC and actualized in practice, the College has developed and deployed the requisite instructional and student support services to qualify the Woodfin location as a full-service multi-campus location.

6. The multi-campus center does not have a negative impact on institutions in contiguous areas.

As previously noted, the Woodfin ESC will not have a negative impact upon other colleges within the SMA; rather it will serve as a location convenient to other colleges (Mayland, McDowell, and Isothermal) in the western North Carolina region. Colleges will be able to access world-class ES training programs and state-of-the-art facilities within a short driving distance. Given the fact that Fire Chiefs, Law Enforcement Officials, County officials and A-B Tech came together to identify needs, location, and design of structures, the Woodfin facility will actually be appealing to other college and ES leadership across the region for meeting their specialized training, certification and re-certification needs. This convenient location will also reduce training costs (travel expenses) for colleges' and local budgets already stretched thin during recovery from the Great Recession.

7. Students enrolled at a multi-campus location must be able to complete at least one associate degree at the campus that requests the multi-campus designation.

As approved by the SACSCOC, A-B Tech is authorized and currently providing the following Emergency Services programs at the Woodfin location:

A.A.S. in Criminal Justice Technology
A.A.S. in Emergency Medical Service
A.A.S. in Emergency Medical Science Bridge
A.A.S. in Fire Protection Technology

8. The duplication of instructional support and other cost expenses are justifiable from cost effectiveness and quality perspectives.

As noted earlier, existing emergency services programs provided by A-B Tech, along with the emergency services provided by Buncombe County (Fire, Law, and Rescue) have been relocated from the Main Campus and Enka Campus to the Woodfin Emergency Services Campus. There are a few courses offered at various fire departments, police departments and high schools county wide. This provides not only a cost effective solution to the unique services required in a mountainous community (rough terrain, water rescue, remote locations, lack of sufficient medical facilities in rural locations, etc.), but it also coordinates and brings together cross-training opportunities for each of the varied occupations.

A web-survey of scheduled classes, courses and clinical experiences provides a glimpse of the vast array of curriculum courses offered in the fall of 2016 and the spring of 2016. A student in any one of the A.A.S. Degree programs can take CPR, emergency management, substance abuse, law, incident management, and other courses that cross disciplines. As such, this is an efficient way to deliver knowledge to a great number of pre-professionals without employing huge numbers of faculty to do so.

A-B Tech professionals have developed budgets which estimate the "earn-back ratio" of budgeted expenditures to projected revenue from FTE earnings for each program area. Such an analysis provides confidence that the programs are not only sustainable, but provide affordable, quality instruction from the best faculty available. Further, as described in Criteria #5, A-B Tech will utilize professional and support staff at the Woodfin location and with remote support from the Main Campus, sufficient to meet student needs.

Finally, the co-location of education and training activities at Woodfin enable pre-professionals to benefit from the experiences of in-service professionals. Students desirous of becoming medical, fire protection, and law enforcement practitioners could not be in a better location than at Woodfin, co-mingled with those "in field".

9. The multi-campus operation must enroll a minimum of 300 budget FTE

In the spring 2015, the Research & Planning Office was asked to forecast the number of FTE that would be generated annually at the Woodfin campus. The first task was to establish a historical record of FTE that was generated by the ESD at various on and off-campus sites for the period 2012-2014. Once the total FTE generated at all sites was compiled, the next step was to calculate the amount of FTE that would have been earned at the Woodfin campus - had it existed during this period.

Interviews were conducted with Department Chairs, and a list of classes that were scheduled at the Woodfin campus in spring 2015 was developed. Using this list, curriculum and continuing education FTE was calculated for each class and department by semester for the 2012/13 and 2013/14 academic years. Again, as previously noted, these classes were held primarily at the Enka campus, with a small number on the Asheville campus when no space was available at Enka. A large portion of the FTE generated by ES takes place in local high schools and fire and police departments, but FTE generated at these sites were excluded from the analysis.

Beginning January 2015, the College began coding all seated and on-line classes originating at Woodfin with local [W] NCCCS codes [5015]. A summary of FTE generated by the ES Division at on-campus sites from the spring 2013 to spring 2016 (three academic years) is listed below. During this time FTE has consistently exceeded the 300 minimum BFTE requirement. This is displayed as follows:

FTE Generated by Emergency Services at Campus Sites Spring 2013 to Fall 2015

	Spring 2013	Summer 2013	Fall 2013	Spring 2014	Summer 2014	Fall 2014	Spring 2015	Summer 2015	Fall 2015
Curriculum	94.98	9.0	102.56	77.13	8.13	122.03	79.19	6.81	91.53
Continuing Education	47.40	44.91	58.45	57.57	36.94	46.94	33.70	74.93	56.70
TOTALS	142.38	53.91	161.01	134.70	45.07	168.97	112.89	81.74	148.23

Note: FTE shaded in gray represent FTE actually delivered at the Woodfin location. The Spring 2016 Curriculum (only) estimate at this time is 75.0 FTE. This does not include mini-mester courses. Con Ed FTE estimates are not yet available.

Summary

Fiscal Year	Curriculum	Continuing Education	TOTAL
2013-14	188.69	150.76	339.45
2014-15	209.35	141.45	350.80
2015-16	173.34	165.33	338.67

Based upon a careful and conservative analysis by the A-B Tech Research & Planning Office, the FTE at Woodfin exceeds the minimum 300 FTE requirement by approximately ten percent (10%).

A recently completed (2015) "Facilities Master Planning" [*Engage Design Transform*] process authorized by A-B Tech and completed by LS3P Associates LTD (design architects) and partners included an analysis of existing facilities. Included in the analysis was the Woodfin site. Based upon an optimal FTE capacity the consultants noted that the Woodfin educational facility could handle 442 FTE out through 2023. It is likely, however, that with MCC status granted to A-B Tech - Woodfin, additional facilities will need to be constructed before that time.

Conditions of Approval: In addition to MCC funding from the General Assembly, final MCC approval is contingent on A-B Tech submitting a copy of an executed amendment to the usage agreement that ensures that any State investment in capital improvements at the Woodfin location would be protected if the usage agreement was prematurely terminated.

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