

**STATE BOARD OF COMMUNITY COLLEGES**  
**Workforce Partnership Innovation**

**Request:** The State Board is asked to approve the use of up to \$81,000 from the State Board Reserve during the 2013-15 fiscal biennium to support the Workforce Partnership Innovation, an initiative to ensure alignment of workforce development programs. The State Board is further requested to authorize the System Office to adjust this amount if necessary to support any salary and/or benefit rate increases mandated by the General Assembly for FY 2014-15.

**Background:** The North Carolina Department of Commerce is designated by the Governor to be the state administrative entity that receives grant funds to carry out the responsibilities of various employment and training related programs. These grant funds support programs including the federal Workforce Investment Act (WIA), Wagner-Peyser Act, Trade Adjustment Act, and other federal and state funded employment and training programs. The North Carolina Community College System (NCCCS) is designated by NCGS 115-D as “the primary lead agency for workforce development training” and was established 50 years ago on the foundation of industry-specific training. There is a compelling need for the State to strengthen the connections between the workforce development programs in these two agencies and to ensure collaborative, aligned delivery of services.

**Rationale:** To ensure alignment of workforce development programs administered by both agencies, this initiative would establish a joint position in Commerce and the System Office. The position would have the titles of Assistant Secretary for Workforce at Commerce and Vice President of Workforce at the System Office with the working title of Executive Director of NCWorks. Based on parameters set forth by a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between Commerce and the System Office, this position would be responsible for developing a plan for how the workforce development programs in Commerce and NCCCS will be organized to improve business services related to workforce development. After one year from the effective date of the partnership, continuation of this initiative will be contingent on the approval of this plan by the Secretary of Commerce and the President of the Community College System.

**Time Period:** The State Board Reserve funds requested for this purpose would support the System Office’s portion of the costs of this initiative for one year from the effective date of the partnership MOU. It is expected that the effective date of the MOU will be March 1, 2014.

**Fund Source and Availability:** State Board Reserve Funds. Per G.S. 115D-5(j), these funds shall be used for feasibility studies, pilot projects, start-up of new programs, and innovative ideas. Continuation of this initiative in FY 2014-15 is contingent upon availability of FY 2014-15 State Board Reserve Funds.

**Contact:**

Dr. R. Scott Ralls  
NCCCS President