

**STATE BOARD OF COMMUNITY COLLEGES**  
**Service Agreement for the Virtual Computing Environment (VCE)**

**Request:** The State Board is requested to approve \$130,600 for a Service Agreement with North Carolina State University for participation in the Virtual Computing Environment (VCE). This collaborative project of the North Carolina Community College System and NC State University allows individual community colleges to provide computer lab services through cloud computing and to achieve cost efficiencies for software and hardware. Cloud computing is a general term for anything that involves delivering hosted services over the Internet.

**Background:** The Virtual Computing Environment is a remote access service that allows students and faculty to request or reserve a computer with a desired set of applications, and to remotely access it over the Internet. Students and faculty can use a number of advanced computer applications. Linux<sup>®</sup>, Solaris<sup>®</sup>, and numerous Windows<sup>®</sup> environments are available. NCCCS and NC State have and will continue to work with community colleges wishing to provide additional specialized software for faculty and student course access.

The initial Service Agreement with NC State included the period from January 1, 2008, through December 31, 2008, and has been renewed each year through December 31, 2014.

**Rationale:** The VCE business model provides community colleges a cost-effective alternative to expensive, traditional computer labs. The VCE business model will continue to support the community colleges which previously participated in year seven of the Virtual Computing Environment, but the colleges must submit a limited proposal to identify participants involved, course sections, and software to be used.

The capacity of this cloud computing environment was expanded in 2011-12 with the addition of higher capacity blade hardware. The increase in storage capacity will allow for up to 35 community colleges to participate in this project. Colleges are selected via a competitive request-for-participation process. The RFP for 2015 was issued on October 21, 2014, with a deadline to submit proposals by November 12, 2014. The following colleges are participating in the current year and/or have been selected to participate in the VCE for 2015:

Alamance CC	Fayetteville Tech CC	Roanoke-Chowan CC
Asheville Buncombe Tech	Guilford Tech CC	Rockingham CC
Bladen CC	James Sprunt CC	Sandhills CC
Caldwell CC & TI	Mayland CC	South Piedmont CC
Cape Fear CC	McDowell Tech CC	Surry CC
Carteret CC	Mitchell CC	Tri-County CC
Cleveland CC	Nash CC	Wake Tech CC
Davidson County CC	Piedmont	Wilson CC
Edgecombe CC	Pitt CC	

Additional colleges participated in the VCE Information Session on November 3, 2014, conducted by Learning Technology Systems staff and NC State University staff. Colleges learned of innovative uses of the VCE and were provided answers to questions about the

capabilities of various software and operating systems in the cloud environment, as well as helpful information about the RFP. The final list of participants will be determined after the November 12, 2014 deadline.

**Method of Procurement:** In accordance with the procurement practice of the State of North Carolina, there is no requirement for competition or approval by outside purchasing authorities for contracts between state agencies.

**Contract Time Period and Amount:** The total amount of this contract is \$130,600 for services provide for the period January 1, 2015, through December 31, 2015.

**Fund Source and Availability:** Funding for this contract is available through the FY 2014-2015 State General Fund appropriation.

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