



RISE Up Credential Year I Report

**Annual Report to the Joint Legislative Education Oversight
Committee, the Senate Appropriations Committee on
Education/Higher Education, the House Appropriations Committee on
Education, and the Fiscal Research Division**

Submitted by The State Board of Community Colleges

As Required by S.L. 2021-180

December 1, 2022

Background:

Session Law 2021-180 Section 6.8.(a) established the RISE Up Training and Credentialing Program for Cooperative Innovative High Schools and directed the North Carolina Community College System (NCCCS) Office to collaborate with the North Carolina Retail Merchants Association and Retail Consumer Alliance Foundation to implement the RISE Up credentialing program for the 2021-2022 fiscal year to teach foundational skills to students attending Cooperative Innovative High Schools (CIHS). The RISE Up curriculum was developed by the National Retail Federation (NRF) Foundation and is hosted by the Penn Foster platform. Students who complete the program will earn industry credentials in the following areas: retail industry fundamentals, customer service/sales, inventory management/profitability, supply chain warehouse/inventory, and logistics.

In June 2022, the NC Retail Merchants Association requested a technical budget correction (HB 103) which expanded RISE Up language to extend the opportunity to any student attending or enrolled in a North Carolina Community College.

State Funding and Budget Allocation Timeline:

- Funding for this project was made available from a nonrecurring General Fund appropriation in the 2021 Appropriations Act (Session Law 2021-180).
- At its January 21, 2022, meeting the State Board of Community Colleges (SBCC) approved SBCC item FC 07 for \$250,000 from the state funds allocation for the establishment of the RISE Up training program.
- In February 2022, Lenoir Community College (LCC) was identified as the lead college for the RISE Up training program.
- On March 21, 2022, NCCCS issued an allocation memo to LCC which included \$250,000 to fund the RISE Up training program. This granted LCC access to purchase the training modules to be distributed to students attending and/or enrolled in a community college statewide upon request.
- On May 18, 2022, purchase order quotes for each course were sent to LCC from Penn Foster.
- On June 20, 2022, LCC issued a check to Penn Foster in the amount of \$249,724.80.
- On June 27, 2022, Penn Foster accounting confirmed that a check for \$249,724.80 was applied to the invoice from Lenoir CC.

Outreach and Marketing – Year 1:

- NCCCS, Lenoir Community College, the NC Retail Merchants Association, and the Retail Consumer Alliance Foundation began meeting in January and have had regular calls and email communication to develop and distribute marketing materials as well as a communication plan for schools and students for the RISE Up credentials. Originally, the marketing materials were designed for CIHS students which were named specifically as the target group of students in the original legislative allocation. Following the technical correction in HB 103, the marketing materials address any students enrolled in or attending a community college in North Carolina.
- NCCCS included announcements about the RISE UP credentials in the January, February, March, and April Chief Academic Officer monthly update calls as well as the quarterly update calls for the Programs and Student Services division.
- On April 28, 2022, the Retail Merchants Association sent marketing materials to NCCCS to distribute to CIHS and community colleges.
- On May 14, May 18 and May 19, 2022, three separate informational email blasts with the marketing materials were sent to CIHS principals, liaisons and staff. Additionally, the NC Retail Merchants Association also hosted a webinar with NRF Foundation staff for CIHS principals and staff to advertise RISE Up and provide more information about the program.
- NCCCS invited speakers from the NC Retail Merchants Association to the May 24, 2022 Chief Academic Officers update call. Marketing materials were shared again with Chief Academic Officers with the presentation materials following this call. Marketing materials were also shared with Career and College Promise (CCP) and CIHS leaders at the CCP/CIHS Leadership Summit hosted by the NC Department of Public Instruction at the end of May 2022.
- On July 13, 2022, the NC Retail Merchants Association submitted applications for each of the four RISE Up training courses to be considered as additions to the list of approved NC Workforce Credentials.
- On August 30, 2022, representatives from the NC Retail Merchants Association joined the August Chief Academic Officers update call and again shared information about this opportunity.
- On September 15, 2022, information about RISE Up was shared by NCCCS with early college principals at a professional development session hosted by RTI.

Program Outcomes – Year 1

- Number of students who received or are in the process of receiving credentials by type of credentials:
 - Students have not yet accessed the RISE Up credentials from their activated accounts at Onslow or Pender Early College High Schools.
- Student outcomes related to the credentialing:
 - As students have not yet accessed the RISE Up credentials, it is premature to assess outcomes at this time.
- List of community colleges and Cooperative Innovative High Schools (CIHS) participating in the programs:
 - School Interest as of September 30, 2022:
 - Two schools have created and activated accounts through Penn Foster which are ready to use:
 - Onslow Early College High School
 - Pender Early College High School
 - Five additional schools have reached out to express interest in RISE Up:
 - Lee County Early College High School
 - Lenoir Community College
 - Stanly Community College
 - Wayne Community College
 - Wilmington Early College High School

Conclusion:

As of September 30, 2022, two CIHS programs have activated accounts with Penn Foster to request training slots for the RISE Up credentials through LCC. Students at these two locations now have access to begin the training programs. It is anticipated that additional community colleges and CIHS programs will request the remaining training slots in the upcoming months as information about this opportunity continues to be shared statewide.