



**NORTH CAROLINA**  
State Board of Education  
Department of Public Instruction



THE UNIVERSITY OF  
NORTH CAROLINA SYSTEM

NORTH CAROLINA  
INDEPENDENT  
COLLEGES & UNIVERSITIES

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# Report to the North Carolina General Assembly

Career and College Promise

*SL 2017-57 (SB 257, Budget Bill), sec. 7.22 (f) GS  
115D-5(x)*

Evaluation of Cooperative Innovative High School  
Programs

*SL 2012-142 (HB 950, Budget Bill), sec. 7.11(g) GS  
115C-238.50-.55*

**Date Due: March 15, 2026**

DPI Chronological Schedule, 2025-2026

**Submitted by the State Board of Education**, in conjunction with the North Carolina Community College System, the University of North Carolina System, the North Carolina Independent Colleges and Universities.

## STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION

### STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION VISION

Every public school student in North Carolina will be empowered to accept academic challenges, prepared to pursue their chosen path after graduating high school, and encouraged to become lifelong learners with the capacity to engage in a globally-collaborative society.

### STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION MISSION

The mission of the North Carolina State Board of Education and the North Carolina Superintendent of Public Instruction is to use their constitutional authority to guard and maintain the right to a public education for every student in North Carolina and to support public school units in providing every student an excellent education that prepares them for success in their next phase of life.

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**Report to the North Carolina General Assembly:  
§ NCGS 115D-5(x) ~ Career and College Promise (CCP)  
§ NCGS 115C-238.55 ~ Cooperative Innovative High Schools (CIHS)**

This report responds to the requirements of the legislation enacted in G.S. §115C-238.55, which establishes that “the State Board of Education and the governing Boards shall evaluate the success of students in cooperative innovative high schools approved under this Part. Success shall be measured by high school retention rates, high school completion rates, high school dropout rates, certification and associate degree completion, admission to four-year institutions, post-graduation employment in career or study-related fields, and employer satisfaction of employees who participated in and graduated from the schools.”

This report also responds to the requirements of the legislation enacted in [G.S. § 115D-5 \(x\)](#), which establishes that “In addition to the evaluation of cooperative innovative high schools by the State Board of Education pursuant to G.S. §115C-238.55, the State Board of Community Colleges, in conjunction with the State Board of Education and the Board of Governors of The University of North Carolina, shall evaluate the success of students participating in the Career and College Promise Program, including the College Transfer pathway and the Career and Technical Education pathway. Success shall be measured by high school retention rates, high school completion rates, high school dropout rates, certification and associate degree completion, admission to four-year institutions, post-graduation employment in career or study-related fields, and employer satisfaction of employees who participated in the programs. The Boards shall jointly report by March 15 of each year to the Joint Legislative Education Oversight Committee. The report shall be combined with the evaluation of cooperative innovative high schools required by G.S. §115C-238.55, and the Community Colleges System Office shall be responsible for submitting the combined report to the Committee.”

North Carolina’s Career and College Promise (CCP) Program has been recognized as a model dual enrollment program and as a model for dual enrollment policy by the Education Commission of the States. Additionally, NC is a leader in the nation in the number of established Cooperative Innovative High Schools (CIHS). The strength of collaborative partnerships between high schools and colleges, statewide articulation agreements, the

requirement for structured pathways, student eligibility criteria, state-level agency collaboration and state-wide policy and funding are what make NC’s Career and College Promise Program a model for other states.

The State Board of Education (SBE) and the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction (NCDPI) fulfill some report requirements, while others are fulfilled by accompanying data from the NC Community Colleges System (NCCCS), the University of North Carolina System (UNCS) and the North Carolina Independent Colleges and Universities (NCICU).

Complete data and additional information follow for CCP and CIHS, including data from the NCCCS, the current list of CIHS, and accountability data, as well as data from the UNCS, and NCICU, and Success Stories from CIHS and CCP from across North Carolina.

**The following table reviews the report requirements and indicates which agency, or source addresses the required information:**

<b>Report Requirement</b>	<b>Agency/Source</b>	<b>Page</b>
Overview of Dual Enrollment and Career and College Promise (CCP)	NCDPI	Pages 4 – 16
Data Highlights of CCP	NCDPI and NCCCS	Page 7
Findings from The Evaluation of Career and College Promise through IES Grant	SERVE Center at UNCG	Pages 16 – 18
Certification and Associate Degree Completion	NCCCS and NCDPI	Pages 20 - 24, 73
CCP CTE and College Transfer Pathways	NCCCS	Pages 20 – 24
Post-graduation employment	NCCCS	Pages 24, 73
Workforce Continuing Education Pathway	NCCCS	Pages 24 - 25
College and Career Ready Pathway	NCCCS	Pages 26 – 27
CCP Investment Cost Analysis	NCCCS	Pages 27 – 35
Admission to Four-Year Institutions	UNCS and NCICU	Pages 36, 74 – 76

Overview of CIHS Programs	NCDPI	Pages 37 – 76
Data Highlights of CIHS	NCDPI and NCCCS	Page 38
Support for CIHS Programs	NCDPI and NCCCS	Pages 44 – 45
List of Current CIHS by Public School Unit (PSU)	NCDPI	Pages 46 – 53
CIHS High School Retention Rates*, Completion Rates, Drop-out Rates*	NCDPI	Pages 56 – 64
CIHS Enrollment Data	NCDPI and NCCCS	Pages 65 – 71
CIHS and CCP Success Stories	NCDPI, NCCCS, CIHS Annual Reports	Pages 76 – 96
Employer satisfaction of CIHS graduates	Data not available	N/A

\*CCP students reside across the state and the causal relationship cannot be clearly determined, NCDPI has not extracted a specific subset of data but presents state-wide data in response to the legislative requirements.

## **Overview of Dual Enrollment and Career and College Promise (CCP)**

North Carolina has a long history of support for dual enrollment programs. The statutes authorizing high school student enrollment in community college courses have evolved over a period of more than 30 years. Previous statutes established concurrent enrollment, Huskins, Learn and Earn, Learn and Earn Online, and CIHS, all of which provided high school students the opportunity to earn college credit while still in high school.

In an effort to increase effectiveness for NC’s dual enrollment program, the General Assembly established Career and College Promise in 2011. All previous dual enrollment programs were consolidated and replaced by CCP. The purpose of CCP is to offer structured opportunities for qualified high school students to dually enroll in community college courses that provide pathways that lead to a certificate, diploma, degree, or State and industry recognized credentials, as well as provide entry-level job skills.

In the years following full implementation in 2012-2013, enrollment in joint high school programs has continued to increase, with the addition of new pathways, increasing student interest, and the establishment of new Cooperative Innovative High Schools.

Currently, Career and College Promise (CCP) offers students the option to choose from four pathways:

- The College Transfer pathway is designed for students planning to continue their educational career beyond high school to eventually achieve an associate's or bachelor's degree at a community college or university.
- The Career and Technical Education pathway allows students to begin a industry recognized credential, certification, diploma, and associate degree program in a particular technical field or career area. The CTE pathway also includes Workforce Continuing Education opportunities for students.
- Cooperative Innovative High School programs allow students to work simultaneously toward completion of both the high school diploma and an associate's degree, transferable credit or certificate. These high schools go through a rigorous application process for approval.
- The College and Career Ready pathway is a new opportunity available to any rising junior or senior that allows students to engage work-based learning, career exploration, and college preparatory coursework to assist with the transition from secondary to postsecondary education.

In order to facilitate the effective implementation and to support growth and progress of CCP in the state of North Carolina, the NC Community College System and the NC Department of Public Instruction collaborate closely together. Most communications, professional development, and technical assistance are facilitated jointly. The UNC System and the NC Independent Colleges and Universities also collaborate with these two lead agencies regarding the Cooperative Innovative High School pathway through the legislated Joint Advisory Committee (JAC).

## **NORTH CAROLINA DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION (NCDPI) Career and College Promise (CCP)**

**Session Law 2011-145, the Appropriations Act of 2011**, authorized the State Board of Education and the State Board of Community Colleges to establish the Career and College Promise program, effective January 1, 2012. The purpose of Career and College Promise is to offer structured opportunities for qualified high school students to enroll dually in community

college courses that provide pathways that lead to a certificate, diploma, degree, or State or industry-recognized credential, as well as to provide entry-level jobs skills.

Every eligible North Carolina high school student has the opportunity to take advantage of the Career and College Promise (CCP) program and enroll in dual enrollment through the College Transfer, Career and Technical Education Pathway, and/or through the new Career and College Ready pathway, which will begin full implementation in 2026-27. CCP is available to every public and private high school in the state, and the NCCCS sets the eligibility requirements.

### **Career and College Promise Data Highlights:**

- In 2024-2025, **38%** of all graduates enrolled in at least one dual enrollment course, primarily through CCP, during their high school years. This represents 44,436 graduates. This is an increase of 4,617 students (2% increase) from the previous 2023-2024 graduating class.
- These graduates enrolled in a total of **279,808** college courses over the course of their high school years. Graduates enrolled in an average of four college courses in their high school years.
- In 2024-2025, **36%** of all graduates earned high school credit through dual enrollment opportunities in their high school years. This represents 42,128 graduates, and is the same percentage of graduates who earned credit during the previous 2023-2024 graduating class.
- In 2024-2025, **95%** percent of graduates who enrolled in a dual enrollment college course earned credit towards high school graduation, a 2% increase from the 2023-2024 graduating class.
- In 2024-2025, there were 86,998\* public high school students enrolled in at least one CCP course. This was a **10% increase** from the 2023-2024 school year (an increase from 78,811 to 86,998 students).

\*NCDPI data includes public and charter school students who are dually enrolled in 2-year or 4-year colleges and universities.

See Table 1 below for further data regarding dual enrollment for 2024-2025 graduates disaggregated by race/ethnicity.

**Table 1: Number and percentage of 2024-2025 graduates who enrolled in at least one dual enrollment course while in high school by race/ethnicity**

Race/Ethnicity	Number of graduates who enrolled in at least one dual enrollment course while in high school	Total Number of graduates	Percent of students enrolled in at least one dual enrollment course while in high school by Race/Ethnicity (change from last year)
American Indian or Alaska Native	388	1083	36% (1%)
Asian	2,498	4,594	54% (5%)
Black or African American	7,072	28,167	25% (1%)
Hispanic or Latino	7,598	24,526	31% (3%)
Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander	44	151	29% (-5%)
Two or More	2,067	5,668	36% (4%)
White	24,769	51,914	48% (3%)
<b>Total</b>	<b>44,436</b>	<b>116,103</b>	<b>38% (2%)</b>

\*NCDPI data includes all public and charter school students who are dually enrolled in 2-year or 4-year colleges and universities, CCP as well as other institute of higher education (IHE) enrollments

For detailed enrollment information by district of 2024-2025 graduates who enrolled in at least one CCP while in high school refer to Table 2 below.

Based on the enrollment data above, while there remains continued work, NCDPI is encouraged with how PSUs are creating environments for access and opportunity among all race/ethnicity groups for dual enrollment. NCDPI and NCCCS continue to work closely together to support school districts and colleges to strengthen partnerships. The CCP Leadership team, with representatives from both agencies, meets regularly to collaborate and coordinate ongoing support. Staff from each agency host regular webinars to share promising practices in CCP that promote expanded awareness, access, and student success.

**Table 2: Number and percent of 2024-2025 graduates who enrolled in at least one dual enrollment course while in high school by PSU.**

PSU Code	PSU Name	Number of graduates who took at least one dual enrollment course in high school	Total Number of Graduates	Percent of graduates who took at least one dual enrollment course in high school
00A	North Carolina Cyber Academy	31	258	12%
00B	NC Virtual Academy	26	174	15%
010	Alamance-Burlington Schools	794	1687	47%
01B	River Mill Academy	28	43	65%
01C	Clover Garden	25	44	57%
01D	The Hawbridge School	15	56	27%
020	Alexander County Schools	184	359	51%
030	Alleghany County Schools	59	112	53%
040	Anson County Schools	76	207	37%
050	Ashe County Schools	124	230	54%
060	Avery County Schools	93	136	68%
06B	Marjorie Williams Academy	*	*	*
070	Beaufort County Schools	252	480	53%
07A	Washington Montessori	26	28	93%
080	Bertie County Schools	80	134	60%
090	Bladen County Schools	161	334	48%
09A	Paul R Brown Leadership Academy	*	58	*
100	Brunswick County Schools	443	1065	42%
110	Buncombe County Schools	1011	1797	56%
111	Asheville City Schools	219	360	61%
11C	Invest Collegiate - Imagine	29	54	54%
11D	The Franklin School of Innovation	23	66	35%
120	Burke County Schools	496	953	52%
130	Cabarrus County Schools	1208	2864	42%
132	Kannapolis City Schools	152	453	34%
13A	Carolina International School	32	59	54%
140	Caldwell County Schools	422	820	51%
150	Camden County Schools	66	147	45%
160	Carteret County Public Schools	325	618	53%
170	Caswell County Schools	69	158	44%
180	Catawba County Schools	625	1290	48%
181	Hickory City Schools	143	308	46%

PSU Code	PSU Name	Number of graduates who took at least one dual enrollment course in high school	Total Number of Graduates	Percent of graduates who took at least one dual enrollment course in high school
182	Newton Conover City Schools	125	240	52%
190	Chatham County Schools	495	759	65%
19A	Chatham Charter	35	35	>95%
19B	Woods Charter School	*	46	*
200	Cherokee County Schools	149	239	62%
210	Edenton-Chowan Schools	55	150	37%
220	Clay County Schools	45	88	51%
230	Cleveland County Schools	534	1102	48%
23A	Pinnacle Classical Academy	38	40	95%
240	Columbus County Schools	277	407	68%
241	Whiteville City Schools	77	163	47%
24B	Thomas Academy	10	11	91%
250	Craven County Board of Education	439	965	45%
260	Cumberland County Schools	1244	3595	35%
26B	Alpha Academy	24	28	86%
26C	The Capitol Encore Academy	*	14	*
270	Currituck County Schools	135	333	41%
280	Dare County Schools	245	429	57%
290	Davidson County Schools	614	1434	43%
291	Lexington City Schools	48	207	23%
292	Thomasville City Schools	49	167	29%
300	Davie County Schools	167	477	35%
310	Duplin County Schools	373	723	52%
320	Durham Public Schools	571	2565	22%
32B	Durham Charter School	*	*	*
32L	Voyager Academy	35	98	36%
32N	Research Triangle High School	25	122	20%
32R	Excelsior Classical Academy	10	28	36%
32T	Discovery Charter School	*	*	*
330	Edgecombe County Public Schools	199	456	44%

PSU Code	PSU Name	Number of graduates who took at least one dual enrollment course in high school	Total Number of Graduates	Percent of graduates who took at least one dual enrollment course in high school
33A	North East Carolina Preparatory School	58	62	94%
340	Winston Salem / Forsyth County Schools	769	4008	19%
34B	Quality Education Academy	*	30	*
34D	Carter G Woodson School	*	21	*
34H	NC Leadership Charter Academy	50	74	68%
350	Franklin County Schools	171	670	26%
35C	Wake Preparatory Academy	12	91	13%
360	Gaston County Schools	867	2308	38%
36B	Piedmont Community Charter	104	152	68%
36C	Mountain Island Charter	52	134	39%
370	Gates County Schools	45	109	41%
380	Graham County Schools	53	88	60%
390	Granville County Schools	121	397	30%
39A	Falls Lake Academy	36	80	45%
39B	Oxford Preparatory School	51	60	85%
400	Greene County Schools	113	267	42%
410	Guilford County Schools	1442	5420	27%
41D	Phoenix Academy Inc	*	30	*
41F	Triad Math and Science Academy	26	82	32%
41G	Cornerstone Charter Academy	70	94	74%
41H	The College Preparatory and Leadership A	16	33	48%
41K	Piedmont Classical High School	*	90	*
420	Halifax County Schools	74	166	45%
421	Roanoke Rapids City Schools	85	236	36%
422	Weldon City Schools	43	64	67%
42B	Hobgood Charter School	15	18	83%
430	Harnett County Schools	625	1612	39%
440	Haywood County Schools	258	505	51%
44A	Shining Rock Classical Academy	19	22	86%
450	Henderson County Schools	402	1012	40%
460	Hertford County Schools	90	179	50%
470	Hoke County Schools	179	314	57%

PSU Code	PSU Name	Number of graduates who took at least one dual enrollment course in high school	Total Number of Graduates	Percent of graduates who took at least one dual enrollment course in high school
480	Hyde County Schools	34	40	85%
490	Iredell-Statesville Schools	705	1864	38%
491	Mooresville Graded School District	240	527	46%
49E	Pine Lake Preparatory	106	162	65%
49F	Langtree Charter Academy	33	88	38%
500	Jackson County Public Schools	140	266	53%
50A	Summit Charter	*	15	*
510	Johnston County Public Schools	1015	3188	32%
51A	Neuse Charter School	31	49	63%
51C	American Leadership Academy - Johnston	*	43	*
520	Jones County Schools	38	72	53%
530	Lee County Schools	349	704	50%
53B	Ascend Leadership Academy: Lee County	30	67	45%
53D	Central Carolina Academy	*	26	>95%
540	Lenoir County Public Schools	331	630	53%
550	Lincoln County Schools	506	887	57%
55A	Lincoln Charter School	136	175	78%
560	Macon County Schools	206	372	55%
570	Madison County Schools	123	178	69%
580	Martin County Schools	66	176	38%
58B	Bear Grass Charter School	41	49	84%
590	McDowell County Schools	214	398	54%
600	Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools	2948	10614	28%
60B	Sugar Creek Charter	24	81	30%
60D	Lake Norman Charter	166	197	84%
60G	Queen's Grant Community School	36	149	24%
60I	Community School of Davidson	76	138	55%
60J	Socrates Academy	12	18	67%
60K	Charlotte Secondary School	*	25	*
60M	Corvian Community School	16	111	14%
60S	Bradford Preparatory School	35	107	33%

PSU Code	PSU Name	Number of graduates who took at least one dual enrollment course in high school	Total Number of Graduates	Percent of graduates who took at least one dual enrollment course in high school
60U	Commonwealth High School	*	135	*
60Y	Pioneer Springs Community School	10	33	30%
610	Mitchell County Schools	100	133	75%
61L	Stewart Creek High School	*	128	*
61M	Charlotte Lab School	13	37	35%
61N	The Math and Science Academy of Charlott	*	*	*
61X	Jackson Day School	21	36	58%
620	Montgomery County Schools	229	300	76%
62M	Bonnie Cone Leadership Academy	*	16	*
630	Moore County Schools	676	1122	60%
63B	Sandhills Theatre Arts Renaiss	*	*	*
640	Nash County Public Schools	445	1087	41%
64A	Rocky Mount Preparatory	30	48	63%
650	New Hanover County Schools	1128	2079	54%
65G	Girls Leadership Academy of Wilmington	13	25	52%
660	Northampton County Schools	83	127	65%
66A	KIPP Pride College Preparatory	15	91	16%
670	Onslow County Schools	546	2027	27%
680	Orange County Schools	210	597	35%
681	Chapel Hill-Carrboro City Schools	201	948	21%
68A	Eno River Academy	54	99	55%
690	Pamlico County Schools	50	108	46%
69A	Arapahoe Charter School	26	121	21%
700	Elizabeth City-Pasquotank Public Schools	123	373	33%
70A	Northeast Academy of Aerospace & AdvTech	67	79	85%
710	Pender County Schools	478	923	52%
720	Perquimans County Schools	65	169	38%
730	Person County Schools	190	332	57%
73B	Roxboro Community School	40	82	49%
740	Pitt County Schools	1044	1908	55%

PSU Code	PSU Name	Number of graduates who took at least one dual enrollment course in high school	Total Number of Graduates	Percent of graduates who took at least one dual enrollment course in high school
750	Polk County Schools	80	135	59%
760	Randolph County School System	528	1121	47%
761	Asheboro City Schools	130	349	37%
76A	Uwharrie Charter Academy	83	194	43%
770	Richmond County Schools	337	548	61%
780	Public Schools of Robeson County	364	1430	25%
790	Rockingham County Schools	318	828	38%
79A	Bethany Community School	24	81	30%
800	Rowan-Salisbury Schools	411	1446	28%
810	Rutherford County Schools	278	609	46%
81A	Thomas Jefferson Classical Academy	22	69	32%
81B	Lake Lure Classical Academy	16	33	48%
820	Sampson County Schools	296	559	53%
821	Clinton City Schools	85	187	45%
830	Scotland County Schools	194	424	46%
840	Stanly County Schools	396	631	63%
84B	Gray Stone Day School	66	92	72%
850	Stokes County Schools	222	444	50%
860	Surry County Schools	388	612	63%
861	Elkin City Schools	86	111	77%
862	Mount Airy City Schools	97	166	58%
86T	Millennium Charter Academy	17	30	57%
870	Swain County Schools	112	142	79%
880	Transylvania County Schools	180	263	68%
890	Tyrrell County Schools	31	47	66%
900	Union County Public Schools	1298	3591	36%
90A	Union Academy Charter School	63	149	42%
910	Vance County Schools	83	377	22%
91A	Vance Charter School	48	81	59%
91B	Henderson Collegiate	*	81	*
920	Wake County Schools	3272	13229	25%
92F	Franklin Academy	55	115	48%

PSU Code	PSU Name	Number of graduates who took at least one dual enrollment course in high school	Total Number of Graduates	Percent of graduates who took at least one dual enrollment course in high school
92G	East Wake Academy	64	96	67%
92K	Raleigh Charter High School	*	125	*
92P	Southern Wake Academy	16	68	24%
92T	Triangle Math and Science Academy	45	92	49%
92U	Longleaf School of the Arts	*	74	*
930	Warren County Schools	55	130	42%
93A	Haliwa-Saponi Tribal School	*	12	*
93L	Central Wake Charter High School	*	94	*
93N	Pine Springs Preparatory Academy	*	*	*
940	Washington County Schools	31	75	41%
94Z	NERSBA Early College	*	35	>95%
950	Watauga County Schools	243	361	67%
960	Wayne County Public Schools	427	1266	34%
96F	Wayne Preparatory	26	53	49%
970	Wilkes County Schools	455	693	66%
980	Wilson County Schools	380	782	49%
98A	Sallie B Howard School	33	57	58%
98B	Wilson Preparatory Academy	17	33	52%
990	Yadkin County Schools	181	399	45%
995	Yancey County Schools	126	159	79%

In order to protect student/staff privacy, small cell suppression rules have been applied where necessary. Any cell below 10 for students or 5 for staff will be represented by an asterisk. Any percentages over 95% will be shown as >95% and any percentages less than 10 will be shown as <10%.

## **State Board of Education CCP Policy**

State Board of Education (SBE) CCP policy [CACP-000, CCP Partnership Agreement](#) requires each Local Education Agency (LEA) to develop a CCP Partnership Agreement with their CCP college partner. The areas outlined in the policy are key topics that help to ensure quality programming for high school students. The policy was amended in October 2025 to include the new CCP pathway, Career and College Ready Pathway. The Career and College Ready Pathway, which will begin full implementation in 2026-27, is described fully on pages 31-32 below.

NCDPI and our partners at NCCCS continue to facilitate face-to-face and virtual meetings with school district and college representatives and have developed a CCP Partnership Agreements Guide, which includes promising practices in CCP from across North Carolina. The resources are accessible to all LEAs and college partners and is accompanied by examples of existing partnership agreements and additional resources. NCDPI and NCCCS continue to provide technical assistance and support through regular meetings for LEA CCP Coordinators and their community college partners' staff, as well as one-on-one meetings with LEA and IHE partners scheduled at their convenience. NCDPI will facilitate face-to-face meetings in spring of 2026 with school district personnel to expand college access, focused on both NC College Connect and CCP, with a focus on the NCDPI/SBE Strategic Plan.

Last year, the statewide four-year graduation cohort rate was 88%. For more information, find the NCDPI Four-Year Cohort Graduation Rate Report under the [Accountability Data Sets and Reports](#) section.

The dropout rate for 2024-2025 is not available at this time. It will be reported to the State Board of Education in March 2025. For more information regarding dropout rates see the [Discipline, ALP and Dropout Annual Reports](#) section.

For detailed data regarding NC school districts and high schools, see the [North Carolina School Report Cards](#).

Continuing work to increase awareness, access, and student success is also informed by the ongoing work of the CCP Institute of Education Sciences (IES) Grant Study. A summary of current findings for the CCP IES Grant Study is presented below. Summary findings of the CCP IES Grant Study are available on the NCDPI [CCP Data and Research](#) website.

**CAREER AND COLLEGE PROMISE  
INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION SCIENCES (IES) GRANT STUDY  
Evaluation of Career and College Promise from 2019-2026  
Findings from The Evaluation of Career and College Promise**

*A research partnership funded by the Institute of Education Sciences and including NCDPI, NCCCS, UNCG, and RAND Corporation.*

Over the past year, the research team has finalized analyses on the impact of CCP participation on employment and earnings. Using data from the NC Unemployment Insurance (UI) System, the study found the following key impacts on students seven years post-high school:

- College Transfer Pathway students were more likely to be employed. They also had 7% higher annual wages and 7% higher cumulative wages through seven years post-high school than comparison students.
- CTE Pathway students were more likely to be employed, and they had 10% higher annual and 14% higher cumulative wages than comparison students.
- CIHS students had higher cumulative earnings than comparison students, likely because they entered the workforce more quickly.

**Workforce outcomes for College Transfer Pathway students:** College Transfer Pathway students were 1.2 percentage points more likely to be employed in jobs that reported to the UI System seven years after high school than similar comparison students, a statistically significant difference. Seven years post-high school, College Transfer Pathway participants had annual wages in the UI System that were \$1,889 higher and cumulative earnings that were \$6,660 higher than comparison students. There were positive impacts for almost all subgroups of students.

**Workforce outcomes for CTE Pathway students:** CTE Pathway students were 2.4 percentage points more likely to be employed in jobs that reported to the UI System seven years after high school than the comparison students, a statistically significant difference. Seven years post-high school, CTE Pathway participants had annual wages in the UI System that were \$2,684 higher and cumulative earnings that were \$14,848 higher than comparison students. There were positive impacts for all subgroups of students.

**Workforce outcomes for CIHS students:** There were not statistically significant differences in employment rates or annual wages between CIHS students overall and comparison students seven years after high school. However, there were statistically significant positive impacts on annual wages for economically disadvantaged students and for students who were members of racial and ethnic groups underrepresented in college. Additionally, there was a significant positive impact of \$6,133 on cumulative wages.

**Over the upcoming year, the project team is finalizing CCP cost analyses and conducting analyses around the role of course delivery mode and location on students' outcomes as well as the transferability of college-credit courses taken in high school.** The project team has been using administrative data and original data collected from high schools and colleges to examine the costs of CCP and look at the return on investment for those costs. The research team is also conducting spinoff analyses that are examining the extent to which outcomes differ by whether a student took a dual enrollment course in person on the college campus, online, or elsewhere (usually the high school campus). The study team is also examining the extent to which college credits earned in high school (both dual enrollment and Advanced Placement) transfer to postsecondary education and count towards students' majors or other graduation requirements.

### **About the Evaluation of Career and College Promise**

**The partners:** The North Carolina Department of Public Instruction and the North Carolina Community College System are partners in a seven-year, \$5 million grant from the U.S. Department of Education's Institute of Education Sciences that started in July of 2019. This project—which is being led by the Early College Research Center at the University of North

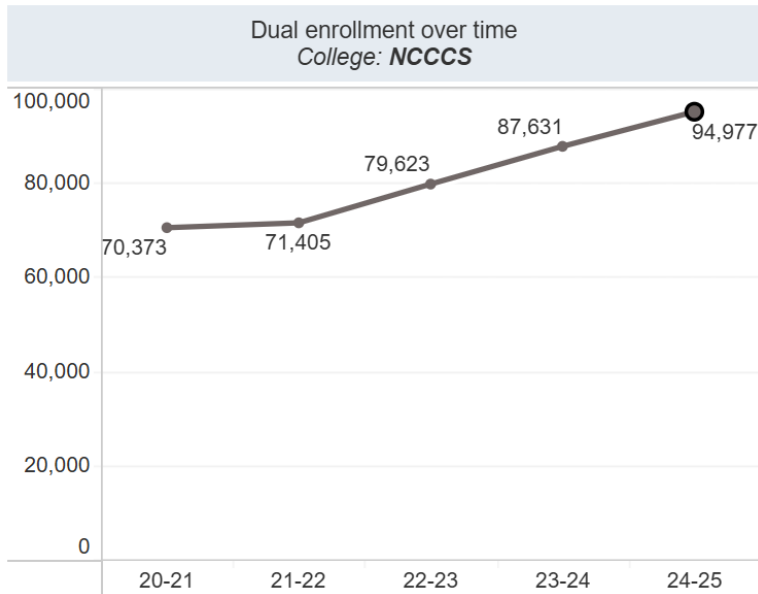
Carolina at Greensboro and also involves the University of North Carolina System, the NC Government Data Analytics Center, the North Carolina Department of Commerce, and RAND—has the goal of conducting a formal and rigorous evaluation of the implementation, impact, and cost of the three different CCP pathways.

**The study design:** The impact study compared workforce outcomes for students who participated in one of the three CCP pathways to a weighted comparison group of statistically similar students. The analysis used a propensity score weighting approach that ensured the pathway participants and the comparison students were similar on many background characteristics, such as demographics, socioeconomics, achievement, and (as appropriate) advanced course taking. The comparison group was created separately for each CCP pathway to reflect differences in the average characteristics of students who pursue each of them. The samples for the College Transfer and CTE Pathway analyses included around 235,000 students who entered 11th grade from 2012-2013 through 2014-2015. Students participating in these two pathways were compared to students who did not participate in any CCP pathway. The sample for the CIHS analysis included approximately 270,000 students who entered 9th grade from 2010-11 through 2012-13. CIHS students were compared to students who were not enrolled in a CIHS but who could have taken CCP courses in the regular high school. The employment and earnings outcomes come from Unemployment Insurance data collected by the NC Department of Commerce and include data only for individuals who were employed in jobs that reported to the North Carolina UI System. There are important caveats associated with these data. The NC UI System does not include data for self-employed workers, those employed by the federal government, or out-of-state workers; as a result, the employment rates and wages reported above do not reflect all possible types of jobs and sources of income. However, we have also run analyses looking only at students who had wages in the UI system and come up with very similar estimates.

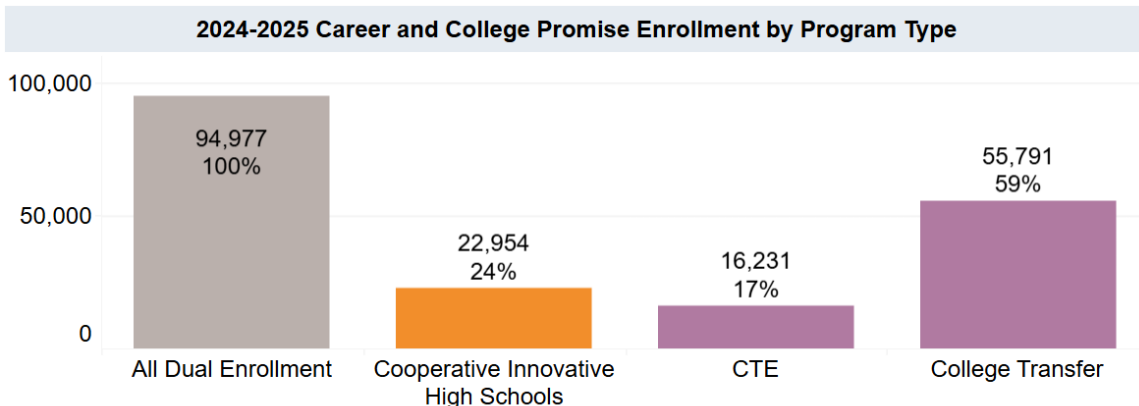
# NORTH CAROLINA COMMUNITY COLLEGE SYSTEM (NCCCS) Career and College Promise (CCP)

## Enrollment Trends in Career and College Promise

During the 2024-2025 academic year, 94,977 high school students participated in Career and College Promise (CCP) through the NC Community College System. Participation has grown quickly over the past five academic years, with nearly 25,000 more students participating in the 2024-2025 academic year than in the 2020-2021 academic year.

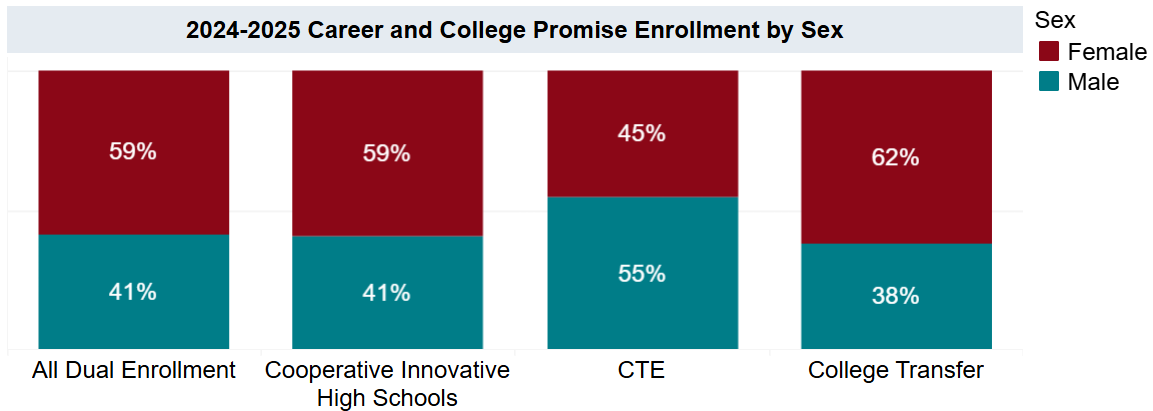


Of the high school students who participated in CCP, 22,954 (24%) participated in Cooperative Innovative High School Programs (Early College, Middle College, or Other Innovative High School), and 72,022 (76%) participated in Pathways programs (Career and Technical Education or College Transfer).

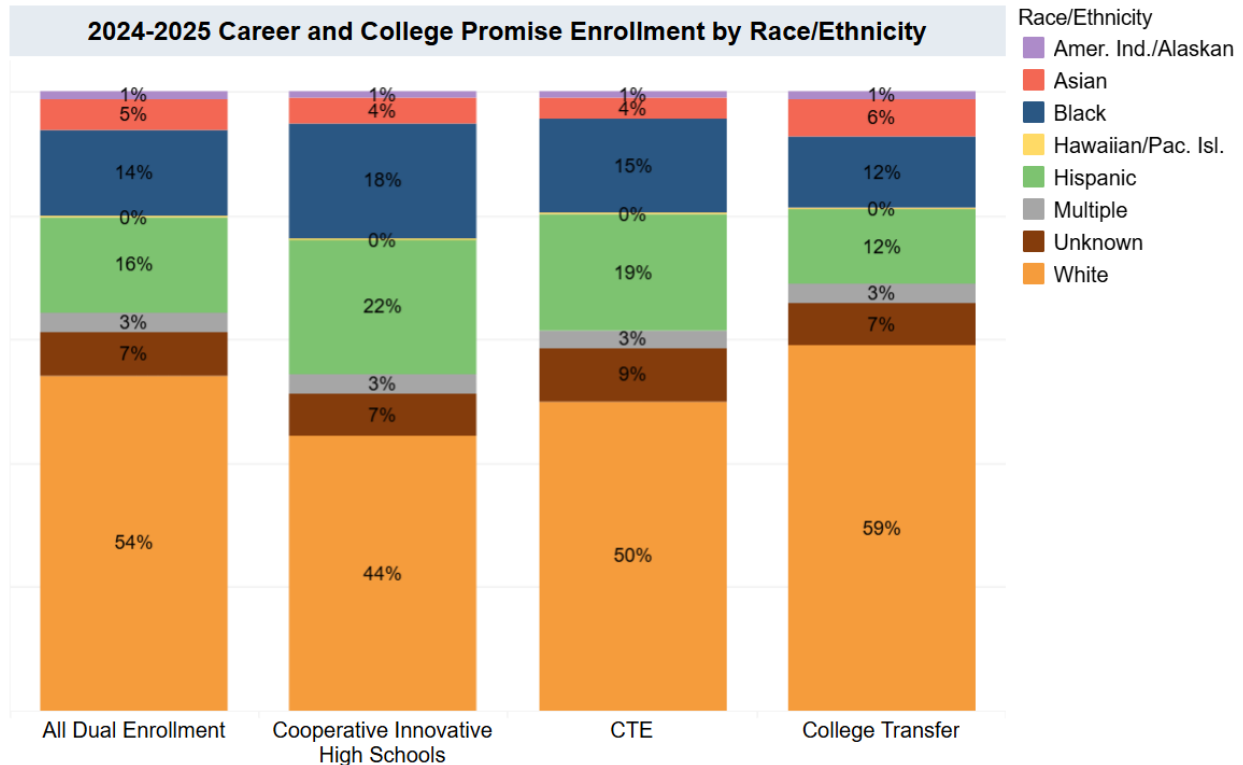


## Career and College Promise Demographics

Participants were primarily female (59%) and white (54%). Career and Technical Education had the highest percentage of male students (55%), while College Transfer had the lowest (38%).

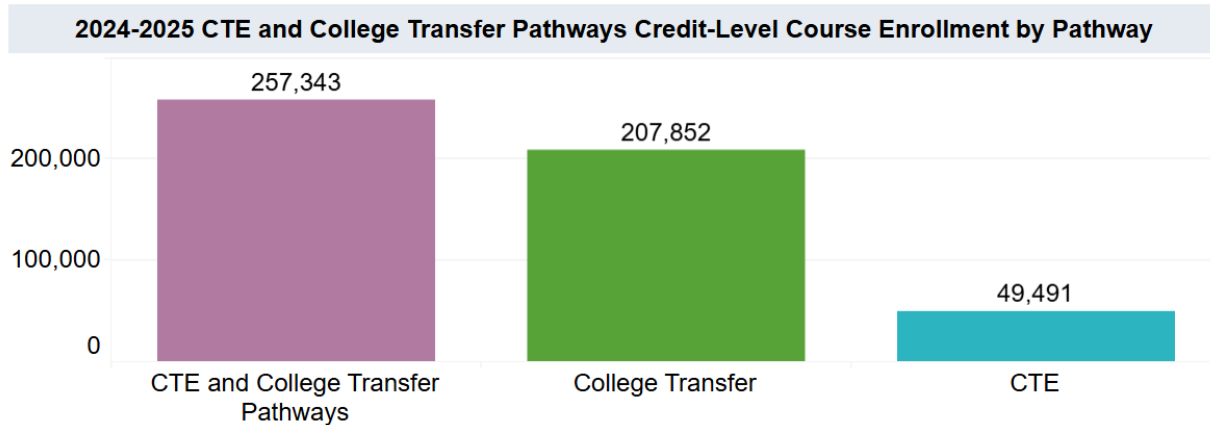


Enrollment by race/ethnicity varies heavily by pathway. Cooperative Innovative High Schools had the highest percentage of non-white students (56%).

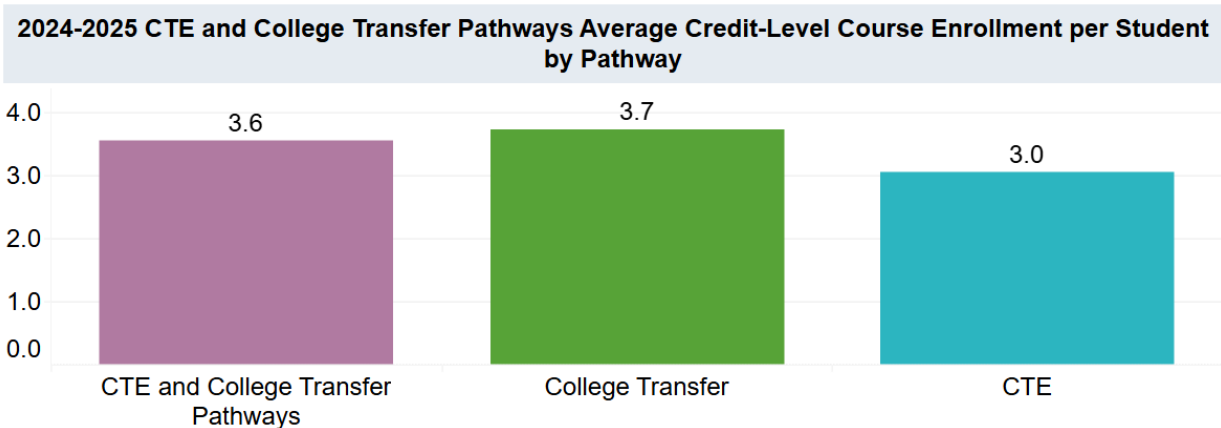


## CTE and College Transfer Pathways Course Enrollment and Credential Completion

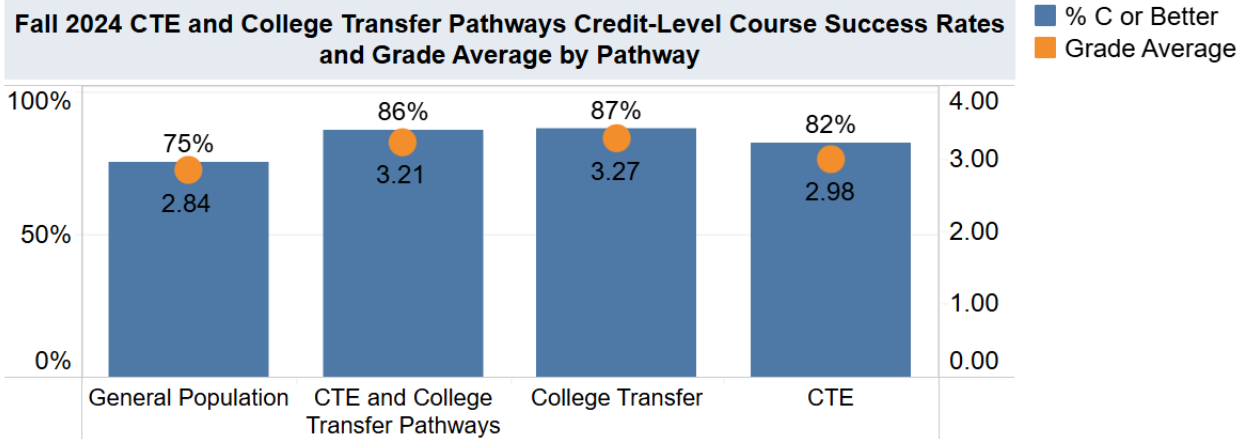
During the 2024-2025 academic year, CCP Pathways students enrolled in 257,343 credit-level college courses. Of those, 207,852 (81%) were taken by College Transfer students.



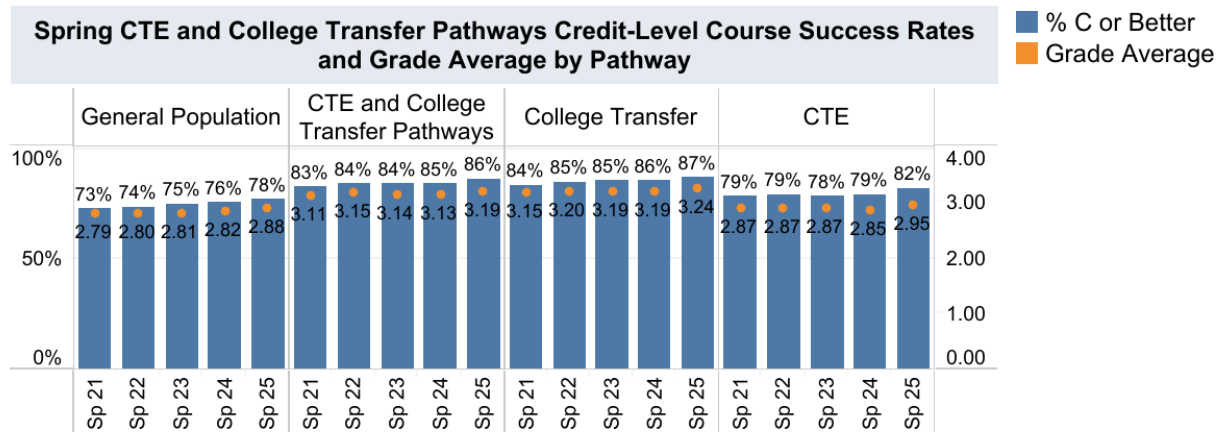
On average, College Transfer students took 3.7 credit-level courses and CTE students took 3.0 credit-level courses within the year.



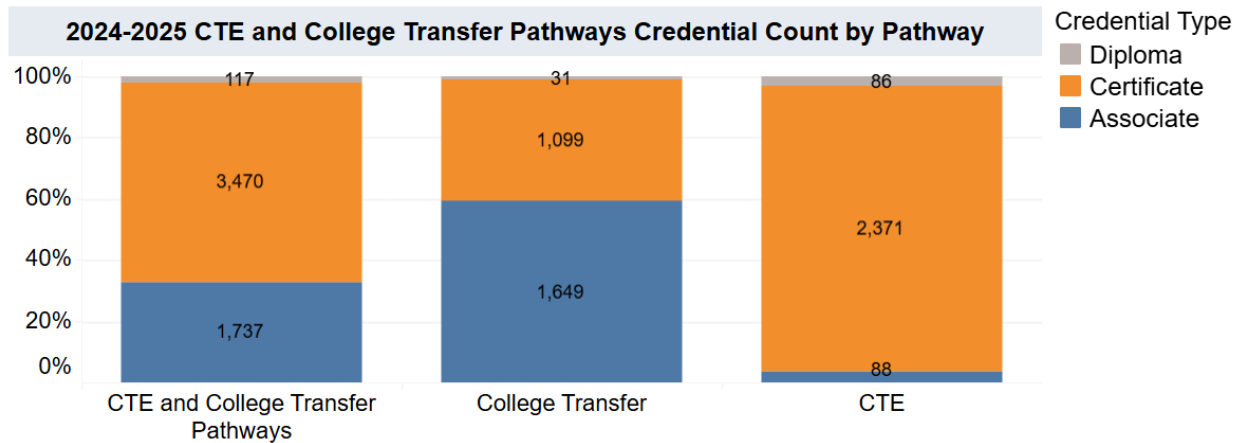
In Fall 2024, CCP Pathways students completed 86% of their credit-level courses with a C or better (average GPA of 3.21), compared to a 75% successful completion rate in the general student population (average GPA of 2.84).



To compare trends in success rates over time, course success rates are provided from Spring 2021 through Spring 2025. College Transfer students' course success rates have improved slightly over time, rising from 84% in Spring 2021 to 87% in Spring 2025. In comparison, CTE success rates remained stable at around 79% success until Spring 2025, when success rates jumped to 82%. Both College Transfer and CTE course success rates and average GPAs outpace the general population.



During the 2024-2025 academic year, CCP Pathways students earned a total of 5,324 credentials. Over 3,400 (65%) were Certificates, the majority of which were earned by CTE students.



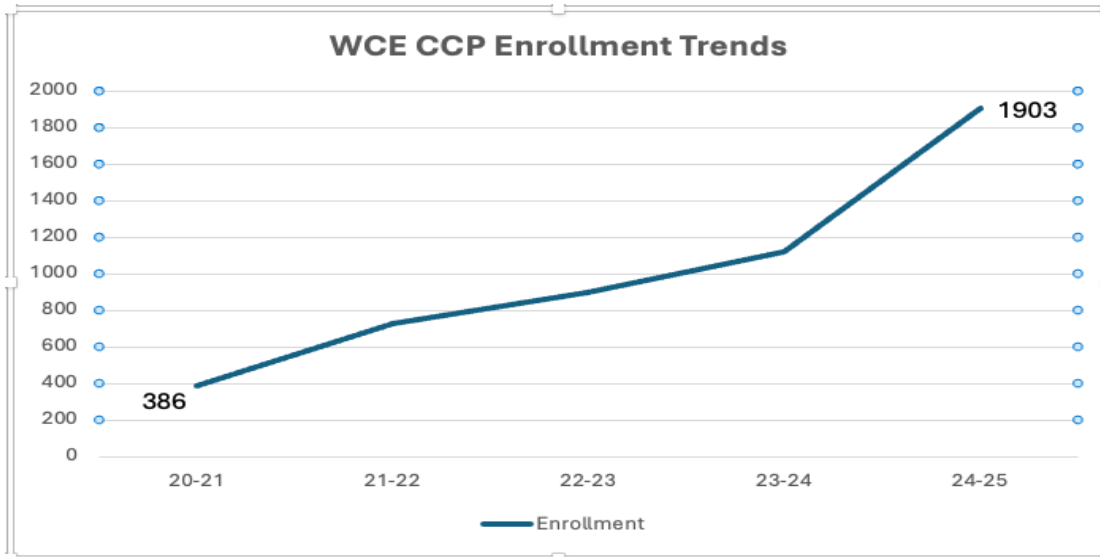
### Post-Graduation Employment

The North Carolina Community College System, with the Department of Commerce, reviewed employment status and wage outcomes of Career and College Promise students who graduated high school in 2022. These students were not enrolled in any postsecondary institution in 2023-2024 and had a full-time or part-time employment record in Quarter 1 of 2024. This sample is limited to those students whose social security numbers matched with Department of Commerce records. Students with missing social security numbers or whose employment is not tracked by the NC Department of Commerce (e.g., self-employed, federal employees, or those employed out of state) were not included. Wage records for 1,687 Transfer and 1,385 CTE pathway 2022 high school graduates were found for the 1st quarter of 2024. The Quarter 1 median wage for transfer students was \$5,987 and the median wage for CTE students was \$7,145.

### Workforce Continuing Education Pathway

Legislative action in 2017 provided tuition waivers for high school students to participate in Workforce Continuing Education (CE) courses through the CCP program. These courses allow students to pursue State and industry-recognized credentials for workforce entry. During the 2024-2025 academic year, 1,903 students were enrolled in the Workforce Continuing Education pathway, up from 1,136 in 2023-2024. In addition, this past year, the System Office approved 314 new applications for 47 colleges working in collaboration with

44 public school districts across the state. The top three WCE CCP pathways utilized across the state include Nurse Aide, Firefighter, and Emergency Medical Technician.



This chart details the enrollment growth of Workforce-CE Pathways over the past four years. Participation continues to grow quickly as over 4,652 students have enrolled in a WCE CCP Pathway since 2020-2021. To support this expansion, the System Office will be streamlining its current processes to align with our curriculum programs. With the support of the Department of Public Instruction, beginning in the Fall 2026, colleges will not be required to submit applications, per pathway, but rather have approval to operate all WCE courses and programs that lead to a state or industry-recognized credential(s). Any coursework or credentials requiring approvals from state licensing entities or industry associations must be planned in partnership with the high school administrator. Colleges will continue to encourage the maximum opportunities for credit mobility, ensuring both high school credit and curriculum credit.

### **Career and College Ready Pathway**

In July 2025, Gov. Stein signed into law S.L. 2025-56, which repealed the original Career and College Ready (CCRG) legislation for school districts and restructured the CCRG program to operate within the new Career and College Ready (CRP) dual enrollment pathway. The CCRG program was a state initiative overseen as a partnership between the Department of Public Instruction and the North Carolina Community College System to

ensure high school students are prepared for college-level math and English, removing the need for remediation at the community college level. SL 2025-56 also provides new language regarding the previous CCRG program by expanding opportunities through this new pathway. This new opportunity is available to any rising junior or senior, regardless of their high school grade point average or assessment scores. This transition reflects a positive and strategic integration of the previous 'CCRG' program into the broader CCP framework, emphasizing earlier intervention, strong K–12 and community college partnerships, and a more streamlined pathway to postsecondary success.

In addition to granting broad access for students, the new pathway includes work-based learning, career exploration, and college preparatory coursework to assist with the transition from secondary to postsecondary education. The CRP pathway offers an unprecedented opportunity to reach students who traditionally have not had access to CCP in the past, by:

- Supporting and inspiring access to a career and/or college path that might not otherwise have been accessible.
- Supporting the work and potential expansion of the Access to Achievement program by providing students with intellectual disabilities with the transitional support services and learning opportunities from secondary to postsecondary education.
- Supporting the work of PropelNC and Governor Stein's Executive Order to strengthen workforce and apprenticeship opportunities by aligning pathways with work-based learning and pre-apprenticeship programs.

In collaboration with our Department of Public Instruction partners, pathway implementation guidance was developed and shared with school districts and colleges throughout the academic year. Several webinars and in-person sessions were also held to support the transition of instruction from the district to the community college. Community college instructors will teach all courses in the new pathway, and instructional resources will be available to all enrolled students. Colleges may collaborate with their LEAs to provide necessary instruction as agreed upon in their local partnership agreement per the

State Board of Education policy CACP-000 Career and College Promise Partnership Agreement. Evaluation and performance data on this new opportunity will begin upon full implementation, starting in 2026-2027.

### **Career and College Promise Investment Analysis**

This portion of the report responds to the requirements of the legislation enacted as rewritten in G.S. § 115D-5(x), which establishes that “In addition to the evaluation of cooperative innovative high schools by the State Board of Education pursuant to G.S. §115C-238.55, the State Board of Community Colleges, in conjunction with the State Board of Education and the Board of Governors of The University of North Carolina, shall evaluate the success of students participating in the Career and College Promise Program, including the College Transfer pathway and the Career and Technical Education pathway. Success shall be measured by high school retention rates, high school completion rates, high school dropout rates, certification and associate degree completion, admission to four-year institutions, post-graduation employment in career or study-related fields, and employer satisfaction of employees who participated in the programs. The evaluation shall also include an analysis of the cost of students participating in each of the programs within the Career and College Promise Program, including at least the following:

1. Total enrollment funding, the number of budgeted full-time equivalent students, number of students enrolled in courses through Cooperative Innovative High Schools, the College Transfer pathway, and the Career and Technical Education pathway.
2. The cost and number of waivers of tuition and registration fees provided for students enrolled in courses through Cooperative Innovative High Schools, the College Transfer pathway, and the Career and Technical Education pathway.
3. Any additional costs of a student attending courses on campus if a student is not attending public school in a local school administrative unit for the majority of the student’s instructional time.

The Boards shall jointly report by March 15 of each year 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 of the General Assembly. The report shall be combined with the evaluation of cooperative innovative high schools required by G.S. §115C-238.55, and the Community Colleges System Office shall be responsible for submitting the combined report to the Committee.”

**Career and College Promise Total Enrollment Funding**

During the 2024-2025 academic year, 94,977 high school students participated in Career and College Promise (CCP) through the NC Community College System. 22,954 students (24%) participated in Cooperative Innovative High School (CIHS) Programs (Early College, Middle College, or Other Innovative High School), 16,231 students (17%) participated in Career and Technical Education pathways, and 55,791 students (59%) participated in College Transfer pathways as their primary pathway. A three-year analysis of costs of instructional full-time equivalent students (FTE) and waivers of tuition demonstrated that total enrollment funding for Career and College Promise programs has grown in proportion to the continued growth in enrollment in the programs.

Estimated FTE + Waivers	22-23	23-24	24-25
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$219,664,119</b>	<b>\$246,982,796</b>	<b>\$272,417,557</b>
Curriculum	\$219,027,184	\$246,171,361	\$271,077,203
Pathway Estimated	\$139,668,466	\$161,714,253	\$184,878,384
Transfer	\$109,675,222	\$124,829,946	\$140,712,573
CTE	\$29,993,244	\$36,884,307	\$44,165,811
CIHS Estimated	\$79,358,718	\$84,457,109	\$86,198,818
Workforce CE Estimated	\$636,934	\$811,435	\$1,340,354

**Estimated Curriculum Full-Time Equivalency (FTE)**

The State Board of Community Colleges Code (SBCCC) defines “Budget Full-Time Equivalent” (BFTE) as the number of full-time equivalent students for which colleges are funded through State funding formulas. SBCC further defines “FTE student” as an amount of instruction that equates to 512 student hours in membership. Students participating in Career and College Promise are included in curriculum FTE.

For 2024-2025, the total estimated curriculum for FTE for Career and College Promise was 42,826. In this academic year, FTE for all three Career and College Promise pathways increased. The largest jump was an increase of 2,485 estimated FTE in the College Transfer Pathway. In addition, the Career and Technical Education (CTE) pathway showed a marked increase, growing from 5,558 estimated curriculum FTE in 2023-2024 to 6,647 estimated curriculum FTE in 2024-2025, a 19% increase.

<b>Estimated Curriculum FTE Generated</b>	<b>22-23</b>	<b>23-24</b>	<b>24-25</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>35,109</b>	<b>39,053</b>	<b>42,826</b>
Pathway	22,333	25,604	29,178
<i>Transfer</i>	<i>17,777</i>	<i>20,046</i>	<i>22,531</i>
Sector 1 (prev. Tier 1A)	398	444	450
Sector 2 (prev. Tier 1B)	4,859	5,428	5,920
Sector 3 (prev. Tier 2)	12,520	14,174	16,162
<i>CTE</i>	<i>4,555</i>	<i>5,558</i>	<i>6,647</i>
Sector 1 (prev. Tier 1A)	2,045	2,438	2,757
Sector 2 (prev. Tier 1B)	577	653	871
Sector 3 (prev. Tier 2)	1,933	2,467	3,018
CIHS	12,776	13,449	13,648
Sector 1 (prev. Tier 1A)	687	745	825
Sector 2 (prev. Tier 1B)	3,606	3,920	4,067
Sector 3 (prev. Tier 2)	8,484	8,784	8,756

For the 2024-2025 academic year, the total Estimated Curriculum FTE investment for the Career and College Promise was approximately \$185 million (\$184,757,498). The cost of the program was around \$17.7 million higher than the previous academic year, driven by increases in CCP enrollment.

Estimated Curriculum FTE Investment	22-23	23-24	24-25
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$146,322,968</b>	<b>\$167,052,234</b>	<b>\$184,757,498</b>
Pathway	\$93,421,484	\$109,842,422	\$126,067,647
<i>Transfer</i>	<i>\$72,861,837</i>	<i>\$84,218,258</i>	<i>\$95,299,117</i>
Sector 1 (prev. Tier 1A)	\$2,025,793	\$2,316,835	\$2,365,609
Sector 2 (prev. Tier 1B)	\$21,858,675	\$25,041,157	\$27,543,251
Sector 3 (prev. Tier 2)	\$48,977,370	\$56,860,266	\$65,390,258
<i>CTE</i>	<i>\$20,559,647</i>	<i>\$25,624,164</i>	<i>\$30,768,530</i>
Sector 1 (prev. Tier 1A)	\$10,401,677	\$12,715,864	\$14,502,338
Sector 2 (prev. Tier 1B)	\$2,595,070	\$3,012,413	\$4,054,293
Sector 3 (prev. Tier 2)	\$7,562,900	\$9,895,888	\$12,211,900
CIHS	\$52,901,484	\$57,209,812	\$58,689,850
Sector 1 (prev. Tier 1A)	\$3,493,130	\$3,887,413	\$4,340,346
Sector 2 (prev. Tier 1B)	\$16,220,348	\$18,084,856	\$18,922,553
Sector 3 (prev. Tier 2)	\$33,188,006	\$35,237,544	\$35,426,951

### Career and College Promise Number and Cost of Tuition Waivers

As members of an authorized group as defined in G.S. § 115D-20(4), eligible North Carolina high school students participating in Career and College Promise are granted access to course waivers that apply to tuition and registration fees as authorized by G.S. § 115D-5(b)(12). Colleges are authorized to provide courses in approved Career and College Promise Pathways. Additionally, colleges are responsible for ensuring that students are appropriately enrolled in Career and College Promise pathways consistent with the State Board of Community Colleges (SBCC) Career and College Promise Operating Procedures. A three-year analysis of the number and cost of waivers provided for Career and College Promise participants is provided below.

In the 2024-2025 academic year, the estimated cost of waivers across programs was approximately \$86.7 million, and the estimated number of course waivers was 386,144.

Estimated Cost of Waivers	22-23	23-24	24-25
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$72,915,641</b>	<b>\$79,379,921</b>	<b>\$86,746,517</b>
Curriculum	\$72,704,216	\$79,119,127	\$86,319,705
Pathway Estimated	\$46,246,982	\$51,871,831	\$58,810,737
<i>Transfer</i>	<i>\$36,813,385</i>	<i>\$40,611,688</i>	<i>\$45,413,456</i>
<i>CTE</i>	<i>\$9,433,597</i>	<i>\$11,260,143</i>	<i>\$13,397,281</i>
CIHS Estimated	\$26,457,234	\$27,247,296	\$27,508,968
Workforce CE	\$211,425	\$260,794	\$426,812

Note: this is the total cost of tuition waivers.

Estimated Number of Course Waivers	22-23	23-24	24-25
<b>Total</b>	<b>328,775</b>	<b>357,627</b>	<b>386,144</b>
Curriculum	327,486	356,030	383,618
Pathway Estimated	208,313	233,419	261,364
<i>Transfer</i>	<i>165,821</i>	<i>182,749</i>	<i>201,824</i>
<i>CTE</i>	<i>42,492</i>	<i>50,670</i>	<i>59,540</i>
CIHS Estimated	119,173	122,611	122,254
Workforce			
CE	1,289	1,597	2,526

## **2024-2025 Costs for Career and College Promise Participants**

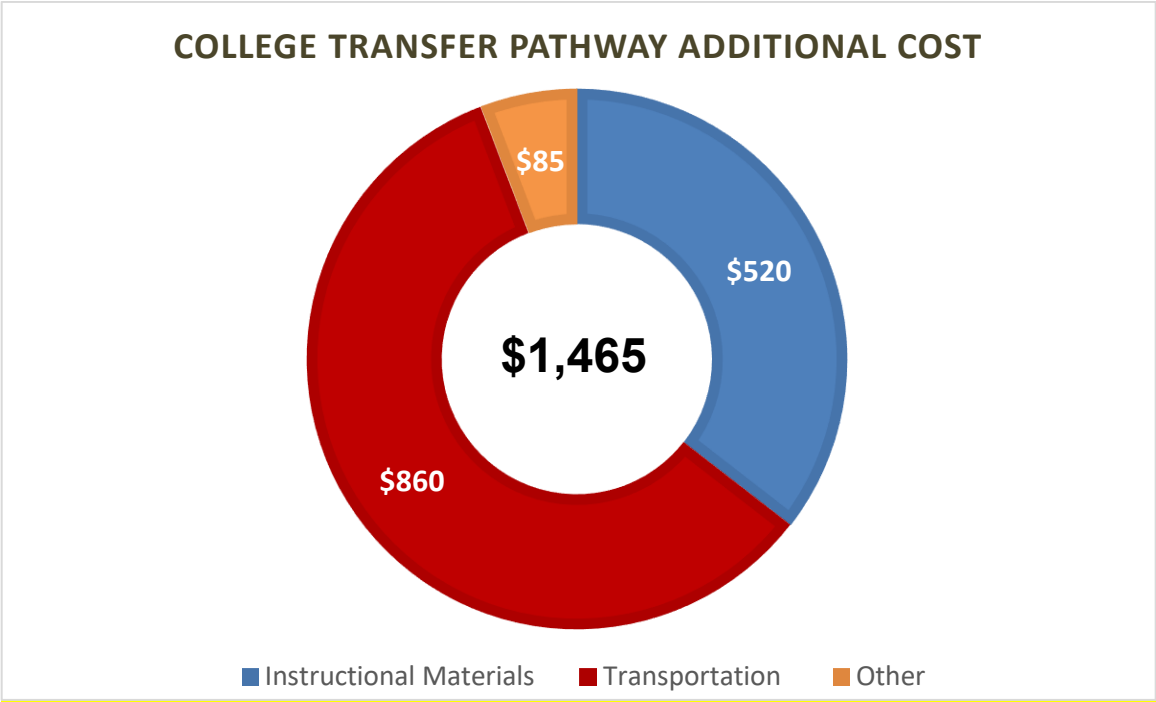
### ***Methods***

The purpose of this report is to provide an estimate of out-of-pocket expenses that students incur when they attend CCP courses. To estimate these costs, a survey was developed and sent to representatives at all community colleges in Fall 2022, asking them to estimate costs of transportation, instructional supplies, and other costs such as fees to students for the previous academic year. The same survey has been administered in each subsequent Fall semester. Respondents are typically college administrators who work closely with CCP students. For the 2024-2025 academic year, respondents from fifty-eight colleges contributed data. The responses were compiled then disaggregated by pathway: College Transfer, Career and Technical Education, and Cooperative Innovative High Schools. Compared to the previous year, the results estimate a slight increase in out-of-pocket costs of the CTP and CIHS pathways. As with the previous survey, and by a small margin, it was estimated that the CIHS pathway option requires the least additional funding, however, enrollment opportunities in this pathway are the most limited.

### **College Transfer Pathway (CTP)**

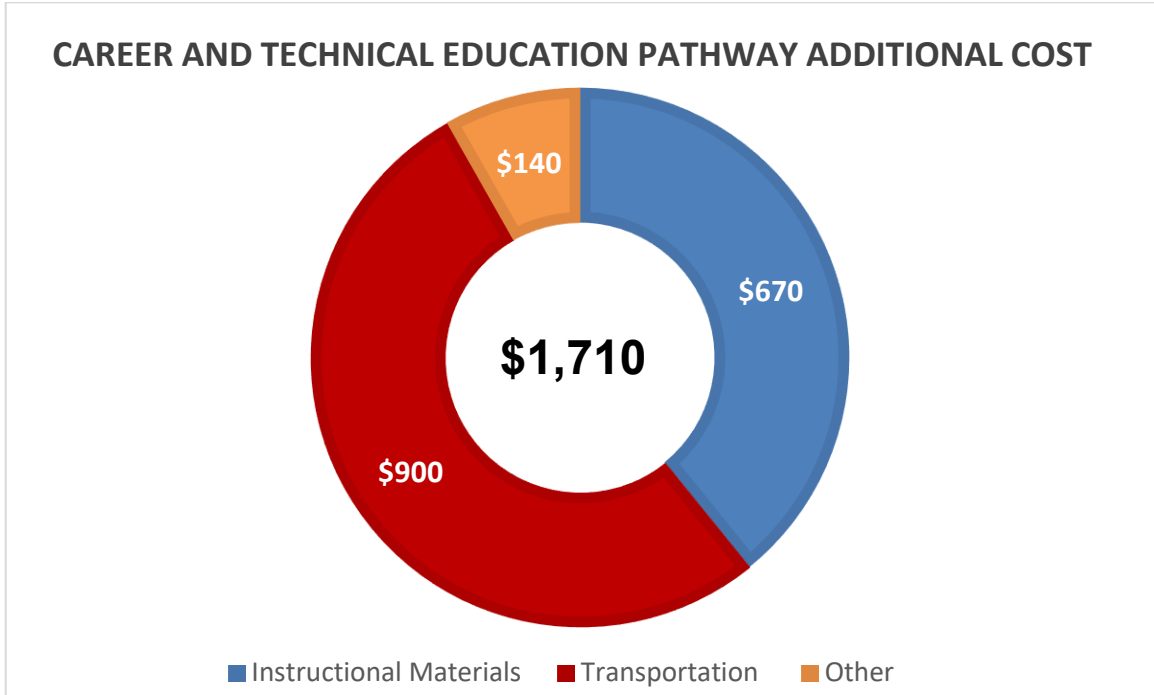
On average, college administrators estimated that additional costs for each CTP student were \$1,465; a 7% increase over AY 2023-2024. The estimated instructional supply cost, including items such as textbooks, text access codes, writing utensils, notebooks, and equipment rental fees, was \$520. The average annual transportation cost, including fuel, bus passes, parking

passes, and fees, was estimated at \$860. Other associated costs, which could include fees for courses or labs charged separate from tuition, were estimated at \$85.



**Career and Technical Education Pathway (CTE)**

On average, respondents estimated that additional annual costs per CTE student were \$1,710, a 4% increase since AY 2023-2024. This includes an estimated \$670 in instructional materials (e.g., textbooks, textbooks, access codes, tool kits, notebooks, background checks, equipment rental fees, and software), an estimated \$900 in transportation costs (e.g., fuel, bus passes, parking passes, and parking fees), and an estimated \$140 in other associated costs (e.g., enrollment, lab fees, licensure exams, or student activities fee).

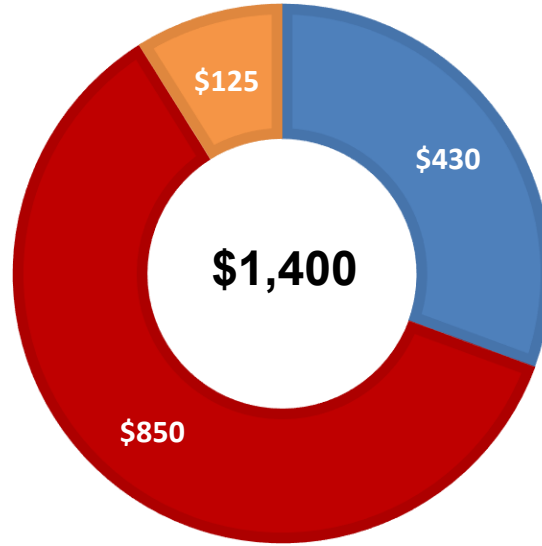


**Cooperative Innovative High School (CIHS)**

A small portion of students attending a CIHS may have incurred additional costs. Specifically, 5 of the 138 schools reported limited transportation options, 9 reported some instructional supply costs to students, and several reported some form of additional fees. Therefore, the vast majority of students likely experienced no additional costs to participate in CIHS.

On average, when costs were incurred, respondents estimated that students spent around \$430 on instructional materials and supplies, \$850 in transportation costs, and \$125 in other costs (e.g., fees). Students who incurred costs in all three categories were estimated to spend an average of \$1400 per academic year, a 39% increase since last reported in AY 2023-2024.

### COOPERATIVE INNOVATIVE HIGH SCHOOLS ADDITIONAL COST



■ Instructional Materials ■ Transportation ■ Other

## UNC SYSTEM NC Public High Schools

Institutions within the University of North Carolina (UNC) system preliminarily admitted **112,883\*** students from NC Public High Schools, including Charters, for Fall 2025 based on preliminary results. **UNC system admissions of NC Public High School students increased by 10,564 (10%) students admitted from Fall 2024.** Refer to Table 6 for admissions of Cooperative Innovative High School students.

**Table 3: NC Public High School student admissions to UNC System schools, Fall 2025**

UNC Institution	Number of NC public high school students admitted to UNC Institutions, Fall 2025** (As of 10/28/2025***)
Appalachian State University	12,272
East Carolina University	16,147
Elizabeth City State University	2,825
Fayetteville State University	2,140
North Carolina A&T State University	6,662
North Carolina Central University	5,304
North Carolina State University	8,668
University of North Carolina – Asheville	5,483
University of North Carolina – Chapel Hill	4,846
University of North Carolina – Charlotte	12,933
University of North Carolina – Greensboro	9,425
University of North Carolina – Pembroke	4,919
University of North Carolina – Wilmington	8,385
University of North Carolina – School of the Arts	90
Western Carolina University	8,367
Winston-Salem State University	4,417
<b>UNC Total</b>	<b>112,883</b>

\*Note: Students may apply and be admitted to multiple UNC Institutions.

\*\*Cooperative Innovative High School students are excluded from this table.

\*\*\*Neither IPEDS Admissions nor the Freshmen Admissions and Performance dashboard have yet been finalized for the current year, this data should be considered preliminary. Refer to the UNC System [Stats, Data, & Reports](#) page for official results.

## **NORTH CAROLINA DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION (NCDPI) Cooperative Innovative High School (CIHS) Programs**

In response to N.C.G.S. §115C-238.50, the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction (NCDPI) initially established Cooperative Innovative High Schools (CIHS) in 2004 with the NC Community Colleges System (NCCCS) and the University of North Carolina General Administration (UNCGA). G.S. §115C-238.50 authorizes “local boards of education to jointly establish with one or more boards of trustees cooperative innovative programs in high schools and colleges or universities that will expand students' opportunities for educational success through high quality instructional programming. These cooperative innovative high school programs shall target any of the following groups: (1) High school students who are at risk of dropping out of school before attaining a high school diploma. (1a) High school students with parents who did not continue education beyond high school. (2) High school students who would benefit from accelerated academic instruction.”

In the twenty-three years since the General Assembly authorized the establishment of Cooperative Innovative High School Programs, students, including many at-risk of dropping out and historically underserved, continue to see increased academic outcomes that surpass those of students across the state. CIHS programs continue to open in North Carolina school districts, though with fewer CIHS opening in North Carolina in recent years. As these CIHS programs grow and expand enrollment, an increasing number of students are benefitting from new opportunities, leading to stronger outcomes, with higher rates of academic achievement, graduation and postsecondary enrollment and completion.

CIHS programs include a variety of models focused on transfer degrees and/or Career and Technical Education programs. Programs define themselves in a variety of ways, such as early colleges, middle colleges, STEM schools and career academies.

North Carolina has made significant progress in opening and sustaining innovative secondary schools that share the critical goal of graduating every student for success in college, careers and life. **For 2024-2025, CIHS programs extended across 87 of the state's 115 school districts, with 138 individual schools operating for the 2024-2025 school year.** CIHS program partner with various NC colleges and universities: 121 with

NC community colleges; 11 with UNC System colleges/universities; and 6 partner with independent colleges or universities.

### **Cooperative Innovative High Schools Data Highlights:**

- Enrollment in CIHS in 2024-2025 was 27,599 students; this is a **decrease** of 1,343 students from the previous school year. In total, 6,560 students graduated from Cooperative Innovative High Schools in 2024-2025, an **increase** of 286 students from the previous year.
- High school retention and completion rates for CIHS were **above** the state averages, with the average CIHS rates above 95%.
- The average high school drop-out rate of CIHS programs was **below** the state average.
- CIHS students at community colleges received better grades, on average, than the general population of students, with **89%** averaging a passing grade of a C or better. This is 14% higher than the general population. (NCCCS)
- **2,731** individual students earned **7,259** industry-recognized credentials through high school CTE courses, based on NCDPI data.
- CIHS students also earned a total of 1,460 diploma and certificate credentials, based on NCCCS data. This represents a total of **4,191** individual credentials earned from both agencies, an increase of 1,002 credentials from the previous school year.
- **3,907** CIHS students graduated with an associate degree. This is an increase of 409 students from the previous school year. (NCCCS)
- **13,715** applications from CIHS students were accepted by UNC System four-year institutions, based on UNC System data. This is an increase of 1,021 applications from the previous school year.
- **3,932** applications from CIHS students were accepted by North Carolina Independent Colleges and Universities, based on available NCICU data. This is an increase of 839 applications from the previous school year.

## **State Board of Education CIHS Policy**

Based on the Office of Advanced Learning and Gifted Education's focus on continuous improvement of CIHS programs and with input from the Joint Advisory Committee, the State Board of Education (SBE) adopted a new policy for CIHS in October 2025: [CACP-001: Cooperative Innovative High Schools](#). This policy documents long-standing best practices for CIHS and addresses the interest of State Board members in ensuring that our CIHS continue to serve the CIHS target populations established by CIHS legislation.

The new CIHS policy outlines CIHS program objectives, outlines the application process for new CIHS or for CIHS supplemental funding, and establishes that CIHS annual reports and CIHS renewals will include information about target populations. The new policy also establishes that requests by existing CIHS to change their IHE partner may be approved by the State Board of Education.

### **SBE CACP-001: Cooperative Innovative High Schools**

Cooperative Innovative High Schools (CIHS) are one of the Career and College Promise structured pathways available to local school administrative units (LSAU) and accredited partnering Institutions of Higher Education (IHE). CIHS programs prepare students for future learning in the workforce or in an IHE. Career and College Promise (CCP) is North Carolina's dual enrollment program. CIHS are also known as early colleges across the state.

CIHS programs enable students to concurrently obtain a high school diploma and begin or complete an associate degree program, certificate/license, or earn up to two years of college credit within five years.

CIHS programs focus on the following target student populations:

- High school students who are at risk of dropping out of school before attaining a high school diploma.
- High school students with parents who did not continue education beyond high school.
- High school students who would benefit from accelerated academic instruction.

## **A CIHS program shall:**

- establish and maintain a college-going culture, including a blended approach to high school and college coursework;
- be located on the campus of the partnering IHE. If the CIHS is not located on the campus of the IHE, the IHE will maintain a regular presence on the CIHS campus;
- recruit, enroll, support, and graduate the CIHS target populations;
- offer opportunities for students that are not available through other CCP pathways;
- provide in person-instruction for at least 50% of college courses in which high school students are enrolled, unless there is an exemption from NCDPI;
- offer Grades 9-12 or 9-13, unless approved before January 1, 2025;
- maintain no more than 100 students per grade, enrolling at least 80 and no more than 500 students total in Grades 9-13;
- provide students with college support services for college success;
- create an effective high school and college partnership where the staff meet regularly and collaborate to support CIHS student success;
- encourage the cooperative or shared use of resources, personnel, and facilities between LSAU and IHE partner;
- emphasize parental/guardian involvement and provide consistent counseling, advising, and parent conferencing so that parents and students can make responsible decisions regarding course taking and can track the students' academic progress and success; and
- develop methods for early identification of potential participating students in the middle grades and through high school and provide outreach to those students to promote academic preparation and awareness of the cooperative innovative high school programs.

## **CIHS Application Process**

Local school administrative units and their college partners may apply jointly to open a new Cooperative Innovative High School or request allocation of CIHS supplemental funding for an existing CIHS by following the CIHS application process and timeline established by the Joint Advisory Committee (JAC). The Joint Advisory Committee is comprised of representatives of the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction (NCDPI), the North Carolina Community Colleges System, the UNC System, and the North Carolina Independent Colleges and Universities. A CIHS program is a choice option for students.

In accordance with G.S. 115C-238.51A(a1), the State Board of Education (SBE) may approve up to three CIHS applications to open in a school year, and that the SBE shall give priority consideration to CIHS applications from LSAUs that do not already operate a CIHS.

To apply for a CIHS, the LSAU and IHE partner(s) shall:

- Submit a Letter of Intent by June 15 of the academic year prior to the desired opening school year indicating an intent by the LSAU and IHE partner(s) to apply to open a new CIHS. An LSAU may have two academic years to open a CIHS program once it is approved by the NC General Assembly.
- Submit a complete CIHS application (provided by DPI) that includes the information required by G.S. 115C-238.51(b) by October 15.
  - The CIHS application will identify the CIHS target student populations that the CIHS will serve and will indicate the intention to serve at least two of the target student populations. Priority consideration for approval will be given to proposed CIHS that will serve all three CIHS target populations.
  - CIHS application will include a request for a location waiver if the planned CIHS will not be on the campus of the IHE partner.
- CIHS applications require signatures from the applicable Local Board of Education and IHE partner governing board.
- The JAC will review each application and issue a recommendation to the SBE and applicable IHE governing board.
- The SBE and applicable IHE system governing board may give conditional approval up to three applications for a single school year for CIHS programs that request additional funds. Final approval is contingent upon approval of opening and/or appropriation of funds by the General Assembly in accordance with G.S. 115C-238.51A(c).
- CIHS programs receive funding for a principal position after the first year that the CIHS program has a total enrollment of at least 100 students.

**CIHS Annual Reports:**

All CIHS programs shall submit an annual CIHS report to NCDPI, using the CIHS Annual Report template, indicating:

- target populations served (if the annual report indicates that the CIHS is not serving all three CIHS target populations, the report must include an explanation of the reasons the CIHS is not doing so);
- grade levels offered;
- programs of service offered (College Transfer pathway, CTE pathway, or both);
- total enrollment for each grade level; and
- school effectiveness measures.

CIHS annual reports inform the data included in the CCP/CIHS report to the General Assembly.

### **Existing CIHS Program Updates:**

The LSAU and IHE partner of an existing CIHS will submit to NCDPI a CIHS Program Update if there are:

- changes to the name of the CIHS,
- changes to the location of the CIHS, or
- programmatic changes of curricular pathway options.

If a CIHS relocates to a location other than the original IHE partner, a location waiver must be requested by the LSAU and IHE partner. Location waivers are approved by the governing board of the IHE partner.

### **Requests to Change the IHE Partner:**

An LSAU operating an existing CIHS program may apply to the SBE to change the CIHS IHE partner, if there is an issue with accreditation or stability with the IHE partner. Requests to change the IHE partner of an existing CIHS may be approved by the SBE and the appropriate IHE governing boards. Requests to change the IHE partner must include revisions of critical components of the original CIHS application to ensure the intent of the CIHS program and all appropriate documentation is in place. Requests shall be submitted to DPI by December 15 of the academic year prior to the academic year in which the change will go into effect.

### **CIHS Renewal Agreements:**

Each CIHS program shall operate under the original CIHS application approved by the SBE and applicable IHE governing board. Each CIHS program must be renewed every five years. The

LSAU and applicable IHE governing board shall submit a renewal form to DPI that includes updated program information as needed. Once submitted, CIHS renewals are signed by the SBE chairperson and the chairperson of the corresponding IHE partner state-level board.

Each CIHS renewal agreement shall include:

- an attestation from the LSAU and IHE partner that the CIHS in its current programming sustains the innovations and programming established by the original CIHS application;
- current CCP pathways available to students;
- the target populations the CIHS intends to serve for the following five years, provided that the CIHS shall serve at least two of the target populations;
- a description of efforts taken to recruit and serve the CIHS target populations; and
- any updates to the original program application.

## Support for CIHS Programs

CIHS programs are supported by a partnership between NCDPI, NCCCS, the UNCS, and the NCICU. The Joint Advisory Committee (JAC), per legislation, comprises staff from each agency, who meet regularly and collaborate to support CIHS throughout the year and to provide oversight and guidance to the program, including technical support, resource development, policy implementation and data collection and analysis. The JAC also provides application development support, leads the application review of new CIHS applications, and provides recommendations to agency governing boards on the approval of CIHS applications. Partner agencies also lend specialized support for CIHS programs based on the needs of the schools.

As the lead agency, NCDPI works closely with the CIHS to support implementation. NCDPI hosts regular webinars for principals, and site visits with technical assistance to each new CIHS. NCDPI and the JAC also develop various resources to support development and implementation of the CIHS, shared via the NCDPI [CIHS website](#). The [CIHS Design and Implementation Guide](#) includes CIHS Promising Practices from CIHS across North Carolina.

Together, these schools are transforming teaching and learning for their students, while also helping to prompt the growth of innovative practices in many other districts and schools. A growing number of districts are now embracing similar innovations for all their schools, as more CIHS demonstrate sustained success.

The state's most recent data from NCDPI, the NCCCS, UNCS, and NCICU continue to show gains in areas of high school retention rates, high school completion rates, certification and associate degree completion, admission to four-year institutions, and a reduction in drop-out rates.

Following the complete data captured below in response to legislative requirements, this report includes success stories from across North Carolina's network of CIHS, as well as success stories about CCP students from NC's community colleges. These stories of student and of school transformations richly illustrate the powerful impact CIHS programs are having in our communities. These stories also abundantly show how CIHS are improving outcomes of the CIHS target populations: first-generation college goers, students at risk of dropping out, and

students who benefit from accelerated academic instruction. Several CIHS programs are expanding pathways for students to include more career-ready opportunities, often leading to good jobs in their local communities upon graduation. This continued success is a result of hard work by NC's CIHS teachers, principals, counselors, college liaisons, and districts.

With investment of state funds, support from the local and state-level policy makers, sustained efforts of professional development and technical assistance from NCDPI, NCCCS, the UNC System, and NCICU, SBE/NCDPI expect continued progress to increase access and successful participation in Cooperative Innovative High Schools across North Carolina to further meet the intent of the legislation.

**Table 4: List of Approved and Operating Cooperative Innovative High Schools by School District and Institution of Higher Education (IHE) partner, Fall 2025**

#	PSU Name	School Name	IHE Name
1	Alamance-Burlington Schools	Alamance-Burlington Early College High School	Alamance Community College
2	Alexander County Schools	Alexander Early College High School	Catawba Valley Community College
3	Anson County Schools	Anson County Early College High School	South Piedmont Community College
4	Ashe County Schools	Ashe County Early College High School	Wilkes Community College
5	Asheville City Schools	School of Inquiry and Life Sciences at Asheville	A-B Tech Community College
6	Beaufort County Schools	Beaufort County Early College High School	Beaufort County Community College
7	Bertie County Schools	Bertie County Early College High School	Martin Community College
8	Bladen County Schools	Bladen County Early College High School	Bladen Community College
9	Brunswick County Schools	Brunswick County Early College High School	Brunswick Community College
10	Buncombe County Schools	Buncombe County Early College High School	A-B Tech Community College
11	Buncombe County Schools	Buncombe County Center for Career Innovation	A-B Tech Community College
12	Buncombe County Schools	Martin L. Nesbitt Jr. Discovery Academy	A-B Tech Community College
13	Burke County Schools	Burke Middle College High School	Western Piedmont Community College
14	Cabarrus County Schools	Cabarrus Early College of Technology	Rowan-Cabarrus Community College
15	Cabarrus County Schools	Cabarrus-Kannapolis Early College High School	Rowan-Cabarrus Community College

#	PSU Name	School Name	IHE Name
16	Cabarrus County Schools	Cabarrus Health Sciences Institute	Cabarrus College of Health Sciences
17	Caldwell County Schools	Caldwell Applied Sciences Academy	Caldwell Community College and Technical Institute
18	Caldwell County Schools	Caldwell Early College High School	Caldwell Community College and Technical Institute
19	Camden County Schools	Camden Early College High School	College of The Albemarle
20	Catawba County Schools	Challenger Early College High School	Catawba Valley Community College
21	Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools	Cato Middle College High School	Central Piedmont Community College
22	Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools	Charlotte Engineering Early College High School	UNC Charlotte
23	Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools	Charlotte Teacher Early College High School	UNC Charlotte
24	Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools	Harper Middle College High School	Central Piedmont Community College
25	Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools	Hawthorne Academy of Health Sciences	Carolinas College of Health Sciences
26	Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools	Levine Middle College High School	Central Piedmont Community College
27	Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools	Merancas Middle College High School at CPCC	Central Piedmont Community College
28	Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools	Central Piedmont Early College (formerly Performance Learning Center)	Central Piedmont Community College
29	Chatham County Schools	Chatham County School of Science and Engineering	Central Carolina Community College
30	Cherokee County Schools	Tri-County Early College High School	Tri-County Community College
31	Cleveland County Schools	Cleveland Early College High School	Cleveland Community College
32	Columbus County Schools	Columbus Career and College Academy	Southeastern Community College
33	Craven County Schools	Craven Early College High School	Craven Community College

34	Craven County Schools	Early College EAST High School	Craven Community College
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#	PSU Name	School Name	IHE Name
35	Cumberland County Schools	Cross Creek Early College High School	Fayetteville State University
36	Cumberland County Schools	Cumberland International Early College High School	Fayetteville State University
37	Cumberland County Schools	Cumberland Polytechnic High School	Fayetteville Tech Community College
38	Currituck County Schools	J.P. Knapp Early College High School	College of The Albemarle
39	Dare County Schools	Dare Early College High School	College of the Albemarle
40	Davidson County Schools	Davidson Early College High School	Davidson-Davie Community College
41	Davidson County Schools	Yadkin Valley Regional Career Academy	Davidson-Davie Community College
42	Davie County Schools	Davie County Early College High School	Davidson-Davie Community College
43	Duplin County Schools	Duplin Early College High School	James Sprunt Community College
44	Durham Public Schools	City of Medicine Academy	Durham Tech Community College
45	Durham Public Schools	Durham School of Technology	Durham Tech Community College
46	Durham Public Schools	Josephine Dobbs Clement Early College High School	North Carolina Central University
47	Durham Public Schools	Durham Early College of Health Sciences	Durham Tech Community College
48	Edgecombe County Public Schools	Edgecombe Early College High School	Edgecombe Community College
49	Edgecombe County Public Schools	EDGE Academy of Health Sciences	Edgecombe Community College
50	Elizabeth City-Pasquotank Public Schools	Elizabeth City Pasquotank Early College High School	College of The Albemarle
51	Franklin County Schools	Franklin County Early College High School	Vance-Granville Community College

52	Gaston County Schools	Gaston Early College High School	Gaston College
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#	PSU Name	School Name	IHE Name
53	Gaston County Schools	Gaston Early College of Medical Sciences	Gaston College
54	Granville County Schools	Granville Early College High School	Vance-Granville Community College
55	Greene County Schools	Greene Early College High School	Lenoir Community College
56	Guilford County Schools	Early College at Guilford College	Guilford College
57	Guilford County Schools	Early/Middle College at GTCC – Greensboro	Guilford Tech Community College
58	Guilford County Schools	Early/Middle College at GTCC - High Point	Guilford Tech Community College
59	Guilford County Schools	Early/Middle College at GTCC – Jamestown	Guilford Tech Community College
60	Guilford County Schools	A&T Four Middle College (formerly Early/Middle College at NC A&T)	North Carolina A&T State University
61	Guilford County Schools	Greensboro College Middle College	Greensboro College
62	Guilford County Schools	Middle College at UNCG	UNC Greensboro
63	Guilford County Schools	STEM Early College at NC A&T	North Carolina A&T State University
64	Guilford County Schools	The Academy at Ben L. Smith High School	Guilford Tech Community College
65	Guilford County Schools	The Kearns Academy at Central	Guilford Tech Community College
66	Halifax County Schools	Halifax County Early College High School	Halifax Community College
67	Harnett County Schools	Harnett County Early College High School	Central Carolina Community College
68	Haywood County Schools	Haywood Early College High School	Haywood Community College
69	Henderson County Schools	Henderson County Early College High School	Blue Ridge Community College
70	Hertford County Schools	Hertford County Early College High School	Roanoke-Chowan Community College

71	Hoke County Schools	SandHoke Early College High School	Sandhills Community College
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#	PSU Name	School Name	IHE Name
72	Hyde County Schools	Hyde Academy	Beaufort County Community College
73	Iredell-Statesville Schools	Agriculture and Science Early College High School	Mitchell Community College
74	Iredell-Statesville Schools	Collaborative College for Technology and Leadership	Mitchell Community College
75	Iredell-Statesville Schools	Crossroads Arts and Sciences Early College High School	Mitchell Community College
76	Jackson County Public Schools	Blue Ridge Early College High School	Southwestern Community College
77	Jackson County Public Schools	Jackson County Early College High School	Southwestern Community College
78	Johnston County Public Schools	Johnston County Early College Academy	Johnston Community College
79	Johnston County Public Schools	Johnston County Schools Career Technical Leadership Academy	Johnston Community College
80	Lee County Schools	Lee County Early College High School	Central Carolina Community College
81	Lenoir County Public Schools	Lenoir County Early College High School	Lenoir Community College
82	Macon County Schools	Macon County Early College High School	Southwestern Community College
83	Madison County Schools	Madison Early College High School	A-B Tech Community College
84	Martin County Schools	Martin Innovative Early College High School	Martin Community College
85	McDowell County Schools	McDowell Academy for Innovation	McDowell Tech Community College
86	McDowell County Schools	McDowell Early College High School	McDowell Tech Community College
87	Mitchell County Schools	Mayland Early College High School	Mayland Community College
88	Montgomery County Schools	Montgomery County Early College High School	Montgomery Community College

89	Moore County Schools	Moore Innovative High School	Sandhills Community College
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#	PSU Name	School Name	IHE Name
90	Nash County Public Schools	Center for Industry, Technology and Innovation High School	Nash Community College
91	Nash County Public Schools	Nash-Rocky Mount Early College High School	Nash Community College
92	New Hanover County Schools	Isaac M. Bear Early College High School	UNC Wilmington
93	New Hanover County Schools	Southeast Area Technical High School	Cape Fear Community College
94	New Hanover County Schools	Wilmington Early College High School	Cape Fear Community College
95	Northampton County Schools	Northampton County Early College High School	Halifax Community College
96	Northeast Regional School - Biotech/Agri	Northeast Regional School of Biotechnology and Agriscience (NERSBA)	Martin Community College
97	Onslow County Schools	Onslow Early College High School	Coastal Carolina Community College
98	Pender County Schools	Pender Early College High School	Cape Fear Community College
99	Person County Schools	Person Early College for Innovation and Leadership	Piedmont Community College
100	Pitt County Schools	Innovation Early College High School	East Carolina University
101	Pitt County Schools	Pitt County Early College High School	Pitt Community College
102	Polk County Schools	Polk County Early College High School	Isothermal Community College
103	Public Schools of Robeson County	Public Schools of Robeson County Early College High School	Robeson Community College
104	Randolph County School System	Randolph Early College High School	Randolph Community College
105	Richmond County Schools	Richmond County Early College High School	Richmond Community College

106	Roanoke Rapids City Schools	Roanoke Rapids Early College High School	Halifax Community College
107	Rockingham County Schools	Rockingham County Early College High School	Rockingham Community College

#	PSU Name	School Name	IHE Name
108	Rockingham County Schools	Rockingham CTE Innovative High School	Rockingham Community College
109	Rowan-Salisbury Schools	Rowan County Early College High School	Rowan-Cabarrus Community College
110	Rutherford County Schools	Rutherford Early College High School	Isothermal Community College
111	Sampson County Schools	Sampson Early College High School	Sampson Community College
112	Scotland County Schools	Scotland Early College High School	Richmond Community College
113	Stanly County Schools	Stanly Early College High School	Stanly Community College
114	Stanly County Schools	Stanly STEM Early College High School	Stanly Community College
115	Stokes County Schools	Stokes County Early College High School	Forsyth Tech Community College
116	Surry County Schools	Surry Early College High School of Design	Surry Community College
117	Tyrrell County Schools	Columbia Early College High School	Beaufort County Community College
118	Union County Public Schools	Union County Early College High School	South Piedmont Community College
119	Vance County Schools	Vance County Early College High School	Vance-Granville Community College
120	Wake County Schools	North Wake College and Career Academy	Wake Tech Community College
121	Wake County Schools	Vernon Malone College and Career Academy	Wake Tech Community College
122	Wake County Schools	Wake Early College of Health and Science	Wake Tech Community College
123	Wake County Schools	Wake Early College of Information and Biotechnologies	Wake Tech Community College

124	Wake County Schools	Wake STEM Early College High School	North Carolina State University
125	Wake County Schools	Wake Young Men's Leadership Academy	Shaw University
126	Wake County Schools	Wake Young Women's Leadership Academy	Shaw University

#	PSU Name	School Name	IHE Name
127	Warren County Schools	Warren Early College High School	Vance-Granville Community College
128	Washington County Schools	Washington County Early College High School	Beaufort County Community College
129	Watauga County Schools	Watauga Innovation Academy	Caldwell Community College and Technical Institute
130	Wayne County Public Schools	Wayne Early/Middle College High School	Wayne Community College
131	Wayne County Public Schools	Wayne School of Engineering at Goldsboro High School	Wayne Community College
132	Weldon City Schools	Roanoke Valley Early College of Health Sciences, Business and Civic Leadership	Halifax Community College
133	Wilkes County Schools	Wilkes Early College High School	Wilkes Community College
134	Wilson County Schools	Wilson Academy of Applied Technology	Wilson Community College
135	Wilson County Schools	Wilson Early College Academy	Wilson Community College
136	Winston Salem / Forsyth County Schools	Early College of Forsyth County	Forsyth Tech Community College
137	Winston Salem / Forsyth County Schools	Middle College of Forsyth County	Forsyth Tech Community College
138	Yadkin County Schools	Yadkin Early College High School	Surry Community College

Figure 1: NC Cooperative Innovative High Schools, September 2025

# NC Cooperative Innovative High Schools

AS OF SEPTEMBER 2025

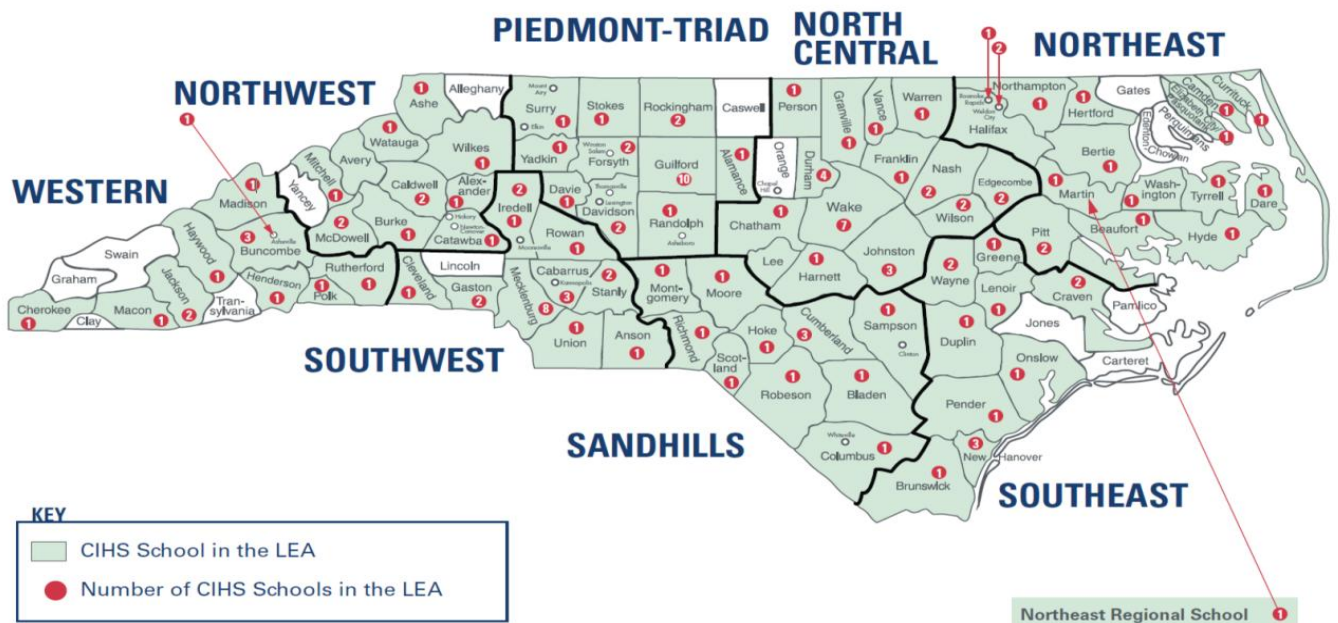
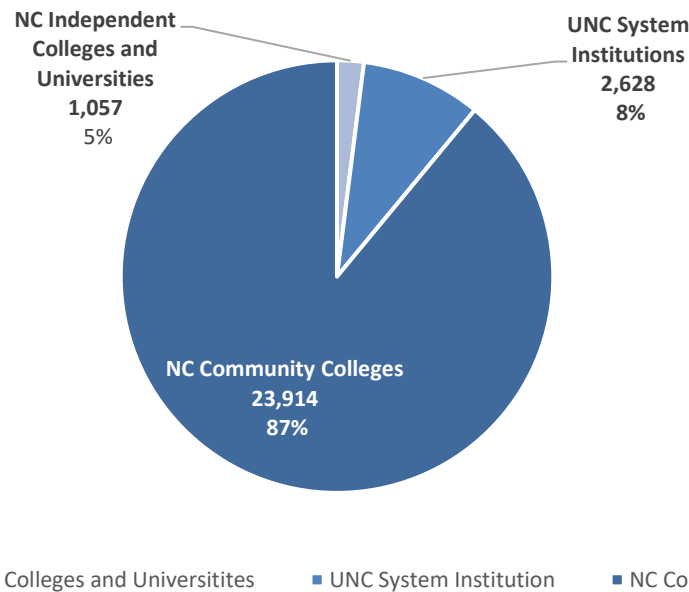


Figure 2: 2024-2025 Cooperative Innovative High School student enrollment by Institution of Higher Education (IHE)

## 2024-2025 CIHS Student Enrollment by IHE



## Cooperative Innovative High School Applications

[NC Session Law 2025-92](#) authorized any CIHS originally approved as a virtual CIHS to continue to receive funding pursuant to Section 7.22(c)(1) of S.L. 2017-57. NC Session Law 2025-92 also approved the 2024 CIHS applications to open and to receive additional funding. These CIHS are currently in operation:

- Hawthorne Academy of Health Sciences (Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools)
- Martin Innovative Early College
- Moore Innovative High Schools

**Table 5: Retention rate and cohort graduation rate of Cooperative and Innovative High Schools for the 2024-2025 school year; number of dropouts from the 2023-2024 school year**

#	PSU Name	School Name	Retention Rate	Number of Dropouts*	Cohort Graduation Rate**
1	Alamance-Burlington Schools	Alamance-Burlington Early College High School	>95%	*	>95%
2	Alexander County Schools	Alexander Early College High School	>95%	*	>95%
3	Anson County Schools	Anson County Early College High School	>95%	*	>95%
4	Ashe County Schools	Ashe County Early College High School	>95%	*	>95%
5	Asheville City Schools	School of Inquiry and Life Sciences at Asheville	91%	*	95%
6	Beaufort County Schools	Beaufort County Early College High School	94%	*	>95%
7	Bertie County Schools	Bertie County Early College High School	>95%	*	>95%
8	Bladen County Schools	Bladen County Early College High School	>95%	*	>95%
9	Brunswick County Schools	Brunswick County Early College High School	94%	*	>95%
10	Buncombe County Schools	Buncombe County Early College High School	92%	*	>95%
11	Buncombe County Schools	Center for Career Innovation	88%	*	>95%
12	Buncombe County Schools	Martin L. Nesbitt Jr. Discovery Academy	94%	*	>95%
13	Burke County Schools	Burke Middle College High School	>95%	*	>95%
14	Cabarrus County Schools	Cabarrus Early College of Technology	93%	*	>95%

#	PSU Name	School Name	Retention Rate	Number of Dropouts*	Cohort Graduation Rate**
15	Cabarrus County Schools	Cabarrus-Kannapolis Early College High School	>95%	*	>95%
16	Cabarrus County Schools	Cabarrus Health Sciences Institute	91%	*	N/A
17	Caldwell County Schools	Caldwell Applied Sciences Academy	>95%	*	>95%
18	Caldwell County Schools	Caldwell Early College High School	>95%	*	>95%
19	Camden County Schools	Camden Early College High School	>95%	*	93%
20	Catawba County Schools	Challenger Early College High School	>95%	*	>95%

21	Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools	Cato Middle College High School	95%	*	>95%
22	Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools	Charlotte Engineering Early College High School	95%	*	>95%
23	Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools	Charlotte Teacher Early College High School	94%	*	>95%
24	Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools	Harper Middle College High School	>95%	*	>95%
25	Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools	Hawthorne Academy of Health Sciences	>95%	*	82%
26	Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools	Levine Middle College High School	>95%	*	>95%
27	Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools	Merancas Middle College High School at CPCC	>95%	*	>95%
28	Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools	Central Piedmont Early College	91%	*	>95%
29	Chatham County Schools	Chatham County School of Science and Engineering	93%	*	>95%
30	Cherokee County Schools	Tri-County Early College High School	88%	*	>95%

31	Cleveland County Schools	Cleveland Early College High School	95%	*	>95%
32	Columbus County Schools	Columbus Career and College Academy	>95%	*	93%
33	Craven County Schools	Craven Early College High School	>95%	*	>95%
34	Craven County Schools	Early College EAST High School	90%	*	>95%
35	Cumberland County Schools	Cross Creek Early College High School	93%	*	>95%
36	Cumberland County Schools	Cumberland International Early College High School	95%	*	>95%
37	Cumberland County Schools	Cumberland Polytechnic High School	93%	*	>95%

#	PSU Name	School Name	Retention Rate	Number of Dropouts*	Cohort Graduation Rate**
38	Currituck County Schools	J.P. Knapp Early College High School	95%	*	>95%
39	Davidson County Schools	Davidson Early College High School	>95%	*	>95%
40	Davidson County Schools	Yadkin Valley Regional Career Academy	94%	*	>95%
41	Davie County Schools	Davie County Early College High School	>95%	*	94%
42	Duplin County Schools	Duplin Early College High School	>95%	*	>95%
43	Durham Public Schools	City of Medicine Academy	92%	*	>95%
44	Durham Public Schools	Durham School of Technology	88%	*	93%
45	Durham Public Schools	Josephine Dobbs Clement Early College High School	94%	*	>95%
46	Durham Public Schools	Durham Early College of Health Sciences	>95%	*	>95%
47	Edgecombe County Public Schools	Edgecombe Early College High School	>95%	*	>95%
48	Edgecombe County Public Schools	Edge Academy of Health Sciences	83%	*	N/A

49	Elizabeth City-Pasquotank Public Schools	Elizabeth City Pasquotank Early College High School	95%	*	>95%
50	Franklin County Schools	Franklin County Early College High School	94%	*	>95%
51	Gaston County Schools	Gaston Early College High School	>95%	*	>95%
52	Gaston County Schools	Gaston Early College of Medical Sciences	93%	*	>95%
53	Granville County Schools	Granville Early College High School	>95%	*	>95%
54	Greene County Schools	Greene Early College High School	95%	*	>95%
55	Guilford County Schools	Early College at Guilford College	>95%	*	>95%
56	Guilford County Schools	Early/Middle College at GTCC – Greensboro	93%	*	>95%

#	PSU Name	School Name	Retention Rate	Number of Dropouts*	Cohort Graduation Rate**
57	Guilford County Schools	Early/Middle College at GTCC High Point	85%	*	>95%
58	Guilford County Schools	Early/Middle College at GTCC Jamestown	>95%	*	>95%
59	Guilford County Schools	A&T Four Middle College	86%	*	>95%
60	Guilford County Schools	Greensboro College Middle College	>95%	*	>95%
61	Guilford County Schools	Middle College at UNCG	>95%	*	>95%
62	Guilford County Schools	STEM Early College at NC A&T	>95%	*	>95%
63	Guilford County Schools	The Academy at Ben L. Smith High School	92%	*	>95%
64	Guilford County Schools	The Kearns Academy at Central	91%	*	>95%
65	Halifax County Schools	Halifax County Early College High School	>95%	*	>95%
66	Harnett County Schools	Harnett County Early College High School	>95%	*	>95%

67	Haywood County Schools	Haywood Early College High School	94%	*	>95%
68	Henderson County Schools	Henderson County Early College High School	>95%	*	>95%
69	Hertford County Schools	Hertford County Early College High School	>95%	*	>95%
70	Hoke County Schools	SandHoke Early College High School	>95%	*	>95%
71	Hyde County Schools	Hyde Academy	48%	*	N/A
72	Iredell-Statesville Schools	Agriculture and Science Early College High School	93%	*	>95%
73	Iredell-Statesville Schools	Collaborative College for Technology and Leadership	95%	*	>95%
74	Iredell-Statesville Schools	Crossroads Arts and Sciences Early College High School	>95%	*	>95%

#	PSU Name	School Name	Retention Rate	Number of Dropouts*	Cohort Graduation Rate**
75	Jackson County Public Schools	Blue Ridge Early College High School	91%	*	86%
76	Jackson County Public Schools	Jackson County Early College High School	94%	*	>95%
77	Johnston County Public Schools	Johnston County Early College Academy	>95%	*	>95%
78	Johnston County Public Schools	Johnston County Schools Career Technical Leadership Academy	>95%	*	>95%
79	Lee County Schools	Lee County Early College High School	>95%	*	>95%
80	Lenoir County Public Schools	Lenoir County Early College High School	>95%	*	>95%
81	Macon County Schools	Macon County Early College High School	94%	*	>95%
82	Madison County Schools	Madison Early College High School	>95%	*	>95%

83	McDowell County Schools	McDowell Academy for Innovation	>95%	*	>95%
84	McDowell County Schools	McDowell Early College High School	>95%	*	>95%
85	Mitchell County Schools	Mayland Early College High School	>95%	*	92%
86	Montgomery County Schools	Montgomery County Early College High School	>95%	*	>95%
87	Nash County Public Schools	Center for Industry, Technology and Innovation High School	>95%	*	93%
88	Nash County Public Schools	Nash-Rocky Mount Early College High School	>95%	*	>95%
89	New Hanover County Schools	Isaac M. Bear Early College High School	>95%	*	>95%
90	New Hanover County Schools	Southeast Area Technical High School	94%	*	>95%

#	PSU Name	School Name	Retention Rate	Number of Dropouts*	Cohort Graduation Rate**
91	New Hanover County Schools	Wilmington Early College High School	92%	*	>95%
92	Northampton County Schools	Northampton County Early College High School	>95%	*	>95%
93	Northeast Regional School - Biotech/Agri	Northeast Regional School of Biotechnology and Agriscience (NERSBA)	>95%	*	70%
94	Onslow County Schools	Onslow Early College High School	>95%	*	>95%
95	Pender County Schools	Pender Early College High School	>95%	*	>95%
96	Person County Schools	Person Early College for Innovation and Leadership	90%	*	>95%
97	Pitt County Schools	Innovation Early College High School	>95%	*	>95%
98	Pitt County Schools	Pitt County Early College High School	>95%	*	>95%

99	Polk County Schools	Polk County Early College High School	90%	*	95%
100	Public Schools of Robeson County	Public Schools of Robeson County Early College High School	94%	*	>95%
101	Randolph County School System	Randolph Early College High School	>95%	*	>95%
102	Richmond County Schools	Richmond County Early College High School	>95%	*	>95%
103	Roanoke Rapids City Schools	Roanoke Rapids Early College High School	93%	*	>95%
104	Rockingham County Schools	Rockingham County Early College High School	95%	*	>95%
105	Rowan-Salisbury Schools	Rowan County Early College High School	>95%	*	>95%
106	Rutherford County Schools	Rutherford Early College High School	>95%	*	>95%

#	PSU Name	School Name	Retention Rate	Number of Dropouts*	Cohort Graduation Rate**
107	Sampson County Schools	Sampson Early College High School	>95%	*	>95%
108	Scotland County Schools	Scotland Early College High School	>95%	*	>95%
109	Stanly County Schools	Stanly Early College High School	>95%	*	>95%
110	Stanly County Schools	Stanly STEM Early College High School	94%	*	>95%
111	Stokes County Schools	Stokes County Early College High School	>95%	*	>95%
112	Surry County Schools	Surry Early College High School of Design	93%	*	>95%
113	Tyrrell County Schools	Columbia Early College High School	92%	*	90%
114	Union County Public Schools	Union County Early College High School	93%	*	>95%

115	Vance County Schools	Vance County Early College High School	89%	*	>95%
116	Wake County Schools	North Wake College and Career Academy	94%	*	>95%
117	Wake County Schools	Vernon Malone College and Career Academy	93%	*	>95%
118	Wake County Schools	Wake Early College of Health and Science	>95%	*	>95%
119	Wake County Schools	Wake Early College of Information and Biotechnologies	>95%	*	>95%
120	Wake County Schools	Wake STEM Early College High School	>95%	*	>95%
121	Wake County Schools	Wake Young Men's Leadership Academy	89%	*	>95%
122	Wake County Schools	Wake Young Women's Leadership Academy	86%	*	>95%
123	Warren County Schools	Warren Early College High School	>95%	*	90%

#	PSU Name	School Name	Retention Rate	Number of Dropouts*	Cohort Graduation Rate**
124	Washington County Schools	Washington County Early College High School	93%	*	91%
125	Watauga County Schools	Watauga Innovation Academy	>95%	*	>95%
126	Wayne County Public Schools	Wayne Early/Middle College High School	91%	*	>95%
127	Wayne County Public Schools	Wayne School of Engineering at Goldsboro High School	93%	*	>95%
128	Weldon City Schools	Roanoke Valley Early College of Health Sciences, Business and Civic Leadership	89%	*	>95%
129	Wilkes County Schools	Wilkes Early College High School	>95%	*	>95%
130	Wilson County Schools	Wilson Academy of Applied Technology	>95%	*	>95%
131	Wilson County Schools	Wilson Early College Academy	>95%	*	>95%

132	Winston Salem / Forsyth County Schools	Early College of Forsyth County	>95%	*	>95%
133	Winston Salem / Forsyth County Schools	Middle College of Forsyth County	>95%	*	>95%
134	Yadkin County Schools	Yadkin Early College High School	>95%	*	>95%

\*One year lag data from the 2023-2024 school year.

In order to protect student/staff privacy, small cell suppression rules have been applied where necessary. Any cell below 10 for students or 5 for staff will be represented by "\*\*". Any percentages over 95% will be shown as >95% and any percentages less than 5 will be shown as <5%.

\*\*Schools with N/A are new CIHS programs and data is not yet available for this measure or the Cohort size is too small to calculate data through the system.

**Table 6: Enrollment in Cooperative Innovative High Schools (CIHS) for the 2024-2025 school year. Each CIHS is permitted by legislation to serve 100 students per grade level (total 500 in grades 9-13). (+) and (-) represent enrollment change from previous academic year.**

Note: Based on the most recent SBE policy, NCDPI will be working with districts who have schools less than 100 students and developing a plan for recruitment.

#	PSU Name	School Name	Total
1	Alamance-Burlington Schools	Alamance-Burlington Early College High School*	245 (+)
2	Alexander County Schools	Alexander Early College High School*	169 (+)
3	Anson County Schools	Anson County Early College High School*	203 (-)
4	Ashe County Schools	Ashe County Early College High School*	141 (+)
5	Asheville City Schools	School of Inquiry and Life Sciences at Asheville	324 (-)
6	Beaufort County Schools	Beaufort County Early College High School*	255 (-)
7	Bertie County Schools	Bertie County Early College High School*	100 (-)

#	PSU Name	School Name	Total
8	Bladen County Schools	Bladen County Early College High School*	121 (-)
9	Brunswick County Schools	Brunswick County Early College High School*	318 (-)
10	Buncombe County Schools	Buncombe County Early College High School*	246 (-)
11	Buncombe County Schools	Buncombe County Center for Career Innovation	36 (-)
12	Buncombe County Schools	Martin L. Nesbitt Jr. Discovery Academy*	363 (-)
13	Burke County Schools	Burke Middle College High School	130 (+)
14	Cabarrus County Schools	Cabarrus Early College of Technology*	231 (+)
15	Cabarrus County Schools	Cabarrus-Kannapolis Early College High School*	234 (-)
16	Cabarrus County Schools	Cabarrus Health Sciences Institute*	155 (+)
17	Caldwell County Schools	Caldwell Applied Sciences Academy	202 (-)
18	Caldwell County Schools	Caldwell Early College High School*	310 (-)
19	Camden County Schools	Camden Early College High School*	120 (-)

20	Catawba County Schools	Challenger Early College High School*	368 (+)
21	Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools	Cato Middle College High School	167 (-)
22	Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools	Charlotte Engineering Early College High School*	308 (+)
23	Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools	Charlotte Teacher Early College High School*	177 (-)
24	Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools	Harper Middle College High School*	106 (-)
25	Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools	Hawthorne Academy of Health Sciences	223 (-)
26	Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools	Levine Middle College High School*	209 (-)
27	Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools	Merancas Middle College High School*	167 (-)
28	Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools	Central Piedmont Early College	271 (+)
29	Chatham County Schools	Chatham County School of Science and Engineering*	104 (+)
30	Cherokee County Schools	Tri-County Early College High School*	141 (+)
31	Cleveland County Schools	Cleveland Early College High School*	212 (-)

#	PSU Name	School Name	Total
32	Columbus County Schools	Columbus Career and College Academy*	218 (-)
33	Craven County Schools	Craven Early College High School*	219 (-)
34	Craven County Schools	Early College EAST High School*	192 (-)
35	Cumberland County Schools	Cross Creek Early College High School*	249 (-)
36	Cumberland County Schools	Cumberland International Early College High School*	237 (-)
37	Cumberland County Schools	Cumberland Polytechnic High School*	312 (+)
38	Currituck County Schools	J.P. Knapp Early College High School*	241 (-)
39	Davidson County Schools	Davidson Early College High School*	137 (-)
40	Davidson County Schools	Yadkin Valley Regional Career Academy*	159 (-)
41	Davie County Schools	Davie County Early College High School*	127 (-)
42	Duplin County Schools	Duplin Early College High School*	189 (-)
43	Durham Public Schools	City of Medicine Academy*	290 (-)

44	Durham Public Schools	Durham School of Technology*	208 (-)
45	Durham Public Schools	Josephine Dobbs Clement Early College High School*	357 (-)
46	Durham Public Schools	Durham Early College of Health Sciences	157 (+)
47	Edgecombe County Public Schools	Edgecombe Early College High School*	161 (-)
48	Edgecombe County Public Schools	EDGE Early College of Health Sciences	71 (+)
49	Elizabeth City-Pasquotank Public Schools	Elizabeth City Pasquotank Early College High School*	103 (-)
50	Franklin County Schools	Franklin County Early College High School*	167 (-)
51	Gaston County Schools	Gaston Early College High School*	225 (-)
52	Gaston County Schools	Gaston Early College of Medical Sciences*	166 (+)
53	Granville County Schools	Granville Early College High School*	205 (-)
54	Greene County Schools	Greene Early College High School*	159 (+)

#	PSU Name	School Name	Total
55	Guilford County Schools	Early College at Guilford College	192 (-)
56	Guilford County Schools	Early/Middle College at GTCC – Greensboro*	152 (-)
57	Guilford County Schools	Early/Middle College at GTCC - High Point*	174 (-)
58	Guilford County Schools	Early/Middle College at GTCC – Jamestown*	236 (-)
59	Guilford County Schools	The A&T Four Middle College at NC A&T*	154 (+)
60	Guilford County Schools	Greensboro College Middle College	103 (+)
61	Guilford County Schools	Middle College at UNCG*	191 (-)
62	Guilford County Schools	STEM Early College at NC A&T*	191 (0)
63	Guilford County Schools	The Academy at Ben L. Smith High School*	245 (+)
64	Guilford County Schools	The Kearns Academy at Central*	104 (-)
65	Halifax County Schools	Halifax County Early College High School*	123 (-)

66	Harnett County Schools	Harnett County Early College High School*	173 (+)
67	Haywood County Schools	Haywood Early College High School*	167 (-)
68	Henderson County Schools	Henderson County Early College High School*	188 (-)
69	Hertford County Schools	Hertford County Early College High School*	197 (+)
70	Hoke County Schools	SandHoke Early College High School*	413 (-)
71	Hyde County Schools	Hyde Academy	36 (+)
72	Iredell-Statesville Schools	Agriculture and Science Early College High School*	222 (-)
73	Iredell-Statesville Schools	Collaborative College for Technology and Leadership*	223 (-)
74	Iredell-Statesville Schools	Crossroads Arts and Sciences Early College High School*	212 (-)
75	Jackson County Public Schools	Blue Ridge Early College High School*	122 (+)
76	Jackson County Public Schools	Jackson County Early College High School*	96 (-)
77	Johnston County Public Schools	Johnston County Early College Academy*	172 (-)

#	PSU Name	School Name	Total
78	Johnston County Public Schools	Johnston County Schools Career Technical Leadership Academy*	184 (-)
79	Lee County Schools	Lee County Early College High School*	256 (-)
80	Lenoir County Public Schools	Lenoir County Early College High School*	237 (+)
81	Macon County Schools	Macon County Early College High School*	152 (+)
82	Madison County Schools	Madison Early College High School*	246 (-)
83	McDowell County Schools	McDowell Academy for Innovation*	151 (+)
84	McDowell County Schools	McDowell Early College High School*	236 (+)
85	Mitchell County Schools	Mayland Early College High School*	113 (-)
86	Montgomery County Schools	Montgomery County Early College High School*	276 (+)
87	Nash County Public Schools	Center for Industry, Technology and Innovation High School*	87 (-)

88	Nash County Public Schools	Nash-Rocky Mount Early College High School*	324 (-)
89	New Hanover County Schools	Isaac M. Bear Early College High School*	258 (+)
90	New Hanover County Schools	Southeast Area Technical High School*	195 (-)
91	New Hanover County Schools	Wilmington Early College High School*	264 (+)
92	Northampton County Schools	Northampton County Early College High School*	143 (+)
93	Northeast Regional School - Biotech/Agri	Northeast Regional School of Biotechnology and Agriscience (NERSBA)*	139 (+)
94	Onslow County Schools	Onslow Early College High School*	186 (-)
95	Pender County Schools	Pender Early College High School*	174 (-)
96	Person County Schools	Person Early College for Innovation and Leadership*	129 (-)
97	Pitt County Schools	Innovation Early College High School*	225 (+)
98	Pitt County Schools	Pitt County Early College High School*	320 (-)
99	Polk County Schools	Polk County Early College High School*	46 (-)
100	Public Schools of Robeson County	Public Schools of Robeson County Early College High School*	265 (+)

#	PSU Name	School Name	Total
101	Randolph County School System	Randolph Early College High School*	348 (-)
102	Richmond County Schools	Richmond County Early College High School*	185 (-)
103	Roanoke Rapids City Schools	Roanoke Rapids Early College High School*	117 (-)
104	Rockingham County Schools	Rockingham County Early College High School*	338 (+)
105	Rowan-Salisbury Schools	Rowan County Early College High School*	226 (-)
106	Rutherford County Schools	Rutherford Early College High School*	207 (+)
107	Sampson County Schools	Sampson Early College High School*	211 (-)
108	Scotland County Schools	Scotland Early College High School*	235 (+)
109	Stanly County Schools	Stanly Early College High School*	180 (-)
110	Stanly County Schools	Stanly STEM Early College High School*	177 (+)
111	Stokes County Schools	Stokes County Early College High School*	156 (+)

112	Surry County Schools	Surry Early College High School of Design*	285 (-)
113	Tyrrell County Schools	Columbia Early College High School*	167 (-)
114	Union County Public Schools	Union County Early College High School*	303 (-)
115	Vance County Schools	Vance County Early College High School*	221 (-)
116	Wake County Schools	North Wake College and Career Academy*	334 (-)
117	Wake County Schools	Vernon Malone College and Career Academy*	335 (-)
118	Wake County Schools	Wake Early College of Health and Science*	317 (-)
119	Wake County Schools	Wake STEM Early College High School*	281 (+)
120	Wake County Schools	Wake Young Men's Leadership Academy*	255 (+)
121	Wake County Schools	Wake Young Women's Leadership Academy*	321 (+)
122	Wake County Schools	Wake Early College of Information and Biotechnologies*	258 (+)
123	Warren County Schools	Warren Early College High School*	119 (-)
124	Washington County Schools	Washington County Early College High School*	68 (-)

#	PSU Name	School Name	Total
125	Watauga County Schools	Watauga Innovation Academy*	271 (-)
126	Wayne County Public Schools	Wayne Early/Middle College High School*	236 (+)
127	Wayne County Public Schools	Wayne School of Engineering at Goldsboro High School*	387 (+)
128	Weldon City Schools	Roanoke Valley Early College of Health Sciences, Business and Civic Leadership*	113 (-)
129	Wilkes County Schools	Wilkes Early College High School*	264 (+)
130	Wilson County Schools	Wilson Academy of Applied Technology*	275 (+)
131	Wilson County Schools	Wilson Early College Academy*	254 (+)
132	Winston Salem / Forsyth County Schools	Early College of Forsyth County*	305 (+)
133	Winston Salem / Forsyth County Schools	Middle College of Forsyth County	118 (+)

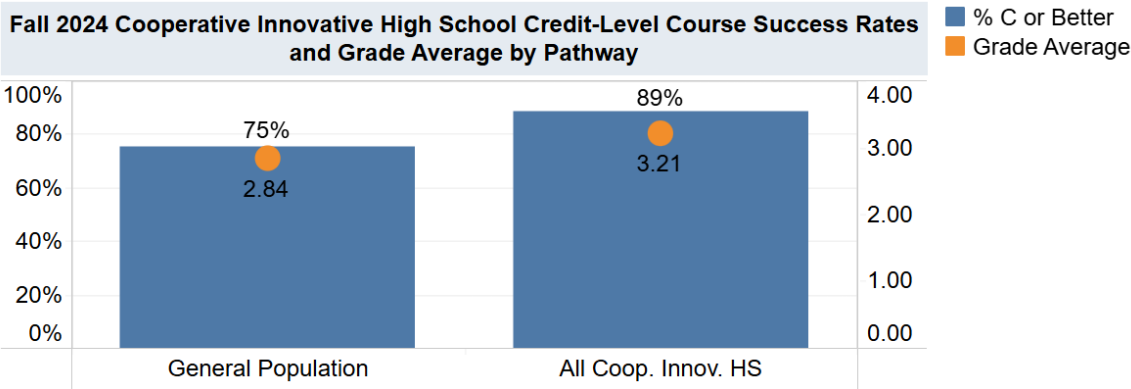
134	Yadkin County Schools	Yadkin Early College High School*	181 (-)
<b>Total Enrolled</b>			<b>27,599</b>
<b>Average Size of a CIHS</b>			<b>206</b>

\*Indicates CIHS that receive CIHS supplemental funding.

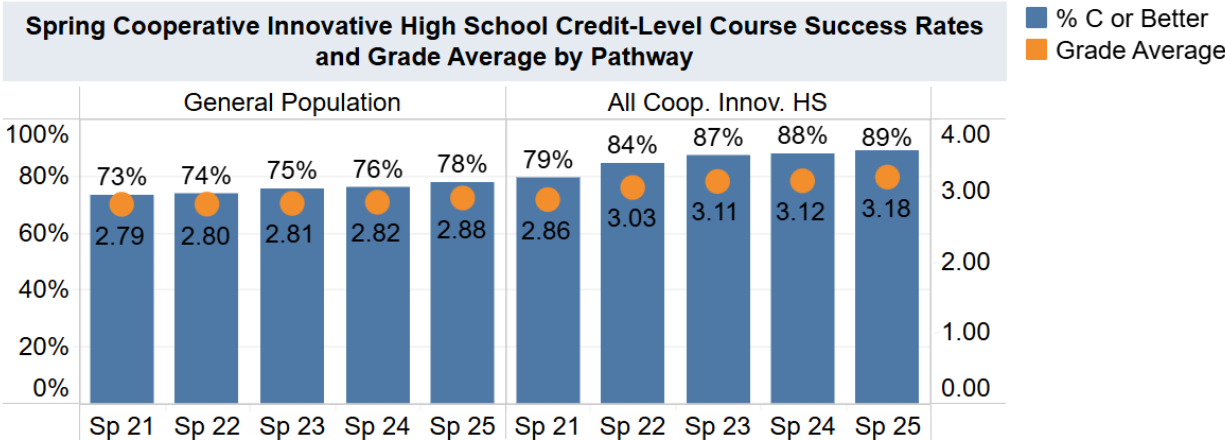
# NORTH CAROLINA COMMUNITY COLLEGE SYSTEM (NCCCS) Cooperative Innovative High School (CIHS) Programs

## Cooperative Innovative High Schools Course Enrollment and Degree Completion

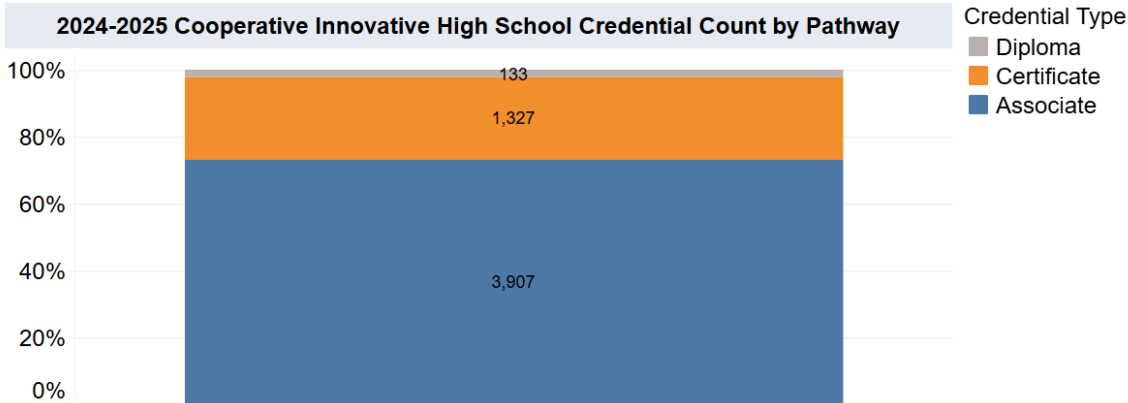
During the 2024-2025 academic year, Cooperative Innovative High School Students enrolled in 121,902 credit-level college courses, an average of 5.3 per term. In Fall 2024, Cooperative Innovative High School students completed 89% of their credit-level courses with a C or better (average GPA of 3.21), whereas the general student population completed 75% of their credit-level courses with a C or better (average GPA of 2.84).



To compare trends in success rates over time, course success rates are provided from Spring 2021 through Spring 2025. The average course success rate saw a steep increase (5%) between Spring 2021 and Spring 2022, and another jump between Spring 2022 and Spring 2023 (3%). Since then, the average success rate and GPA have seen small but steady improvements year-over-year.



During the 2024-2025 academic year, Cooperative Innovative High School students earned a total of 5,367 credentials.



Post-Graduation Employment

The North Carolina Community College System, with the Department of Commerce, reviewed employment status and wage outcomes of Career and College Promise students who graduated high school in 2022. These students were not enrolled in any postsecondary institution in 2023-2024 and had a full-time or part-time employment record in Quarter 1 of 2024. This sample is limited to those students whose social security numbers matched with Department of Commerce records. Students with missing social security numbers or whose employment is not tracked by the NC Department of Commerce (e.g., self-employed, federal employees, or those employed out of state) were not included. Wage records for 1,029 CIHS 2022 graduates were found for the 1st quarter of 2024. The median Quarter 1 wage for this sample was \$6,643.

## UNC SYSTEM Cooperative Innovative High School (CIHS) Programs

Institutions within the University of North Carolina (UNC) system preliminarily admitted **13,715\* Cooperative and Innovative High School students for Fall 2025 based on preliminary results. UNC system admissions of CIHS students increased by 1,021 (8%) of students admitted for Fall 2024.** Refer to table 6 for enrollment of Cooperative Innovative High School students. A breakdown by campus is indicated in the following table.

\*Note: Students may apply and be admitted to multiple UNC Institutions.

**Table 7: CIHS student admissions to UNC System schools, Fall 2025**

UNC Institution	Number of CIHS students admitted to UNC Institutions, Fall 2025 (As of 10/28/2025**)
Appalachian State University	1,204
East Carolina University	1,771
Elizabeth City State University	364
Fayetteville State University	276
North Carolina A&T State University	1,033
North Carolina Central University	705
North Carolina State University	1,000
University of North Carolina - Asheville	746
University of North Carolina – Chapel Hill	613
University of North Carolina – Charlotte	1,730
University of North Carolina – Greensboro	1,367
University of North Carolina – Pembroke	645
University of North Carolina – Wilmington	763
University of North Carolina – School of the Arts	<10
Western Carolina University	946
Winston-Salem State University	549
<b>UNC Total</b>	<b>13,715</b>

\*\*Neither IPEDS Admissions nor the Freshmen Admissions and Performance dashboard have yet been finalized for the current year, this data should be considered preliminary. Refer to the UNC System [Stats, Data, & Reports](#) page for official results.

## NC INDEPENDENT COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES Cooperative Innovative High School (CIHS) Programs

Institutions within the NC Independent Colleges and Universities system admitted **3,932 Cooperative and Innovative High School students for Fall 2025. This was an increase of 839 (27%) students admitted from Fall 2024.** Note: This year’s report includes data from all independent colleges and universities, which was not the case for last year’s report – ten independent colleges or universities did not submit data in time to be included in last year’s report. A breakdown by campus is indicated in the following table. Campuses in bold house a CIHS program.

\*Note: Students may apply and be admitted to multiple NCICU Institutions.

**Table 8: CHIS student admissions to NCICU schools, Fall 2025**

<b>NCICU Institution</b>	<b>Number of CIHS students admitted to NCICU Institutions, Fall 2025**</b>
Barton College	42
Belmont Abbey College	<10
Bennett College	<10
Brevard College	31
<b>Cabarrus College of Health Sciences</b>	146
Campbell University	603
Catawba College	211
Chowan University	101
Davidson College	<10
Duke University	18
Elon University	251
Gardner-Webb University	10
<b>Greensboro College</b>	199
<b>Guilford College</b>	125
High Point University	27
Johnson C. Smith University	18
Lees-McRae College	129
Lenoir-Rhyne University	287
Livingstone College	*
Louisburg College	29

<b>NCICU Institution</b>	<b>Number of CIHS students admitted to NCICU Institutions, Fall 2025**</b>
Mars Hill University	<10
Meredith College	141
Methodist University	201
Mid-Atlantic Christian University	<10
Montreat College	<10
N. C. Wesleyan College	14
Pfeiffer University	136
Queens University of Charlotte	214
St. Andrews University	*
Saint Augustine's University	*
Salem College	*
<b>Shaw University</b>	85
University of Mount Olive	82
Wake Forest University	58
Warren Wilson College	21
William Peace University	66
Wingate University	658
<b>NCICU Total</b>	<b>3,932</b>

\*\*In accordance with FERPA guidelines, individual student counts less than 10 are displayed as <10, individual counts of zero are denoted with an \*. Data not available are denoted with an \*\*.

# **COOPERATIVE INNOVATIVE HIGH SCHOOL AND CAREER AND COLLEGE PROMISE PROGRAMS**

## **CIHS Special Recognitions**

- 2025 Inaugural Blue Ribbon School: Henderson Early College
- 2025 Craven County Schools Principal of the Year: Dr. Marlow Artis, Craven Early College
- 2025 Yadkin County Schools Principal of the Year: Chris Lyon, Yadkin Early College
- 2025 National History Teacher of the Year: Valencia Abbot, Rockingham Early College

## **2025 CIHS and CCP Pathways Success Stories from across North Carolina**

Based on CIHS 2024-2025 Annual Reports submitted by schools and CCP Pathways stories shared with the NC Community College System.

## **CIHS Success Stories**

### **Agriculture and Science Early College. Iredell-Statesville Schools**

The Agriculture and Science Early College had the largest graduating class for the 2024-2025 school year! Our school has worked hard from advisors to teachers to the college to help our students develop their career goals and paths to go into the workforce or to college. We had 31 students out of a class of 54 who graduated in four years with a total of 62 graduates including 4th and 5th year students.

We are proud that 45 students selected college, and among the 45 students, we had just over \$3,000,000 in scholarships offered. This is a huge accomplishment for our students, and we are extremely proud of our school community!

### **Anson Early College, Anson County Schools**

We have several students at Anson County Early College that come from difficult backgrounds and face many hardships. Often times our school is their safe place. One particular student worked very hard, stayed her Super Senior year and completed her high school diploma and associate degree. She is currently at UNC-Charlotte completing her four-year degree in accounting. The road to getting here was not easy for this student.

For at least a year this student and her mother lived out of the mother's car. Even during this time, the student still came to school consistently and excelled in her college classes and high school classes. She was also heavily involved in our band program. She attended all school events and functions and never once complained. Thankfully, she formed a lasting relationship with our school counselor, and she assisted this student with college applications, scholarships, financial aid, and other resources. Many of her teachers did not know the student was

homeless. The student preferred privacy and did not want anyone to feel sorry for her. Working with the school counselor, this student was able to go to college and currently lives on campus. Our school counselor still checks on her regularly. We are proud that this student is thriving at UNC-Charlotte and is using this opportunity to create a brighter future for herself.

### **Ashe Early College, Ashe County Schools**

During the 2024–2025 school year, Ashe Early College experienced 47 days without in-person instruction: 31 full days of no school, 16 remote learning days, and an additional 11 two-hour delays, 5 one-hour delays, and 1 three-hour delay. Despite these disruptions, our school remained dedicated to student well-being, connection, and living out core values.

One example of this commitment was the Birthday Express initiative, created during the Hurricane Helene closure. Recognizing the impact of prolonged school interruptions on Ashe County’s youngest learners, the Ashe Early College team organized and delivered Birthday Bags to each of the 61 PreK–3rd grade students who celebrated birthdays during the closure. Each bag included thoughtful and comforting items—a stuffed animal, blanket, coloring book, crayons, a game, playdough, and candy—designed to bring joy and a sense of normalcy during uncertain times.

### **Blue Ridge Early College, Jackson County Schools**

At Blue Ridge Early College, we are proud to celebrate students who embody what is possible when determination meets opportunity. This student dedicated hundreds of hours to volunteering at area churches, interpreting for families in need, and providing tutoring support to non-English-speaking classmates.

They stepped up during Hurricane Helene relief efforts, packaging and delivering food and supplies to impacted families. Their bilingual skills, combined with genuine care for others, have made them a trusted leader and advocate both in the school and wider community.

As a first-generation college student, this young leader will continue their journey at a Division I university in North Carolina. Their achievement is not only the result of their own drive and resilience but also a reflection of the collective effort of our faculty and staff.

### **Brunswick Early College, Brunswick County Schools**

At Brunswick County Early College, we see how the CIHS model transforms lives. One of our students, a first-generation college learner who once described himself as “average,” learned through hard work and perseverance to envision a different future. With a dream of entering the medical field, he embraced the challenge of rigorous coursework and the support of our CIHS community.

His leadership grew alongside his academics. As President of the Beta Club, he promised to be “the best Beta President we’ve ever had”— and fulfilled that vision. He ensured important

traditions like Senior Sunrise and Senior Sunset continued, and he led the most successful fundraiser in our school's history by organizing and hosting a school-wide bingo night. With a microphone in hand, he kept the event fun, well-paced, and engaging for all.

His growth, resilience, and service culminated in a tremendous honor: becoming one of our first students to receive the prestigious Goodnight Fellows Scholarship from NC State University. His journey from "average" to accomplished leader reflects the heart of CIHS—opening doors, shaping futures, and proving that success is possible when purpose meets opportunity.

### **Burke Middle College, Burke County Schools**

When this student first came to Burke Middle College, she was shy, somewhat self-conscious, and hesitant to talk in class. As the year progressed, her teachers saw what a creative and enthusiastic student she was and encouraged her to get involved in clubs and class discussions. She slowly began to gain confidence and began to occasionally contribute to small group discussions. When she found her classmates validated her contributions and insights, she began to add to whole group discussions.

The small class size, close relationships with her teachers, and the warmth and acceptance of her peer group allowed this student to blossom. By senior year, she was setting an example for new students as the yearbook editor. Her encouragement, enthusiasm, and friendly leadership style made the yearbook team a huge success, and her contributions in the classroom were also valued. By creating a safe space for all students to feel comfortable and valued, BMC allowed her to recognize and capitalize on her potential and become a strong leader. She's now putting those skills to use in the university setting and helping others recognize their potential as she continues to grow.

### **Caldwell Applied Sciences Academy, Caldwell County Schools**

In 2024, Caldwell Applied Sciences Academy SkillsUSA chapter proudly took 17 students to the state competition, where they competed in both leadership and career-specific clusters.

Throughout the year, our students dedicated themselves to strengthening our chapter, and their hard work paid off – we achieved Chapter of Excellence Silver Level in our very first attempt!

At the state level, five of our competitors earned first place finishes, advancing to the National Leadership and Skills Conference in Atlanta, with impressive results:

- 5th in the Nation, Web Design
- 8th in the Nation, Health Portfolio
- 18th in the Nation, Electronic Technology

In addition, one student proudly earned a Customer Service Certification, further highlighting the career-readiness focus of SkillsUSA.

### **CATO Middle College, Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools**

One of our recent graduates is a student at Dartmouth University. His journey is a powerful example of what our school model can achieve. He arrived at Cato Middle College High School with a dream of attending a top university and through our collective effort, especially his, we bridged the gap between high school and college, allowing him to successfully practice being a university student in a supportive honors level environment.

Through our school's small group and individual tutoring as well as smaller class sizes, this student learned to "uncover solutions" rather than just "cover material," a key skill for 21st-century learning. He also took a nearly full college course load most semesters while still in high school, which helped him manage the pace and workload of a university. Our college transition programs like ACT prep, financial aid programming and college visits, including one with a representative from Dartmouth University, also helped him see himself succeeding in that environment.

His success is a source of pride for our entire school. He is a testament to our core belief that every student is uniquely capable and deserves an engaging and challenging educational experience. His story reinforces our mission to cultivate excellence and prepare all our students for endless possibilities.

### **Central Piedmont Early College, Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools**

In just two short years, Central Piedmont Early College (CPEC) has established itself as a model of academic excellence and innovation within Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools. From its inception, CPEC has pursued a bold mission: to provide students with access to rigorous high school and college-level coursework while fostering leadership, resilience, and equity. That vision has quickly become a reality. In its first two years, CPEC earned an "A" School Performance Grade and exceeded growth expectations with an overall growth index of 4.31, placing it among the top-performing schools in the state.

Beyond test scores, CPEC has built a thriving culture of opportunity and community. Through partnerships with Opportunity College and Wells Fargo, juniors and seniors are now engaged in paid internships that connect classroom learning with career pathways. The school has launched new traditions—such as Leadership Academies, Student Government elections, and the creation of a diverse set of student clubs—that have given every student a voice and a place to belong. These accomplishments in just two years demonstrate CPEC's unwavering commitment to student success and its growing impact as a leader in early college education.

### **Collaborative College for Technology and Leadership, Iredell Statesville Schools**

This year we are highlighting a student who joined CCTL as a freshman and graduated with his high school diploma and associate degree. He was a first-generation college student that began his early college journey facing significant emotional challenges. Navigating struggles with emotional dysregulation was by far the most challenging hurdle for this student. He had limited parental support and lived with his grandmother on and off.

Early in his high school tenure, he had difficulty connecting with peers. Through the support of school personnel and mentorship from key teachers, along with campus involvement, he transformed these obstacles into opportunities, eventually emerging as a respected student leader. He repaired his peer relationships and sharpened his leadership skills; he participated in several school clubs and ultimately held leadership positions in two academic clubs.

Our student's Portrait of a Graduate project began as community service to a local community member who was working toward preserving and publicly displaying local history. This blossomed into a partnership with the local historian as our student took the lead on a large-scale marketing and social media management initiative. This connection to history and his love of history further inspired him to publish as a freelance historical writer for a local newspaper.

Our student's former low-level part-time employment transitioned to include social media and marketing management, plus data-driven assistant management responsibilities in a local small family-owned restaurant. In his final year of high school, he applied for full-time employment in a large-scale franchised restaurant. He was quickly noticed by management for his leadership abilities and his continuous improvement influence after analyzing operational data and demonstrating how they could improve by focusing on one element at a time. His impact resulted in him becoming a trainer locally, and then regionally in a new, full time position.

Today, this student is known not only for his academic achievements but also for his leadership, entrepreneurial drive, and ability to uplift others facing similar barriers. Ultimately, his CCTL career has led him to pursue business management at his university to further hone his business acumen.

### **EDGE Academy of Health Sciences, Edgecombe County Public Schools**

This year, our staff came together in a way that really made a difference. By staying focused on our shared goals, we were able to raise our school performance grade from a D to a B and exceed growth for the second year in a row. Even better, every content area showed real gains in proficiency. These results aren't just numbers—they're a reflection of the dedication and hard work of our teachers and students. Together, we're proving what's possible when a school community works together as one.

### **Edgecombe Early College, Edgecombe County Schools**

Matt Bristow-Smith, Principal of Edgecombe Early College, recently shared a story with us in person that we are pleased to include here. Many years ago, as a young English teacher with Edgecombe County Schools, he taught a student who gave birth to her first child while in high school. Mr. Bristow-Smith has continued to keep up with this former student through the years.

About ten years ago, this first child attended Edgecombe Early College and went on to graduate with a full scholarship to East Carolina University. This spring, his younger brother will graduate from Edgecombe Early College as a recipient of a Quest Bridge full scholarship to attend Stanford University. This young man will be the first student in the history of Edgecombe

County to be accepted to Stanford University. He will be the second graduate of Edgecombe Early College to attend an Ivy League university. This remarkable achievement is the culmination of a thirty-year legacy of hard work, dedication and success for this family and for Edgecombe Early College.

### **Gaston Early College of Medical Sciences, Gaston County Schools**

Gaston Early College of Medical Sciences is proud to highlight a graduate from the class of 2025 who took advantage of all opportunities available to her through our school and partnership with Gaston College.

This student graduated from the Associate of General Education Nursing pathway with the associate in general education and her high school diploma. She completed Certified Nurse Aide I through Gaston College the summer after 11th grade and was immediately hired after her name was added to the North Carolina CNA registry. Through her senior year, she worked as an emergency room CNA at CaroMont Regional Medical Center- Mount Holly. Providing direct patient care solidified this student's desire to continue on the nursing pathway by applying to Gaston College's Registered Nursing associate program. The student was offered direct admission as a result of exceeding all admission requirements, completing the Associate of General Education Nursing, and being a graduate of Gaston Early College of Medical Sciences. The student is currently enrolled in the Registered Nursing program and continuing to work as a CNA. She shared that Gaston Early College and Gaston College prepared her for nursing school through rigorous coursework and a supportive environment while in high school. She is excited to continue her nursing education and is an example of how CIHS are preparing students for their future careers.

### **Henderson Early College, Henderson County Public Schools**

This is a bittersweet success story, but it demonstrates the maturity, resilience and kindness of the students who attend Henderson County Early College. Last spring, one of our students passed away unexpectedly, at the age of 17. She was a senior, a bright young lady and a wonderful human being. We announced her passing to the student body, and our students rightfully took the news very hard. The next few weeks were difficult, with many students choosing to seek the services of the extra counseling staff our district provided for us.

It is difficult to find a silver lining when someone so young and full of promise passes away, but our HCEC students channeled their grief in a number of beautiful ways. They created memorials around the school, wrote songs about the friend they lost, led prayer circles, planned a memorial garden, and pulled together as a school family to support one another. When the student's family hosted her memorial service several weeks after her passing, many of our students and staff attended. The family encouraged our students to stand at the front of the outdoor chapel and share stories and reflections about their friend. In listening to our students speak through their grief, I was in awe of their composure, their compassion and their wonderful insights. The

family was extremely appreciative, and our staff couldn't have been more proud.

### **Lee Early College, Lee County Schools**

The class of 2025 earned more than 6 million dollars in scholarships! This included one student who received a full ride academic scholarship to Columbia University. We have seen an increase in the past three years of students attending universities out of state. This means that our students are quite literally going farther than they've ever gone before! The class of 2025 also included our first student to be accepted to Howard University, the #1 HBCU in the country!

### **Madison Early College, Madison County Schools**

One of our students is a prime example of how Cooperative Innovative High Schools can help students reach for their dreams in spite of any barriers they may encounter. Both of his parents worked at Hot Springs Spa & Resort when Hurricane Helene devastated our area. While many of our students were affected, this student's life was changed in the extreme. Both parents and the student in question lost their jobs in the aftermath until the spa and surrounding businesses reopened months later. In spite of that, he continued to attend school and volunteer at a high capacity through it all. He earned his high school diploma with high honors as well as his associate in arts degree and was a member of the National Honor Society. This student is now enrolled and thriving at UNC Charlotte.

### **Middle College at GTCC High Point**

One of our students spends a lot of time on the family's desktop playing Earth Bound, or Sonic the Hedgehog, or watching one of his favorite shows on YouTube. Ever curious about technology, he'd ask everyone in his house how the desktop worked. They didn't know. They simply knew the desktop worked. That's it.

"Why am I using something I don't understand?" he'd often ask himself.

Only when he started his freshman year at Middle College at GTCC-High Point did he start to understand. As he sat in "Freshman Focus," a required class his first semester, his teacher had everyone watch a video about a student who loved to create computer apps. Sitting in the back of class, he tuned in right away. After class, he walked into the hallway and saw courses he could take, courses like computer programming and computer fundamentals.

He knew then that an answer he longed to discover was within reach. He later found out how his family's desktop worked because of what he learned in and around what he and other students call H5, a classroom building on the GTCC campus in High Point. His curiosity will now lead to a career.

### **Montgomery Early College, Montgomery County Schools**

When one of our students arrived at our early college program, he was content to remain in the background. He showed little desire to extend himself beyond what was required. His focus was

solely on meeting expectations and maintaining satisfactory progress. Because we sometimes see students who lack motivation, Montgomery County Early College offers a variety of symposium sessions on a range of topics. We hope that we can support the development of critical thinking skills and provide information on enrichment activities.

This student attended a symposium session on pre-college programs and opportunities. The presentation was led by two of his classroom teachers. Following the session, he had a wealth of questions. For several days following the symposium, he asked for details and clarification. His entire outlook was changed. His curiosity was piqued, and he became intentional in his preparations for college. He took initiative and sought opportunity after opportunity, broadening his educational horizons and exploring ideas with zeal. He applied himself to his studies, earning the best grades possible. The contrast between his early attitude and his later drive was impressive. His willingness to challenge himself led to his admission to Wake Forest University, where he now studies on a full scholarship. His phoenix-like trajectory is one of our greatest successes.

### **Rockingham Early College, Rockingham County Schools**

Innovative teaching and learning is about finding fresh and effective ways to engage students, enhance their understanding, and prepare them for the challenges of the 21st century. English teachers at Rockingham Early College have implemented a pointless grading system where the focus is shifted from a grade to student-initiated learning, ownership, and self-advocacy.

Authentic learning experiences are also exemplified in the history department. For over a decade, Mrs. Valencia Abbott has provided students with opportunities to conduct real world research and study. Her students' accomplishments include making it to the second round for scholarships from Leadership Enterprise for a Diverse America (LEDA), which empowers young leaders from under-resourced backgrounds to create a more inclusive and equitable country, and the JFK Profile in Courage Essay Contest. Students have also received Lincoln Forum Student Scholarships, a program which recognizes high school students who have demonstrated academic and extracurricular excellence.

Most recently, one current student was awarded the Gilder Lehrman-National History Academy Scholarship. In cooperation with the Library of Congress, our students have conducted oral histories that will be part of the archives located at the Museum and Artifacts of Rockingham County, with the potential to be included in the NC State Archives. Students this school year are researching the lives of WWII veterans, which has led to an invitation to be a part of the exhibit for the Library of Congress. The students' time and talent have been instrumental in getting our local history honored with two historical markers and also being the subject of a Discovery Education video titled, *The Voices of the Civil Rights Movement: In the Classroom, Expert Class*.

Mrs. Valencia Abbot has been honored with the recognized as the 2025 National History Teacher of the year by the Gilder Institute of American History.

### **STEM at A&T Early College, Guilford County Schools**

There is a quote by Martin Luther King Jr. that states “Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere.” This quote is why I chose to write about one of our seniors at the STEM Early College at NC A&T. This student has found inspiration in this quote, not only for his extracurricular activities, but his career aspirations as well.

This student has served on both the Superintendent Advisory Council and the Principal’s Advisory Council. As a member, shares his perspective and insight on school policies, programs, and initiatives. He works hard to advocate for students’ resources and programs that will support student success and well-being. He also serves as the Vice President of the NC Child Youth Advocacy Council, where he supports legislative initiatives regarding North Carolina high school students’ mental health.

To prepare for his future career, this young man actively participates in STEM’s Mock Trial team. He competes as one of the team’s defense attorneys, and he won the award for Best Attorney in the North Carolina Mock Trial Program Regional Final Round. In the future, he plans to major in criminal justice and become a criminal defense attorney. His career goal is to advocate for underrepresented groups and be a role model in a field that has a low percentage of minority lawyers. We are profoundly proud of all his accomplishments and eagerly anticipate the remarkable achievements he will undoubtedly attain in the future.

### **Vernon Malone College and Career Academy, Wake County Public Schools**

One of our recent graduates is a remarkable individual whose resilience, determination, and academic achievements have set her apart as a truly inspiring student. Despite facing significant personal challenges, including illness and family responsibilities, she has excelled academically, earning a 4.17 GPA and an impressive ACT score of 34. Her leadership shines through as president of the Race Car Club’s marketing department, a SkillsUSA award-winner, and volleyball team captain. This fall, she will attend Smith College in Northampton, MA, as a recipient of the Quest Bridge Match Scholarship, covering full tuition for four years, to pursue her dreams of a career in electrical engineering.

### **Wilmington Early College, New Hanover County Schools**

This is one of many inspiring success stories at Wilmington Early College High School that highlights how personalized student support helps shape Future Ready Graduates.

Four years ago, a young man stepped off the bus as an incoming freshman at WECHS. Quiet and shy, he looked much younger than his age. Yet from the very beginning, it was clear he was respectful, kind, and carried a big heart.

He arrived with doubts about whether he could succeed at WECHS. From the start, he faced numerous challenges: making new friends, adapting to a rigorous academic workload, and learning to advocate for himself. At home, he endured profound hardships, the loss of a beloved grandparent who had been his biggest cheerleader and the heavy responsibility of making adult

decisions without fully relying on his parents. Many times, he considered leaving, convinced the work was too difficult and beyond his reach.

But through personalized student support tailored to his needs—academic mentoring, counseling, a caring school environment, and the strong community formed through the WECHS and CFCC (CIHS) partnership—he found the guidance and encouragement necessary to persevere. At WECHS, he truly found a village: a network of teachers, counselors, and peers dedicated to helping him succeed.

With each passing year, we witnessed his remarkable growth. His confidence blossomed as he navigated academic challenges and developed essential skills that prepared him not only to graduate but to thrive in life beyond high school. His journey at WECHS shaped him into a future-ready graduate—equipped with resilience, self-advocacy, and the determination to achieve his goals.

Today, he moves forward with maturity, strength, and pride, having achieved one of his most important goals: graduating from high school. He is a proud member of the Wilmington Early College High School Class of May 2025 and is now gainfully employed, ready to take on the next chapter of his life with the skills and confidence WECHS helped him build.

### **Yadkin Valley Regional Career Academy**

This is an excerpted letter of recommendation our counselor wrote for a student.

I met this student in the fall of 2020 when schools were still trying to navigate the murky and unsettled pandemic waters. At Yadkin Valley Regional Career Academy, a cooperative and innovative high school, we learn through Project-Based/Inquiry-Based Learning. Our students collaborate and work in groups. They know how to give and receive constructive criticism that is kind, helpful, and specific. This proved to be challenging with days in and out of school, social distancing, and students being home and quarantined. This student already had a tumultuous middle school experience when her world was rocked by the separation and divorce of her guardians and her grandparents. They had obtained custody in 2006 and she had always referred to them as "mom" and "dad."

During 2020, she would come to school when she had to, but was quiet and wanted to hide within the shadows. She was hesitant to trust. What I quickly deduced through observation was that she was innately curious and wanted to learn as much as she possibly could. Her desire for knowledge was insatiable. Once she had gained confidence in herself, she started sharing, and her trust in her educational environment grew exponentially. She started excelling. Now her peers clamor to be with her in a group because they know she can assess a situation and devise a course of action. She is astute and motivated to get the task at hand accomplished. She is not one to shirk responsibilities and can be counted on to jump to the aid of others.

During her sophomore year, this student applied for and earned a leadership role in the Yadkin Valley Student Ambassadors. She has been an integral part of the program ever since. As an ambassador, she is responsible for various tasks, including assisting teachers during our

exhibition nights, leading student panels, and giving tours. Her dedication to these responsibilities is unwavering.

Because of the size of our Cooperative and Innovative High School, it is not uncommon for me to see students in the halls, their classrooms, or in my office daily. This student has always been one to pop in to run an idea by me, tell me something she has recently learned, or just check in. She and I would meet daily. My own mother had been diagnosed with cancer and was receiving treatments. She and I talked a lot about letting go of things we had absolutely no control over. We talked often about what it means to allow those you love to die with dignity. We spoke about honoring those we love with our actions.

This student's "mom" (her non-biological grandmother and only legal guardian) was diagnosed with cancer in August 2022. "Mom" went to Pennsylvania to reside and receive medical treatment. With no other legal guardian available, this student stayed with Mom's oldest daughter to remain in school and complete her high school requirements and her "Super Senior"/5th year. She graduated with several certificates and a diploma in Criminal Justice in May 2025. She is now working on finishing her Associate of Arts. Her "Mom" passed away in May 2023. This young lady could have chosen to be bitter; however, she has shown remarkable resilience, remaining steadfast and focused on her goals. Her trustworthiness is unquestionable, and her character is one of integrity. She has maintained steady part-time employment and was ranked 1st in her graduating class, a testament to her academic success.

I unequivocally believe that she will do great things with her life. Her resilience, academic success, and unwavering integrity indicate her potential. I am confident that her future is bright, and I look forward to seeing what she will achieve.

## **CCP Pathways Success Stories**

### **Alamance Community College: Career and Technical Education Pathway (Welding)**

During his senior year of high school, this student attended Eastern Alamance High School and graduated in June 2025. He took the college's welding courses at a neighboring high school in both the fall and spring semesters, completing four of the five courses in the welding pathway. With support from his instructor, he finished the final pathway course during the summer after his senior year. According to his counselor, this young man comes from a low-income household, and his mother has been a strong advocate for his education. He is now enrolled in the welding associate in applied science degree program this fall and is already registered for spring classes. He currently has a 4.0 GPA and has completed 21 credits.

The welding program offered at Graham High School is a special cohort developed in partnership with Alamance-Burlington Public Schools (ABSS). It is open to students from all ABSS high schools, with transportation provided for those who need it. Beginning in the 2025–26 school year, the course offerings were adjusted so that all five welding pathway courses are

taught. The pathway now aligns directly with a certificate, allowing some students who enroll in both semesters to complete the certificate in just one year.

### **Alamance Community College: Career and Technical Education Pathway (Emergency Medical Services)**

A Southern Alamance High student who graduated in June 2025 participated in public safety classes at the high school level and then started the CCP program in his junior year in the Fire Protection pathway. His counselor stated that he struggled in school, and they worked to find ways to keep him engaged because they were concerned he would not make it through. During the spring of his senior year, he enrolled in EMS-110 within the Emergency Medical Science pathway, where he earned his EMT licensure. He graduated in June and was just hired as a full-time employee with the Elon Fire Department. He is currently at the Fire Academy. A dedicated section of EMS-110 was created for CCP students only, with priority registration going to students in Alamance-Burlington Public Schools (ABSS). It is taught on the Alamance Community College campus but follows ABSS's calendar.

### **Brunswick Community College: Career and Technical Education Pathway (HVAC)**

This school year, an 11th-grade student met with our NC Career Coach to explore possible career paths. Expressing interest in HVAC programs, the student worried that his 2.3 GPA might hold him back. Thankfully, that wasn't the case! CCP permits students to enroll in Career and Technical Education pathways with a recommendation letter, despite not having satisfactory test scores or a satisfactory high school grade point average. This unique enrollment option supports several students, and with encouragement and support, he was recommended for and enrolled in our daytime HVAC I course in Fall 2024 as a 12th grader.

Though he faced challenges along the way, he never gave up. With help from his instructor, classmates, and online resources, he grew more confident and discovered a true passion for the field. Motivated by his success, he continued into HVAC II during the spring semester of his senior year.

By the time he graduated, he had not only completed the course but also accepted a position with a respected local HVAC company in Brunswick County. This student's hard work and perseverance earned him the Career and College Promise CWE Student Success Award for 2025. Surrounded by his proud family at the award ceremony, their smiles and hugs said it all. His mother later shared that the HVAC program "truly changed his life." This story reflects the spirit of Brunswick Community College's CCP program of helping students turn potential into purpose and dreams into real-world success.

## **Cape Fear Community College: Career and Technical Education (Health Sciences)**

One recent graduate started at Cape Fear Community College as a dually enrolled high school student through the CCP program. After graduating high school, she discovered the Medical Assisting program at CFCC and realized it was the perfect fit for her future. “I started as a CCP student, but after hearing about the Medical Assisting program, I knew that this could either be a full-time career or a great foundation if I wanted to go further.” With a projected 15% job growth from 2023 to 2033, medical assistants fill critical roles in physicians’ offices, hospitals, outpatient clinics, and other healthcare facilities.

She was especially interested in the hands-on experience and the wide range of skills the program teaches. “I loved that I could accomplish so many different tasks while being in one program. We cover such a wide variety of topics and skills. From lab tests and phlebotomy to being interactive with the patient and taking vital signs.”

She is grateful for the incredible support system within the program. **“I absolutely love my instructors and the hands-on practice I get in the lab. They bring out the best in me. They make up real life scenarios that can happen which help us put our skills and minds to work. Preparing for the ‘what-ifs’ is essential in the real world, and practice is key.”** “The instructors ensure we know what we’re doing before we even consider picking up an instrument. They know if we are ready before we do!”

This young lady credits instructors for leaving a lasting impact on her education. “They encourage us to look at different perspectives and help us understand the real-life impact of doing our jobs right. The participation from every classmate and the experiences we get in the lab are more than preparing us for the next lesson; it is preparing us for our real-world jobs!”

After getting her diploma in medical assisting, she plans to continue her education and earn an associate degree in the field to keep her options open for further growth in the healthcare field. “I may continue my education, but even if I choose to stay with my associate degree, I will have a pretty cool job.”

She also emphasized the importance of using the resources available to CFCC students. “Use your resources! I cannot stress this enough! If you are struggling or even think you could use more explanation on something, tell your professor, or go to the learning lab. Use the resources that are given to you!”

## **Cape Fear Community College: College Transfer Pathways (Business)**

A CCP student at Cape Fear Community College has turned his passion for surfing into an international success story. Growing up immersed in his father’s Indo Jax® Surf School, known

worldwide for its outreach to children with special needs and at-risk youth, this student developed both a love for the ocean and a strong sense of purpose. He has been able to balance his academic goals with his professional surfing career. The flexibility of Cape Fear's program has allowed him to earn college credit while training and competing at the highest levels of the sport. Now competing in the World Surf League, this young man continues to exemplify the best of what North Carolina students can achieve when opportunity meets determination. Originally enrolled in a New Hanover County public high school before transitioning to homeschool, he found the CCP program offered the perfect balance of academic rigor and flexibility. The ability to take college courses allowed him to experience the challenges of higher education while maintaining a schedule that supported his training and travel for surfing competitions.

This student graduates this year and plans to enroll at either UNC Chapel Hill or NC State University. In addition to his success in surfing, he has developed a strong interest in finance and investments. He intends to major in finance and pursue a career in financial advising and wealth management, while continuing to compete internationally. This student's story illustrates how the CCP program empowers students to follow their passions while building a solid educational and professional foundation for the future.

### **Craven Community College: College Transfer Pathways (Human Services)**

A student from New Bern Christian Academy set her sights on a future career as an Occupational Therapist and has taken impressive steps toward achieving that goal. Throughout high school, she challenged herself with a rigorous dual enrollment schedule, demonstrating both academic drive and determination. As a result of her hard work, this student will finish the associate in science pathway and graduate with two associate degrees, having focused primarily on completing the associate in science. After graduation, she plans to attend UNC-Chapel Hill, where she will major in Human Development and Family Sciences. She credits her success and confidence in taking this next step to the strong foundation and preparation she gained with the help of the CCP program.

### **Davidson-Davie Community College: Career and Technical Education Pathway (Health Sciences)**

A North Davidson High School graduate began taking CCP courses through Davidson-Davie Community College during her junior year. By the fall of her senior year, she enrolled in the nurse aide course and successfully earned her nurse aide certification while still in high school.

This student's dedication and hard work allowed her to graduate with both her high school diploma and an associate in arts degree. Her CCP experience played a significant role in

helping her earn a full-tuition scholarship to Campbell University, where she is currently attending. Because all her college credits transferred, she is on track to complete her Bachelor of Science in Nursing in just three years. She plans to apply to Campbell's Nursing program this spring and begin the program in the fall.

After earning her nurse aide certification, this student gained valuable hands-on experience by working with families who needed in-home care for elderly relatives. Soon after, she was offered a position at Get Up and Glo Medspa in Thomasville. This opportunity has allowed her to observe a wide range of medical aesthetic procedures while developing strong customer service, organizational, and clinical support skills.

Through this experience, she discovered a passion for medical aesthetics and now hopes to become a nurse practitioner so she can perform similar procedures in the future. She continues to work at the Medspa during weekends and college breaks and is grateful for the foundation the CCP program provided. She recently shared that she is "so glad to have taken advantage of these opportunities through Davidson-Davie Community College" and credits the CCP program for helping her clarify her career goals and build the confidence to pursue them.

### **James Sprunt Community College: College Transfer Pathways (Health Sciences)**

Our college's star CCP student is a senior at East Duplin High School, and an outstanding example of perseverance and purpose. She is enrolled in the College Transfer Pathway with a focus on the associate degree in nursing. Although she does not plan to become a nurse, she is taking full advantage of the opportunity to complete several prerequisite courses that will increase her chances of being accepted into a Dental Hygiene program.

This student's academic achievements are even more inspiring when you learn about her personal journey. She has faced tremendous loss, having lost both of her parents within just four years. Despite these hardships, this student continues to excel academically and personally, maintaining a positive attitude and a clear vision for her future. Through all of this, she has maintained a 4.0 college and high school GPA. Her resilience, determination, and drive to build a better life for herself truly embody the spirit of the Career and College Promise program.

A former student enrolled in welding classes at Mitchell High School in 2021. He graduated from Mitchell High School in 2022 and received a welding diploma while in high school. He then went on to graduate from Mayland Community College in 2024 with an Associate of Applied Science in General Occupational Technology, welding degree. Shortly after graduating, a local business, McGee Brothers Machining & Welding Co., contacted Mayland Community College's Welding department for a recommendation, and this young man was recommended for the position.

He was working at one of the local fast-food restaurants when he was approached by McGee Brothers Machining & Welding Co. about a job opening. Shortly after, he took a full-time position in their welding shop, where he is still employed today. Reflecting on his journey, he shares, "Mayland prepared me for the job I have now at McGee Brothers. I continue to learn how to weld and fabricate from them." His story is a testament to the power of early career preparation, supportive educators, and the strong partnerships Mayland Community College fosters with Mitchell High School and local employers.

### **Mitchell Community College: Career and Technical Education Pathway (Criminal Justice)**

At Langtree Charter High School, one of our current high-school seniors is demonstrating what it means to take full advantage of the CCP program at Mitchell Community College. This student is on track not only to complete a Career & Technical Education (CTE) pathway in criminal justice, but also to graduate with an Associate in Science degree, while maintaining a 4.0 Grade Point Average.

On top of this, the student has taken another step forward by participating in Mitchell's continuing education fire program at night, showing that they're not just planning a career; they're preparing for it. Volunteering hours are already being logged, building their experience and readiness for "adulting" and for a career in service. As a result of their proactive approach, they plan to complete their training at Mitchell in the fall and move into the next chapter of their professional journey with confidence.

This student's story is a powerful example of what happens when ambition meets opportunity and of how high school students can leverage dual-enrollment and college partnerships to accelerate their success, reduce costs, and jump-start their future.

### **Nash Community College: College Transfer Pathway (Engineering)**

A recent graduate of East Wake Academy was already a driven student prior to enrolling at Nash Community College. He was diagnosed with cancer at a very young age but showed resilience in his battle throughout his treatments, all while serving his community. He completed 31 credit hours of college coursework, in addition to serving on the Teen Advisory Council at UNC Children's Hospital, where he helped create an outdoor play space for pediatric patients. This young man is a 2025 recipient of the Morehead-Cain Scholarship at UNC-Chapel Hill with plans to study biomedical engineering.

### **Randolph Community College: Career and Technical Education Pathway and Apprenticeship Program (Computer Integrated Machining)**

A 2025 high school graduate from Eastern Randolph High School completed a computer integrated machining (CIM) certificate at Randolph Community College. Randolph's CIM program is a manufacturing process that uses computers and machines to direct precise movements develop and cut parts. This summer, this graduate completed an apprenticeship program with a local industry partner, United Brass Works, from Randleman, NC. This industry partner reported that this young man is a hard worker and continues to do great work by applying the skills and knowledge learned through CCP. This fall, he will continue his education by enrolling at Randolph Community College, while also working full-time with United Brass Works, Inc.

### **South Piedmont Community College: Career and Technical Education and Pre-Apprenticeship Program (Welding)**

In 2024, after completing their junior year of high school, both two classmates earned a certificate in industrial systems through South Piedmont Community College's dual enrollment program. The certificate includes courses on basic welding, machining, and hydraulic systems. Both students also participated in the Anson High School Pre-Apprenticeship program, which provided them with the opportunity to gain relatable experiences that aligned with college courses.

Thanks to a local industry partner in Anson County, Southern Fabricators, Inc., took these students in and gave them the opportunity to discover a passion for welding. Their site supervisor recognized growth in these two, noting their willingness "to listen, think critically, and problem solve". After these students graduated from Anson High School in May of 2025, both students were offered and accepted full-time employment with Southern Fabricators, Inc.

This is a perfect example of how powerful the partnerships between our high schools, Community Colleges, and local industries are being made across the state.

### **Surry Community College: Pre-Apprenticeship Program (Computer Science)**

We love seeing our students grow and succeed long after their time in Surry Community College. Through the Surry-Yakin Works program, a multifaceted work-based learning program that includes pre-apprenticeship opportunities, one student completed an internship at South Data and Workforce Unlimited in 2018 and credits the program with providing a "significant jump start" to his career. Mentored at Workforce Unlimited, this student gained both real-world technical skills and invaluable personal skills like confidence, communication, and professional growth that have served him well. After continuing as an intern, he joined Workforce Unlimited

full-time while earning a bachelor's in computer science from UNC Charlotte.

Today, this young man works as a Network Engineer at Leonard Truck Outfitters, managing support and infrastructure. Reflecting on his experience, he emphasizes the importance of programs like Surry-Yadin Works for high school students, noting how early exposure to career paths helps students grow both technically and personally. He has also returned as a mentor himself, guiding new pre-apprentices and witnessing firsthand the transformative impact of hands-on experience.

### **Wake Technical Community College: College Transfer Pathway (Physical Therapy)**

This eighteen-year-old is already a Wake Tech graduate. Thanks to the CCP program, this South Garner High School senior has earned an Associate in Arts degree and is already two years into her bachelor degree.

This spring, she is one of twelve students who accomplished the major milestone of completing an associate degree – tuition-free – at Wake Tech while still in high school. “CCP has been such a rewarding opportunity, and I’m so thankful for the instructors and staff at my high school and Wake Tech for their support and guidance,” she said. “It’s incredible that I’m going to receive my college degree a month before I graduate from high school.” This student first learned about CCP as a freshman from her Career Development Coordinator at South Garner High School. He explained that she could earn college credits and possibly even an associate degree, if she was willing to put in the work. “I thought to myself, that’s impossible and unattainable,” she said. “Little did I know I would be here four years later.”

Through CCP, high school students can explore more than 40 academic programs. Courses are tuition-free, helping students and families save on college costs while also reducing their future course load. Some CCP pathways also provide a head start on a career, offering job training, skills, and industry-recognized credentials. Ever since eighth grade, this student has dreamed of attending the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, and this fall, that dream becomes a reality. She believes the rigor of completing an associate degree in high school helped her college application stand out. “It was difficult, but very rewarding,” she said. “I could have been doing other things with my time, but nothing else was as valuable to me as this.”

She has said that CCP strengthened her time management and study skills and that those habits will help her “hit the ground running” at UNC. She is still deciding on a major but is considering a career in healthcare, possibly as a nurse, physician assistant, or physical therapist. “CCP really gets you acclimated to what college is like, and I believe I now have a good understanding of how college works, and I’m thankful for that,” she said. “I also enjoyed being in classes with people of all ages and backgrounds, and it really opened my mind to how broad education is.”

Because CCP courses are tuition-free, she estimates she has saved nearly \$10,000 in college tuition. She hopes other high school students will recognize the value of the program and enroll. “College is very expensive, and because I’ve completed two years of college, I’m looking at half the time to complete my bachelor’s degree and the opportunity to perhaps double major for the cost of one,” she said. **“CCP really is one of the best opportunities to take advantage of in high school. I’m so thankful I did.”**

### **Wilkes Community College: College Transfer Pathway (Speech Pathology)**

A first-generation college student from East Wilkes High School in Ronda, NC, demonstrates the life-changing impact of the CCP program and strong career coaching support. Hardworking and focused, she completed the Transfer Pathway toward the Associate in Arts, earning 48 college credit hours before graduating high school in May of 2025.

This student envisioned a future as a teacher. However, through many one-on-one conversations, career exploration activities, and presentations arranged by her Career Coach, she discovered her true passion for Speech-Language Pathology (SPL). She connected with both a private SLP and a hospital-based SLP for job shadowing and internship experiences, giving her a real-world look at the profession. These opportunities not only expanded her career knowledge but also helped her develop confidence in her path forward.

Her hard work and commitment to her future opened the door to UNC-Chapel Hill, where she was accepted and awarded the prestigious Carolina Covenant Scholarship, which will cover all her undergraduate financial needs. She is majoring in Communications and plans to attend graduate school to become a speech-language pathologist, a career projected to grow by 15% in the next decade, with a current median salary of over \$95,000 per year. This student’s story highlights how dual enrollment courses and career coaching together can help students save time, reduce costs, and discover their passion, while launching students into a future filled with opportunity and success.

### **Wilkes Community College: Career and Technical Education Pathway (Graphic Design)**

This student graduated from Wilkes Central High School in 2025. When the student’s assigned Career Coach first began working with the student, the plan was for her to attend Wilkes Community College and then transfer to a university to major in graphic design or another art-related program. As she moved through her senior year, her plans shifted. She decided to remain at Wilkes Community College to complete her degree in graphic design and then enter the workforce directly. With two siblings already pursuing higher education, it seemed that adjusting her own path, perhaps making a personal sacrifice in light of the financial strain on her family, was the right choice.

The student's career coach states, "We're impressed with her talent, her dedication, and her quiet determination. In high school, she not only completed CCP courses but also took Adobe classes, earning articulated credit at Wilkes Community College for her work. What has always stood out to me most about this student, though, is who she is as a person. She is shy and soft-spoken, yet consistently kind and thoughtful, while caring for herself with a quiet grace that reflects the best of both her family and her own character."

### **Wilson Community College: Workforce-Continuing Education Pathway and College Transfer Pathway (Biomedical)**

This recent graduate began taking CCP classes while she was attending Sallie B. Howard School of Arts and Sciences, a Charter School in Wilson, NC. She started with both a College Transfer Pathway and a Workforce Continuing Education course in her senior year as a BioWork Process Technician and earned a certificate, completing that pathway.

Following high school graduation in May of 2025, she enrolled at Wilson Community College in the Associate in Applied Science Biotechnology program, where she is currently taking courses, and her career outlook is bright. Wilson County's need for manufacturing and biotech-related careers is increasing and presently outpacing the North Carolina average for biopharma jobs. Wilson County is a stronghold for pharmaceutical-related companies, including Merck, Purdue, Neopac, Reckitt Health, Fresenius Kabi, SCHOTT pharma, and Johnson and Johnson.

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