



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

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# Report to the North Carolina General Assembly

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North Carolina Education and Workforce  
Innovation Commission Grants

*§ 115C-64.15.*

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**Date Due: April 30, 2025**  
DPI Chronological Schedule, 2024-25

## 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

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**Maurice "Mo" Green, State Superintendent / 301 N. Wilmington Street, Raleigh, North Carolina 27601**

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Thomas Tomberlin, Senior Director, Educator Preparation, Licensure, and Performance, NCDPI  
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## TABLE OF CONTENTS

Index .....	1
Legislation	
§ 115C-64.15. Combining the Education and Workforce Innovation Commission Grant Programs ..	2
Education and Workforce Innovation Commission Members.....	5
2023-24 Education and Workforce Innovation Commission Grantees by Grant .....	6
§ 115C-64.16. The Education and Workforce Innovation and CTE Grade Expansion Program; Innovation Grants.....	8
§ 115C-64.17. The Career and Technical Education Grade Expansion Grants .....	9
Reports	
Innovation Grants Local Reports.....	11
Grade Expansion Grants Local Reports .....	31
Updated Legislated Requirements on Reporting .....	48

## COMBINING OF THE EDUCATION AND WORKFORCE INNOVATION COMMISSION GRANT PROGRAMS

### SESSION LAW 2023-134

#### § 115C-64.15

SECTION 7.43. ARTICLE 6C OF CHAPTER 115C OF THE GENERAL STATUTES READS AS REWRITTEN:

“Article 6C.

"Education and Workforce Innovation and CTE Grade Expansion Program."

§ 115C-64.15. North Carolina Education and Workforce Innovation Commission.

- a) There is created the North Carolina Education and Workforce Innovation Commission (Commission). The Commission shall be located administratively in the Department of Public Instruction but shall exercise all its prescribed powers independently of the Department of Public Instruction. Of the funds appropriated for the Education and Workforce Innovation and CTE Grade Expansion Program established under G.S. 115C-64.16, up to ten percent (10%) of those funds each fiscal year may be used by the Department of Public Instruction to provide technical assistance and administrative assistance, including staff, to the Commission and for reimbursements and expenses for the Commission for the Education and Workforce Innovation Program and the Career and Technical Education Grade Expansion and CTE Grade Expansion Program.
- b) The Commission shall consist of the following 14 members:
  - (1) The Secretary of Commerce or his or her designee.
  - (2) The State Superintendent of Public Instruction or his or her designee.
  - (3) The Chair of the State Board of Education or his or her designee.
  - (4) The President of the University of North Carolina or his or her designee.
  - (5) The President of the North Carolina Community College System or his or her designee.
  - (6) Three members appointed by the Governor who have experience in education.
  - (7) Three members appointed by the House of Representatives, as provided by G.S. 120-121, who have experience in businesses operating in North Carolina.
  - (8) Three members appointed by the General Assembly upon the recommendation of the President Pro Tempore of the Senate, as provided in G.S. 120-121, who have experience in businesses operating in North Carolina.Members appointed by the Governor or the General Assembly shall serve for three-year terms commencing July 1 of the year of appointment and may serve successive terms.
- c) The Commission members shall elect a chair from the membership of the Commission. The Commission shall meet at least three times annually on the call of the Chair or as additionally provided by the Commission. A quorum is six members of the Commission. Members may not ~~send designees to Commission meetings nor may they vote by proxy.~~
- d) The Commission shall develop and administer the Education and Workforce Innovation and CTE Grade Expansion Program, as established under G.S. 115C-64.16, in collaboration with the North Carolina Career and Technical Education Foundation, Inc., and make awards of grants under the Program.

- ~~(1) The Commission shall develop and administer, in coordination with the State Board of Education and the Superintendent of Public Instruction, and in collaboration with the North Carolina Career and Technical Education Foundation, Inc., the Career and Technical Education Grade Expansion Program, as established under G.S. 115C-64.17, and shall make awards of grants under the Program.~~
  - (2) The North Carolina Career and Technical Education Foundation, Inc., shall ~~serve as a grant administrator by providing~~ provide assistance and support to grantees for initiating, expanding, improving, and promoting career and technical education initiatives.
- e) ~~The Commission, in consultation with the North Carolina Career and Technical Education Foundation, Inc.,~~ Commission shall publish a report on the Education and Workforce Innovation and CTE Grade Expansion Program and the Career and Technical Education Grade Expansion Program on or before April 30 of each year. The report shall be submitted to the Senate Appropriations Committee on Education/Higher Education, the House Appropriations Committee on Education, the Fiscal Research Division, the Joint Legislative Education Oversight Committee, the State Board of Education, the State Board of Community Colleges, and the Board of Governors of The University of North Carolina. The report shall include at least all of the following information:
- (1) An accounting of how funds and personnel resources were utilized for ~~each~~ the program and their impact on student achievement, retention, and employability.
  - (2) Recommended statutory and policy changes.
  - (3) Recommendations for improvement of ~~each~~ the program.
  - (4) For the Career and Technical Education Grade Expansion Program, Grants, recommendations on increasing availability of grants after the first two years ~~of the program~~ to include additional local school administrative ~~units~~ units, charter schools, or providing additional grants to prior recipients.

## BACKGROUND

The North Carolina Education and Workforce Innovation Program was established in the 2013 Legislative Session to support local education agencies undertaking innovative projects that would directly result in more students graduating college and career ready. The goals of the Education and Workforce Innovation Program include:

- a) Align public schools with business and industry and colleges/universities;
- b) Provide greater choice for parents/guardians among high-quality public education options;
- c) Enhance teacher and principal effectiveness;
- d) Ensure all students possess job-ready skills; and
- e) Leverage technology to accelerate student and teacher learning.

The Education and Workforce Innovation Program established by statute is a \$2 million annual fund to support schools, districts, and regions undertaking work in service of the goals listed above.

- a) Primary measurable outcomes of the program will include:
- b) Evidence of industry valued skills among students;
- c) Decreased time-to-degree;

- d) Increased rate at which students gain academic college credit and/or workforce credentials;
- e) Evidence of explicit partnerships with business and industry;
- f) Positive placement of every student upon graduation in continuing education or employment; and
- g) Evidence of alignment across K-12 and colleges and universities.

The Education and Workforce Innovation Program's competitive grant fund is administered by the Education and Workforce Innovation Commission (hereafter, "the Commission") and housed administratively in the Department of Public Instruction. This work was transferred to the Department of Public Instruction in July 2017. Members appointed to the Commission include a variety of individuals listed on the next page.

**Please note the following information pertaining to certain local reports that contain limited information:**

The 2023-24 grant year was marked by the passage of the budget bill on October 3, 2023. Following this development, the Commission promptly initiated the application process, finalizing it in October. The application was made available to PSUs in November and December, with final approval by the Commission members in January and the NC SBE in February. Despite the late timing in the fiscal year, the Commission felt it was essential to proceed with disbursing the funds in March 2024 for this grant year. This decision was made after thorough discussions by Commission members reaching consensus that it was crucial to ensure the funds were distributed to schools and districts, even if delayed within the fiscal year.

<b>Education and Workforce Innovation Commission Members</b>		
<b>Name</b>	<b>Title</b>	<b>Appointing or Designating Office</b>
S. Dianne Little, Ed.D. Chair	Retired Leadership Consultant, Catawba Valley Community College	Appointed by The Office of the Governor
Jonah Garson	Attorney, Parry Law, PLLC	Appointed by The Office of the Governor
Jairo McMican Vice-Chair	Associate Director of Equity Initiatives at Achieving the Dream	Appointed by The Office of the Governor
Richard L. Purcell	Associate Manager/Education Public Consulting Group	Appointed by The Speaker of the NC House of Representatives
Michelle P. Logan	Vice President and General Manager, Drug Product Division, Thermo Fisher Scientific	Appointed by The Speaker of the NC House of Representatives
Rachelle "Shelley" R. Wolford	Chief People Officer, Golden Corral Corporation	Appointed by The Speaker of the NC House of Representatives
Stephen Griffin	President, Insurance Peoples of NC	Appointed by the President Pro Tempore of the NC Senate
Thomas Luckadoo	Mayberry Partners, LLC	Appointed by the President Pro Tempore of the NC Senate
Satish Garimella	Council Member, Town of Morrisville	Appointed by the President Pro Tempore of the NC Senate
Dr. Annie Izod (Designee for Lee Lilley)	Executive Director of the NC Works Commission	Designated by The North Carolina Secretary of Commerce
Mo Green	The State Superintendent of Public Instruction	Designated by The State Superintendent of Public Instruction
VACANT (Designee for Eric C. Davis)	To be filled	Designated by The Chair of the State Board of Education
VACANT (Designee for Peter Hans)	To be filled	Designated by The President of the University of North Carolina
VACANT (Designee for Dr. Jeffrey A. Cox)	To be filled	Designated by The President of the North Carolina Community College System

## 2023-24 EDUCATION AND WORKFORCE INNOVATION GRANT RECIPIENTS

<b>SBE Region</b>	<b>Applicant Name</b>	<b>Funding Amount</b>
Northwest	Alexander County Schools	\$60,000.00
Piedmont-Triad	Asheboro City Schools - Asheboro High School	\$60,000.00
Southwest	Cabarrus County Schools	\$60,000.00
Sandhills	Cumberland County Schools	\$60,000.00
Southeast	Duplin County Schools	\$60,000.00
Western	Haywood County Schools	\$60,000.00
Northeast	Hyde County Schools	\$60,000.00
North Central	Johnston County Public Schools	\$60,000.00
Northwest	McDowell County Schools	\$60,000.00
North Central	North East Carolina Preparatory School	\$60,000.00
North Central	Pine Springs Preparatory Academy	\$60,000.00
Sandhills	Public Schools of Robeson County - Purnell Swett High	\$60,000.00
Piedmont-Triad	Randolph County School System	\$60,000.00
North Central	Rocky Mount Preparatory	\$60,000.00
Northeast	Tyrrell County Schools	\$60,000.00
Northeast	Washington County Schools	\$60,000.00
Northwest	Wilkes County Schools	\$60,000.00



## 2023-24 CAREER AND TECHNICAL EDUCATION GRADE EXPANSION GRANT RECIPIENTS

SBE Region	Applicant Name	Funding Amount
Northwest	Alexander County Schools	\$50,000.00
Northwest	Alleghany County Schools	\$50,000.00
Southwest	Apprentice Academy HS of NC	\$50,000.00
Southeast	Brunswick County Schools	\$50,000.00
Southwest	Cabarrus County Schools	\$50,000.00
Southeast	Carteret County Public Schools	\$50,000.00
Piedmont-Triad	Elkin City Schools	\$50,000.00
North Central	Franklin County Schools	\$50,000.00
Southeast	Greene County Schools	\$50,000.00
Western	Haywood County Schools	\$50,000.00
Northwest	Hickory City Schools	\$50,000.00
Northeast	Hyde County Schools	\$50,000.00
North Central	Johnston County Public Schools	\$50,000.00
Southeast	Lenoir County Public Schools	\$50,000.00
Northeast	Martin County Schools	\$50,000.00
Northwest	McDowell County Schools	\$50,000.00
Piedmont-Triad	Mount Airy City Schools	\$49,987.00
North Central	North East Carolina Preparatory School	\$45,000.00
Southeast	Pender County Schools	\$50,000.00
Sandhills	Public Schools of Robeson County	\$50,000.00
Piedmont-Triad	Randolph County School System	\$50,000.00
Northeast	Roanoke Rapids Graded School District	\$50,000.00
Sandhills	Sampson County Schools	\$50,000.00
North Central	Vance County Schools	\$50,000.00
Northwest	Wilkes County Schools	\$50,000.00

**§ 115C-64.16. THE EDUCATION AND WORKFORCE INNOVATION PROGRAM AND CTE GRADE EXPANSION PROGRAM; INNOVATION GRANTS**

- (a) Program Establishment. – There is established the Education and Workforce Innovation and CTE Grade Expansion Program (Program) to foster innovation in education that will lead to more students graduating career and college ready, and to prioritize the inclusion of students in sixth and seventh grades through grant awards provided to selected local school administrative units and charter schools.
- (1) Types of Grant Awards. – Funds appropriated to the Program shall be used to award competitive grants depending on the needs of the State, as determined by the Commission, by dividing the grants between each type as innovation grants pursuant to the provisions of this section or as grants for grade expansion for career and technical education pursuant to the provisions of G.S. 115C-64.17.
- (2) Innovation Grants. - Competitive grants shall be awarded to ~~an~~ a charter school, an individual school, school a local school administrative unit, a local school administrative unit, or a regional partnership of more than one local school administrative unit to advance comprehensive, high-quality education that equips teachers and other hired personnel with the knowledge and skill required to succeed with all students. Before receiving an innovation grant, applicants must meet all of the following conditions:
- Form a partnership, for the purposes of the grant, with either a public or private university or a community college.
  - Form a partnership, for the purposes of the grant, with regional businesses and business leaders.
  - Demonstrate the ability to sustain innovation once grant funding ends.
- (b) Applicant Categories and Specific ~~Requirements.~~ – Requirements for Innovation Grants. –
- (1) Individual schools. – ~~Individual public schools~~ Charter schools and individual public schools in local school administrative units must demonstrate all of the following in their applications:
- Partnerships with business and industry to determine the skills and competencies needed for students' transition into growth sectors of the regional economy.
  - Aligned pathways to employment, including students' acquisition of college credit or industry recognized credentials.
  - Development of systems, infrastructure, capacity, and culture to enable teachers and school leaders to continuously focus on improving individual student achievement.
- (2) Local school administrative units. – Local school administrative units must demonstrate all of the following in their applications:
- Implementation of comprehensive reform and innovation.
  - Appointment of a senior leader to manage and sustain the change process with a specific focus on providing parents with a portfolio of meaningful options among schools.
- (3) Regional partnerships of two or more local school administrative units. – Partnerships of two or more local school administrative units must demonstrate all of the following in their applications:
- Implementation of resources of partnered local school administrative units in creating a tailored workforce development system for the regional economy and fostering innovation in each of the partnered local school administrative units.
  - Promotion of the development of knowledge and skills in career clusters of critical importance to the region.
  - Benefits of the shared strengths of local businesses and higher education.
  - Usage of technology to deliver instruction over large geographic regions and build networks with industry.

- e. Implementation of comprehensive reform and innovation that can be replicated in other local school administrative units.
- (c) Consideration of Factors in Awarding of Innovation Grants. – All applications must include information on at least the following in order to be considered for a an innovation grant:
  - (1) Describe the aligned pathways from school to high-growth careers in regional economies.
  - (2) Leverage technology to efficiently and effectively drive teacher and principal development, connect students and teachers to online courses and resources, and foster virtual learning communities among faculty, higher education partners, and business partners.
  - (3) Establish a comprehensive approach to enhancing the knowledge and skills of teachers and administrators to successfully implement the proposed innovative program and to graduate all students ready for work and college.
  - (4) Link to a proven provider of professional development services for teachers and administrators capable of providing evidence-based training and tools aligned with the goals of the proposed innovative program.
  - (5) Form explicit partnerships with businesses and industry, which may include business advisory councils, internship programs, and other customized projects aligned with relevant workforce skills.
  - (6) Partner with community colleges or public or private universities to enable communities to challenge every student to graduate with workplace credentials or college credit.
  - (7) Align K-12 and postsecondary instruction and performance expectations to reduce the need for college remediation courses.
  - (8) Secure input from parents to foster broad ownership for school choice options and to foster greater understanding of the need for continued education beyond high school.
  - (9) Provide a description of the funds that will be used and a proposed budget for five years.
  - (10) Describe the source of matching funds required in subsection (d) of this section.
  - (11) Establish a strategy to achieve meaningful analysis of program outcomes due to the receipt of grant funds under this section.
- (d) Matching Private and Local Funds.— Funds for Innovation Grants. All innovation grant applicants must match fifty percent (50%) of all State dollars. Matching funds shall not include other State funds. Matching funds may include in-kind contributions.
- (e) Awards for Innovation Grants. – Any innovation grants awarded by the Commission may be spent over a five-year period from the initial award. Grants may be awarded for new or existing projects. Grant funds shall not revert but shall be available until expended.
- (f) Innovation Grant Recipient Reporting Requirements. – No later than September 1 of each year, a an innovation grant recipient shall submit to the Commission an annual report for the preceding grant year that describes the academic progress made by the students and the implementation of program initiatives.

## **§ 115C-64.17. THE CAREER AND TECHNICAL EDUCATION GRADE EXPANSION PROGRAM.GRANTS**

- (a) ~~Program Establishment.— CTE Grade Expansion Grants. — There is established the Career and Technical Education Grade Expansion Program (Program) to expand Career and Technical Education Grade Expansion grants shall be awarded under the Program for the purpose of~~ expanding career and technical education (CTE) programs by prioritizing the inclusion of students in sixth and seventh grade through grant awards provided to selected local school administrative units and charter schools for up to seven years. Funds appropriated for the Program Grant funds shall be allocated to selected local school administrative units and charter schools as competitive grants of (i) up to seven hundred thousand dollars (\$700,000) for the 2017-2018 fiscal year and (ii) grants, to the extent funds are available, of up to one million

dollars (\$1,000,000) for the 2018-2019 fiscal year and subsequent fiscal years. Grant funds shall be used only for employing additional licensed personnel in career and technical education areas, career development coordination areas, and support service areas necessary for expanding the CTE program to sixth and seventh grade students. ~~The funds may be used for CTE programs at one or more schools in the local school administrative unit.~~ For a local school administrative unit, the funds may be used for CTE programs at one or more schools in the unit. Grant funds allocated to the local school administrative unit or charter school each fiscal year ~~under the Program~~ shall not revert but shall be available for the purpose of the grant program until expended.

- (b) Consideration of Factors in Awarding of CTE Grade Expansion Grants. – Local school administrative units and charter schools ~~applying for the Program~~ CTE grade expansion grants shall submit an application that includes at least the following information:
- (1) A plan for expansion of the CTE program to sixth and seventh grade students, including the specific programs that will be expanded, the significance of CTE in the local school administrative unit, unit or charter school, and how a grade expansion would enhance the education program and the community.
  - (2) A request for the amount of funds, a description of how the funds will be used, and any other sources of funds available to accomplish the purposes of this program.
  - (3) A proposed budget for seven years that provides detail on the use of the amount of funds to add personnel, increase career development efforts, and provide support services.
  - (4) A strategy to achieve meaningful analysis of program outcomes due to the receipt of grant funds under this section.
- (c) Selection of CTE Grade Expansion Grant Recipients. – For the 2017-2018 fiscal year, the Commission shall accept applications for a grant until November 30, 2017. For subsequent fiscal years that funds are made available for the ~~Program~~, CTE grade expansion grants, the Commission shall accept applications for a grant until August 1 of each year. The Commission shall consult with the North Carolina Career and Technical Education Foundation, Inc., to select recipients in a manner that considers diversity among the pool of applicants, including geographic location, location of industries in the area in which a local school administrative unit or charter school is located, and the size of the student population served by the unit, or charter school in order to award funds to the extent possible to grant recipients that represent different regions and characteristics of the State. The Commission shall recommend recipients of the grants to the State Board of Education. The State Board, upon consultation with the Superintendent of Public Instruction, shall approve the recipients of grant awards.
- (d) Allocation of Funds. – Of the funds available for the Program in each fiscal year, the Commission shall first allocate funds to applicants who received grant funds for the prior fiscal year for up to seven years. After funds are allocated to prior fiscal year grant recipients, any remaining funds may be used by the Commission to select new grant recipients. recipients, as provided in G.S. 115C-64.16(a1). ~~The Commission, in consultation with the Superintendent of Public Instruction,~~ Commission shall establish rules regarding any requirements for grant recipients to continue eligibility to receive funds each fiscal year, including timely and accurate reporting as required under subsection (e) of this section.
- (e) Reporting Requirements. – No later than August 1 of each year, for up to seven years after the initial grant award, a grant recipient shall submit to the Department of Public Instruction, Local Planning Systems Regional Services staff within the Division of Career and Technical Education, an annual report for the preceding year in which CTE grade expansion grant funds were expended that provides at least the following information on the program for sixth and seventh grade students:
- (1) The use of grant funds, including the CTE programs and courses that have been expanded in the local school administrative unit or charter school to include sixth and seventh grade students.
  - (2) The number of students enrolled in CTE courses as part of the expansion.
  - (3) The number of students who subsequently enrolled in CTE courses in high school.

- (4) The number of students who subsequently participated in internships, cooperative education, or apprenticeship programs.
- (5) The number of students who subsequently earned (i) college credit and (ii) approved industry certification and credentials.
- (6) Any other information the Division of Career and Technical Education deems necessary.

The Superintendent of Public Instruction shall provide a report to the Commission by October 15 of each year based on the information reported to the Local Planning Systems Regional Services staff under this subsection, including how the grant recipients compare to CTE programs statewide and whether the programs are aligned with the Master Plan for Career and Technical Education adopted by the State Board. (2017-57, s. 7.23F(b); 2017-212, s. 2.2.)

## **EDUCATION AND WORKFORCE INNOVATION PROGRAM LOCAL REPORTS**

### **Alexander County Schools**

#### **Goal of Grant Program:**

The Innovative grant program “Igniting Excellence in Public Safety & Fire Academy Program” at Alexander Central High School (ACHS) has been instrumental in enhancing exciting opportunities for students! The original goals and expectations for the Public Safety & Fire Academy Program are centered on significantly enhancing the training environment to better prepare students for real-world fire and emergency scenarios. The Innovation Grant funds have been used to expand our high school training facilities through the installation of three modified shipping containers equipped with props that will simulate realistic fire situations. The ACHS Fire Academy is housed at a former fire department in our county and includes a classroom space and 2 bays to conduct classes and hands-on training. Half of the building is also shared with Emergency Services. This space has been adequate for Fire Tech classes, but it became apparent that more training space would allow for more hands-on training to take place leading to increased student learning. Our Fire Academy Instructor had the background knowledge and insight on how to use shipping containers for fire training stations, which would allow more props and real-life scenarios to be conducted rather than learning these skills from text or a video. Shipping containers allow for extreme durability, versatility, and increased safety for fire training. Thus, a new training site has been constructed. This new training site is equipped with 3 shipping containers that allow fire training simulations in multi-story buildings with multiple corridors, rooms, and windows. This training site replicates a more realistic structure where fire cadets can learn how to maneuver and battle fires.

This grant program has helped develop an innovative, high-quality, well-equipped facility that supports the current curriculum and allows for new training grounds, which will ultimately better prepare our students for the complexities and realities of firefighting by providing an immersive and effective training experience.

#### **Activities Accomplished:**

- (1) The “Igniting Excellence in Public Safety & Fire Academy Program” has achieved implementation goals of having a completed fire training site as evidenced by expenditures and images of the worksite.
- (2) Alexander County Zoning and Building Permits: We have ensured compliance with all local regulations, as reflected in the costs associated with obtaining zoning permits and building permits. The expenses include two zoning permits totaling \$650.00 and a building permit costing \$315.00, demonstrating our commitment to adhering to local guidelines and safety standards.
- (3) Engineering Services: Engineering services, provided by David Bickely Engineer, amounted to \$2,000.00, allowing us to design a safe and effective training ground structure. This investment is crucial for creating an innovative and realistic training environment, aligning with our program’s goal of offering comprehensive, hands-on learning experiences.

- (4) Site Preparation and Construction: The significant expenditure of \$12,540.00 paid to 438 Grading highlights our progress in site preparation. This cost covers land leveling and grading necessary for the construction of the training ground, ensuring a stable foundation for our facility.
- (5) Steel and Lumber Supplies: The purchase of steel from Benco Steel and lumber from Sipe Lumber indicates our commitment to using high-quality materials for the construction. These materials are essential for the durability and safety of the training structures and props used for students.
- (6) Concrete Work: Expenses for concrete work total \$2,130.00, as reflected in invoices from Sigmons Concrete. This expenditure covers the installation of a concrete foundation, critical for supporting the fire training structures and ensuring a safe, realistic training environment for students.
- (7) Modular Containers for Training Facility: The largest portion of our expenses, amounting to \$37,886.11, is allocated to Carolina Mobile Storage for shipping containers. These containers form the core structure of our fire training facility, allowing us to create various realistic firefighting scenarios. The sequential payments (invoices 2349, 2385, 2409, and 2411) illustrate the phased delivery and installation of these containers, a strategic approach to managing construction timelines and costs effectively.

### **Academic Progress Made by Students:**

During the 2023-2024 school year, the Innovative grant funds have been pivotal in progressing our Fire Academy program, although students did not have the opportunity to use the new fire training grounds due to funding and construction delays. However, the funds allowed us to take significant steps toward enhancing our program's infrastructure and providing an unparalleled learning environment for our students. The construction of the new fire training ground has progressed significantly, featuring shipping containers transformed into a realistic training structure. This development provided students with a unique opportunity to observe the construction process, enriching their understanding of engineering and construction logistics, which are vital to fire safety and building codes. While direct use of the facility wasn't possible in the 2023-2024 school year, the experience allowed us to enhance our curriculum by integrating real-world challenges that prepare students for practical firefighting techniques and technical aspects of the profession. The training facility is now completed and ready for the 2024-2025 school year, promising hands-on training for future cohorts. The program has attracted strong interest, with 27 students enrolled in Fire Tech I and 18 in Fire Tech II, and 70 public safety students registered, who will visit the Fire Academy to observe operations, potentially increasing future enrollment.

### **Statements from Students:**

By a senior who graduated and completed Fire Tech I-III, "It's disappointing not to use the new training center, but observing the process let us see how fire training can be. I hope the next class makes the most of this fantastic opportunity."

A rising senior said "The new facility looks great. I'm looking forward to next year when we can finally train there and apply everything we've learned."

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## **Asheboro City Schools**

### **Goal of Grant Program:**

- (1) Provide a JAG (Jobs for America's Graduates) Specialist to deliver curriculum on the 37 employability skill competencies, provide individualized academic assistance/support for students to ensure success, and offer educational opportunities that include, but are not limited to, hands-on lessons, whole group discussions, small group discussions, mock interviews, role-playing, and opportunities to put the employability skills into action.

- (2) Facilitate experiences for students to be exposed to various careers, guides students through educational requirements, and helps students build job attainment, success and leadership skills.
- (3) Provide students opportunities to connect with various business and industry partners through internships and job shadowing events.
- (4) Provide students with the opportunity to participate in state and national competitions and be involved in the JNCG Career Association at Asheboro High School.
- (5) As a part of the support process with JNCG, participants are also followed for one-year post graduation to offer support and resources to address personal challenges, employment issues, exploration of post-secondary options, or support for enlisting in the armed forces.

### **Activities Accomplished:**

The implementation of the program is in its 1st full year, following a second semester start in 2023. The JAG Specialist is in place and serving students who are 11th and 12th graders. The number of students being served has grown since last year, but expected to grow larger as the program becomes more established. Local CIS Randolph Director and state JNCG director met with school administration and counselors in the spring of 2024 to discuss recruitment efforts for the program. Efforts to analyze areas of celebration and areas of need are underway to help guide the program for the 2024-2025 school year. Program evaluation will also encompass evaluating outcomes using the JAG Force Database, which will occur over the summer. Preliminary data, including the 100% graduation rate for seniors, is quite positive. 85% percent of the JNCG graduates have full-time employment, 1 is entering the military and another 10% are continuing their education at either the community college or trade school level.

### **Academic Progress Made by Students:**

- (1) This grant has assisted in continued employment for a JAG Specialist at Asheboro High School to provide relevant and rigorous classroom and work-based learning experiences for select students. The program is in its second year and currently serves 27 students, a mixture of 11th and 12 graders at AHS. The grant funds have allowed for the continued implementation of the Specialist, allowing the program to continue at AHS, to identify students who will benefit from the program, and continue serving the students according to the JAG NC parameters.
- (2) The graduation rate for the 17 seniors enrolled in the JAG program this year at Asheboro High School (23-24) was 100%. All of these seniors will enter the follow-up program for one full year post graduation, an integral and unique feature of this program. Data for JAG graduates is tracked by the JAG Specialist to ensure post-secondary placement and will be tracked throughout the 24-25 school year. Achievement data is also compiled at the state level for all the JNCG programs in North Carolina.
- (3) The average number of barriers for the JNCG students at Asheboro High Schools was 18.61- the highest barrier count among JNCG programs in North Carolina. 85% are economically disadvantaged, 66% need transportation to and from work or school, 66% had a fear of public speaking, 62% of the students' mothers did not graduate from high school, and 59% of students' fathers did not graduate from high school. On average, 6 barriers were removed for these enrolled students.

#### **2023-24 compared to 2022-23 Data**

- 100% of students improved their GPA
- 67% decrease in absences- from 2,121 in 2023 to 717 in 2024
- 27% decrease in in-school suspensions from 73 in 2023 to 54 in 2024
- An average of 7 credits were attained by these students in 23-24 as compared to 5.85 credits attained in 22-23.

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## **Cabarrus County Schools**

### **Goal of Grant Program:**

Cabarrus County Schools applied for the EWIF grant to fund a JAG Specialist through Communities in Schools. Communities in Schools is the sponsor who provides matching funds for the grant. The JAG Specialist will be based at Concord High School. Concord High School is the home of the district's Hospitality and Tourism Academy, therefore the goal with the EWIF funds is to provide support services specifically to students in the academy who are also part of the JAG program. Students are provided career development support and opportunities to participate in work-based learning. Students also review post-secondary options tied to the Culinary and Hospitality programs at Central Piedmont Community College.

### **Activities Accomplished:**

The JNCG program at Concord helps students become successful in grades 9-12. By offering continued support, students with the most barriers to their educational success can get the help they need. Students can self-select the JNCG class, or they can be recommended by counselors, administrators, or other school staff. Very quickly- the students become excited about the curriculum and the real-life opportunities that are available. The standard 37 competencies are presented along with 50 additional ones introduced. Using Project Based Learning, the students must master the standard 37 at an 80% level. The students at Concord High exceeded that goal by 7- 87%.

Students are also exposed to leadership opportunities and civic engagement through the Career Association. Students learn about Roberts Rules of Order, hold offices, and plan and execute community Service projects. Students can compete against peers at the annual Career Development Conference. Students are introduced to a variety of careers during the bi-annual Jump Start Jobs Weeks. This year- guest speakers in the classroom included: Auto repair business, The Shoe Show, US Marine Corp, An Artist and Game Design specialists, Ryland Homes, Foster Lake and Pond Management, Honeywell Corp, a Cosmologist, Bake me a Cake, Giles Flyth Engineering, Precision Contractors, US (United States) Army, Wayne Brothers Construction. Concord High School JNCG was also the pilot school for Bank of America's rollout of their VR Headsets offering modules in financial literacy.

### **Academic Progress Made by Students:**

During the 2023-24 school year, Concord High served 102 students with the JAG National Curriculum. Concord was also serving 21 with follow-up services. The success of the program is measured by two JAG National sets of standards. One with the follow-up students and the other with the students in the classroom. For the follow-up students- 100% of the seniors in the program graduated. The relationships built with the specialists and the students understood the importance of the competencies covered, causing the students to be better prepared for life after high school and to value the diploma. The Concord High graduation rate from the Class of 2024 was 83 percent.

Data concerning the follow-up Graduates from the Class of 23 in relation to the JAG National Evaluation:

JAG National Evaluation Categories	Goal	Concord High School Class of 2023
Graduation Rate	90%	100%
Employment Rate	60%	71.43%
Full Time Employment by those employed	60%	93.33%
Positive Outcome- FT Employment, Post Secondary/professional Credentials and Military Service	75%	95.24%
Further Education Rate- Post Secondary/Professional Credentials	35%	361.90%
Connectivity Rate	93.5%	100%



Data Concerning students enrolled in the 2023-24 school year is tracked in five distinct categories: - Academic Improvement (GPA), Decrease in Absenteeism, Decrease in Discipline referrals, Matriculation to the next grade, Number of Credits obtained, and the removal of one or more barriers.

The JNCG students at Concord High improved in each of these categories except for a decrease in discipline referrals. Concord High instituted strict guidelines for some discipline infractions i.e. cell phone use, which caused the number of discipline referrals to be higher.

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### **Cumberland County Schools**

#### **Goal of Grant Program:**

Cumberland County Schools & Communities in Schools of NC Jobs for North Carolina's Graduates Program pairs wraparound supports with a small group of students to foster readiness for careers and post-secondary education. The goal is to effectively keep students in school through graduation and expose them to careers in their communities to spark workforce readiness. By providing 11th and 12th graders with curriculum-based classroom instruction plus an additional 12 months of post-graduation follow-up, students stay in school and move on to the training needed to find a rewarding career.

#### **Activities Accomplished:**

The JNCG program at South View High School is very successful. The data and results for the current students and the follow-up students exceed the goals of JAG National. Each student mastered the 37 JAG National Curriculum goals for employability skills.

In addition to the JAG National Goals for the graduates in follow-up JAG has goals for the current students in the class. These goals include attendance, discipline reduction, credit attainment, and barrier removal. The 29 students enrolled in the JNCG classes at SVHS averaged 14 barriers to academic success. During the year, an average of 2 barriers per student were removed.

#### **Academic Progress Made by Students:**

Because the funds from this grant arrived so late in the 2023-2024 school year, they will be used in the 2024-2025 school year to continue the JNCG program, which worked with 29 students at Southview High School and completed follow-ups with 21 graduates from the Class of 2023. 100% of the seniors in the class and 100% of the Class of 2023 graduated. For the students enrolled in 2023-24 – The JAG (Jobs of America's Graduates) National Goals of improved attendance, improved matriculation, few discipline referrals, improved GPA and improved credit attainment were all met. For the JAG National Goals for the Follow-up graduates, Southview's JNCG program met all six goals and received the JAG National program of excellence with the 6 or 6 National Award.

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### **Duplin County Schools**

#### **Goal of Grant Program:**

The goals for the Jobs for NC Graduates (JNCG) Program are to create business, industry, and education partnerships to ensure that at-risk high school students remain in high school, attain employability skills through classroom and work-based learning experiences during high school, and graduate ready to successfully transition into a career and/or pursue postsecondary education to enhance career entry and advancement. Further goals of the program are to improve the graduation rate of participants, help students overcome barriers to academic success, assist students with college and job applications, and expose students to career pathways through classroom support, guest speakers, field trips, and follow-up support after graduation.

The JNCG Program also aspires to meet the goals of the national Jobs for America's Graduates (JAG) Program to include 90% of participants attaining a high school diploma or GED, 75% of participants experiencing a positive outcome (including employment, postsecondary education enrollment, or

enlistment in the military), 60% of participants gaining employment in a job in the public or private sector, and 80% in a full-time placement (including employment, postsecondary enrollment, or a combination of work and school). JAG Specialists also strive for a 93% connectivity rate as they follow up with the students for twelve months after graduation.

**Activities Accomplished:**

The Wallace-Rose Hill High School Jobs for North Carolina Graduates program has employed a full-time instructor to ensure full continuing program implementation during the 2023-24 school year. Program activities are implemented to align with the JNCG competencies, which include career development, job attainment, job survival, basic skills, leadership and self-development, personal skills, life survival skills, workplace competencies, and economic empowerment competencies. Each competency has a lesson plan that was used to provide instruction to help students understand the component of the course. In addition to these competencies, students also receive academic support in reading, math, communication, and technology to improve their outcomes and likelihood of high school graduation.

The JNCG curriculum, developed by JAG National, is delivered in a classroom setting. Students receive approximately 120 hours of instruction and are required to achieve 80% mastery of 37 employability lessons. The JNCG Specialist tracks student mastery of these competencies daily. The JNCG Specialist also works individually with each student to support academic performance in core subject areas and to address any of the barriers they face. (Students are required to have at least five barriers to enter the program.)

JNCG includes several initiatives that reinforce the skills taught in the classroom. “Jump Start Jobs Week” is held each semester and brings in local and regional employers to speak with JNCG students about job options and preparation. The JNCG Specialist also arranges field trips, site visits, and guest speakers to expose JNCG students to employment, enrollment, and enlistment options after high school graduation. Guest speakers during the 2023-24 school year included a US Army Recruiter, the Duplin Agribusiness Academy Coordinator, GE Aerospace, the North Carolina Department of Transportation, Corning of Wilmington, Murphy Family Ventures, a US Marine Recruiter, and NC Works.

All students who graduated from the program in 2023 received a year of follow-up support for employment after graduation, and 100% of these students were successful in obtaining employment.

**Academic Progress Made by Students:**

During the 2023-24 school year, 44 students were enrolled in the JNCG Program at Wallace-Rose Hill High School, including 27 males and 17 females. Of the participants, 20 were Black, 18 Hispanic, 2 White, and 4 Multi-Racial. These students averaged eight barriers per student, including 50% economically disadvantaged, 50% with a fear of public speaking, 30% whose father did not graduate from high school, and 30% with a grade point average (GPA) less than 2.0.

Of the students enrolled in the program, 99% either graduated or were promoted to the next grade level, and 99% also had improvements in GPA. Students also improved their attendance and number of credits earned. JNCG students at Wallace-Rose Hill High School were offered \$134,162.00 of scholarship funds. The JNCG Specialist began follow-up services for 2024 graduates on June 1, 2024.

57 JNCG graduates received follow-up from the JNCG Specialist during the 2023-24 school year. Positive outcome attainment for these program participants is detailed below:

<i>Topic</i>	<i>JAG National Goal</i>	<i>WRH Attainment</i>
<i>Graduation Rate</i>	90%	100%
<i>Employment Rate</i>	60%	68.42%
<i>Full-Time Employment (of those employed)</i>	60%	100%

Positive Outcome (employed, enrolled, enlisted)	75%	84.21%
Further Education/Credentials Enrollment	35%	40.35%
Contact Rate	93%	100%

For the third year in a row, Wallace-Rose Hill High School will receive a JAG National “6 of 6” Award for achieving the goals listed above.

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### Haywood County Schools

#### Goal of Grant Program:

- Career Exploration Opportunities:
  - College Campus Tours: Immersive visits to local universities for firsthand exposure to college life.
  - Industry Tours: Guided visits to local businesses to explore various career paths.
- College Admissions and Financial Aid Workshops:
  - Expert-led sessions on navigating college admissions, FAFSA applications, and financial aid opportunities.
- Hands-on Experiences:
  - Job Shadowing/Work Internships: Opportunities for students to apply classroom knowledge in real-world settings.
- Career Fairs and Mini Career Study Camps:
  - Annual fairs connecting students with professionals, and mini camps offering deep dives into specific industries.
- Career Exploration and Assessments:
  - Use of cutting-edge tools for career assessments, guiding students toward personalized career paths.
- Job Skill Development Workshops:
  - Targeted workshops focusing on essential job skills such as communication and problem-solving.
- Financial Literacy:
  - Workshops led by financial experts to enhance students' financial literacy and decision-making skills.
- Partnership with Haywood Community College:
  - Highlighting College Admissions and Programs: Showcasing credentialing opportunities at Haywood Community College, including the new Health Science Center.
  - Highlighting Career Pathways and in-demand Industry based credentials and certifications.

#### Activities Accomplished:

Bridging Futures gained significant progress in supporting students to discover and align their career interests with in-demand industries. Through industry tours and interviews with local general managers, engineers, health care professionals, 32 more students understand the next steps to complete their high school courses and begin their college search and application process. Hands-on experiential learning with an authentic work-based learning experience gave students a clear understanding of what a day in the life of their career entails.

Through career assessments and surveys 32 students indicated career interest in health care fields such as psychology, nursing, radiology, geneticists, neurology, flight medics, and emergency management systems. Other students expressed interest in engineering careers, technology, electrician, construction, machining, and architecture. Based on these interests, students were placed with local employers for a short-term internship. For example, a student interested in engineering was placed in a county government job where he learned how building inspectors and permitting specialists work together with architects, contractors, and grading professionals to finalize infrastructure and

building projects. The student reported: "I've Learned about many types of engineers as well as other careers such as flood management, development planners, graders, and septic tank managers. The onsite experience has helped me understand how these careers work together to create the world we live in." The internships related to the students' career choices and gave them an opportunity to "try on" their careers with local employers such as Duke LifePoint Hospital, engineering firms, law practices, and with entrepreneurs who have started businesses in our rural region.

The program also developed ecosystems as students met with local employers and post-secondary professors. One student who had never worked prior to the program is interested in astrophysics. He was placed with an astronomy professor at the University of NC-Asheville. He learned python coding and the Stellarium program, which maps the night sky of a lot of different locations and tracked data. The student's survey stated prior to his internship he did not have confidence that he could perform in an actual workplace setting, however, now, he feels confident that he has talent and skills to share. 31 students were placed in short term internships with local employers and the initiative will strengthen our future workforce talent pipeline and bridge students to post-secondary education.

Employer Outcome - Over half of the employers indicated HCS students were exceptional communicators, creative problem solvers, and exhibited excellent work behaviors. One third of the employers indicated students lacked confidence but indicated that students developed more confidence by the end of the internship, which provides a foundation for future employment with our local employers and builds confident partnerships.

#### **Academic Progress Made by Students:**

32 Students participated in the Summer Youth Employment Program.

Certifications Achieved:

- 26 Students achieved a Skills to Succeed Academy Certification - The Skills to Succeed Academy Certificate is recognized by the National Cyberwatch Center as an employability training program to prepare job seekers for the entire journey of choosing the right career, finding a job and succeeding in the workplace.
- 1 Student Achieved a Nurse Aid Certification
- 1 Student Achieved a Crisis Prevention Certification
- 1 Student Achieved Behavioral Science Certification

31 students were exposed to College Tours-Financial Aid Workshops-College Admissions Students toured local community colleges, southwestern NC and Haywood Community college. Students toured Western Carolina University and participated in financial aid processes and college admissions applications workshops.

Students toured community college Health Science Centers HCC-SCC and learned about career pathways in emergency management systems, nursing, pediatrics, dental, and mental health opportunities.

32 Students completed career assessments PEAK (Professional Exploration And Knowledge) program, Career Coaches helped inform the best decisions and plans toward academic, occupational, and career goals which provide specific detail to students' skills, aptitude interests, and careers and salaries aligned to their career goals.

#### **Career Fairs-Mini Study Opportunities**

31 Students participated in mini career study days and met with entrepreneurs, engineers, automotive technicians, health science professionals to learn about their jobs and career pathways to specific industries. Group tours such as GE Aerospace provided an in depth look at all careers available in accounting, marketing, engineering, machinist, welding, education, training. Students were provided personal interview opportunities with local artisans and entrepreneurs with Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians, Sequoyah Fund, local business owners and startups to discover local opportunities for future jobs in business.

#### Job Skill Development Workshops:

31 Students engaged in various employability skill workshops such as:

Emotional Intelligence and communication in the Workplace- WCU

Interview Skills-Southwestern Community College

Resume Creation-NC Works Career Centers

Linked In Creation- Community Marketing Social Media Professional

Career Pathways and Workplace Tips for Success- CTE Director DPI

Manpower- Human Resources Onboarding Skills -Time Management-Hourly pay scales

Communication and Time Management in the Workplace- Bank of America

#### Financial Literacy:

32 Students discovered budgeting, how employees are paid, saving for college, purchasing a car, home mortgages, dressing for success on a budget, and digital fraud awareness. Financial Capabilities was facilitated by Bank of America Merrill Lynch Senior VP and Manpower.

#### Partnership with Haywood Community College and Southwestern Community College

- Highlighting College Admissions and Programs: Showcasing credentialing opportunities at Haywood Community College, including the new Health Science Center.
- Highlighting Career Pathways and in-demand Industry based credentials and certifications.

31 Students participated in a college admissions workshop facilitated by HCC Student Services. Students learned about how to apply at all colleges through CFNC and or on the community college website. HCC facilitated financial aid overview and how to apply. Recommended resources for application and explained the Pell grants.

Students toured the Health Science Centers, the emergency management centers, Wildlife Management and Natural resources, and automotive welding departments. Students learned about short term credentials, Career and College Promise courses, curriculum, and university of NC college transfer programs. Facilitators highlighted in demand careers in Health Care, dentistry, technology in rural WNC.

Online access to Max Knowledge ACTE Learn was purchased for CTE teachers and leaders. Since it was not purchased until June, teachers had already made plans to attend or not attend the Summer CTE Conference. Currently, we only have two teachers accessing the platform, but we will make sure teachers are aware of this resource as they return to school this August.

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### Hyde County Schools

#### Goal of Grant Program:

Career Tech Innovation Program is a collaboration between Tyrrell, Hyde, Washington County Schools and Beaufort Community College. While connecting the three districts, goals were to develop partnerships, increase the workforce opportunities, increase credentials, work-based learning and pathway options. The regional collaborative plans included working to increase CTE enrollment including career and college course enrollment (CCP) with Beaufort Community College. The BCCC courses will be offered within the tri-county area and reduce travel time for the districts. The program initiatives include teacher externships, professional development, software and curriculum resources as well.

#### Activities Accomplished:

Through a collaborative approach involving leadership from all three districts, a leadership team has been established that meets at least twice a month to carefully map out program options and identify the most suitable programs for each district. Each district conducted thorough surveys of students to

gather feedback on their interests, ensuring that the selected programs align with their aspirations and the needs of the community.

In addition to gathering student input, we engaged in detailed discussions with BCCC to determine which courses could be feasibly offered to meet the identified needs. These discussions have led to the selection of courses that not only align with student interest but also meet the logistical and resource requirements of our districts.

Furthermore, we have worked closely with the facility management teams to assess classroom suitability for each course. This included evaluating spaces for necessary equipment and supplies, ensuring that each course will be well-supported with the appropriate resources.

This approach has laid a strong foundation for the program, and we are confident that these efforts will lead to successful implementation and positive outcomes for students in all three districts. As we move forward, we will continue to monitor progress, gather data, and make adjustments as needed to ensure the ongoing success of the initiative.

Current courses and programs include:

- Health Sciences
- Core Construction (Introduction to Trade)
- Welding
- JROTC
- EMT/EMR

#### **Academic Progress Made by Students:**

There is no data to report at this time as we are currently in the planning phase. The implementation is scheduled to begin in August, in preparation for the 2024-2025 school year. Further updates and data will be provided as we progress into the implementation phase.

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### **Johnston County Public Schools**

#### **Goal of Grant Program:**

JoCo Teach is a Johnston County Public School (JCPS) high school choice program that prepares students for teaching careers. It brings innovation to the classroom in multiple ways. Immediately, the program, which began in 2019 as an EWIF initiative, helps to fill a significant gap between the number of educator vacancies and the number of candidates entering university teacher education programs. Long term, the program also better prepares future graduates to meet the needs of our growing local industries. As a new innovation, the students participating in JoCo Teach in 2024-2025 will be immersed in experiences with our 40 business leader partners to gain direct knowledge of what skills are required for successful employment in industries beyond the classroom and high school graduation. Therefore, they will understand how to best prepare their future students and immerse them in relevant learning that increases employability and innovative skills.

#### **Activities Accomplished:**

To maximize learning opportunities, effectively collaborate when travel is not feasible, and best prepare our students to be teachers who are, in turn, preparing learners for the future, JoCo Teach leverages technology to enhance learning opportunities. This enables our current teachers/principal to network and grow with other educators, businesses, and leaders. In turn, they can then provide students with similar opportunities to collaborate with industry leaders as well as participate in online classes. Consider the description of the program below:

The JoCo TEACH Academy located at Smithfield-Selma High School is a 4-year opportunity that identifies incoming freshmen that are interested in becoming future teachers. The Academy is a collaboration between Johnston County Public Schools, Johnston Community College, and N.C. State

University. The students will begin a dual enrollment program that leads to an Associate Degree in Teaching. Students will then continue through N.C. State College of Education's teacher preparation program. Some of the teacher licensure degrees that will be offered by NC State are Elementary Education, Math Education, Technology Education, English Education, Science Education, Middle Grades Language Arts & Social Studies and Agriculture Education. NC State also offers an ESL Add-On Licensure. The ultimate goal of the JoCo TEACH Academy is to identify promising students and prepare them for the teaching profession and have them return to Johnston County to teach in Johnston County Public Schools. Visit our virtual space to learn more.

The goal of the program is to prepare students who would otherwise become good teachers such that they can become great teachers. That can only occur if the participants have an authentic understanding of what they will be preparing their own students to do in a few years.

**Academic Progress Made by Students:**

Participants continue to make progress in the designated career pathway. They also have opportunities to partner with local businesses and receive pay/stipends for work performed.

Additionally, since the inception of the program, students now have the opportunity to earn scholarships to finish their schooling at our partnering university, ensuring that they have the financial means to graduate and creating a talent pipeline for JCPS. (Note: Grant funds are not used as part of the scholarship program.)

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**McDowell County Schools**

**Goal of Grant Program:**

- Extend and expand students' knowledge and skills to prepare and align the high school's pathways by connecting the learning to middle school.
- CTE updates course offerings at the middle and high school level to meet local education and economic needs.
- Make sure current pathway programs of study align with industry demand and emerging occupations will be identified and have plans in place to implement programs and activity offerings to students.
- Have industry stakeholders identify skills that are lacking and implement new programs/activities to address the deficiencies identified.
- Continue to create and develop partnerships with additional McDowell County business/industry and continue to create and develop partnerships with other surrounding community colleges.

**Activities Accomplished:**

Oculus – virtual reality sets were used to enhance the class further. Additional Paxton Patterson modules have been purchased.

**Academic Progress Made by Students:**

- 80 - 6th grade students took a 9-week Digital Media and Career Explorations Course
- 70 - 7th grade students took a semester-long study of Minecraft Coding – Introductory
- 65 - 8th grade students took a semester-long study of Computer Science Discoveries II

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**North East Carolina Prep School**

**Goal of Grant Program:**

The original goals and expectations for this program were centered on addressing the critical need for early workforce development in middle school students at NECP, particularly within our economically disadvantaged, rural community. The program aimed to establish a comprehensive and sustainable

system that would introduce students in grades six and seven to career exploration and readiness, starting with the creation of a dedicated CTE position focused on Business and Agricultural Education. The initiative also sought to align with state educational priorities by integrating computer science courses, ensuring students acquire essential digital skills before high school graduation. Additionally, the program envisioned robust partnerships with local industry and educational institutions, such as Edgecombe Community College and Carolina Gateway Partnership, to provide students with real-world job-shadowing, pre-apprenticeship opportunities, and access to industry-recognized certifications. The overarching expectation was to equip students with the knowledge, skills, and experiences needed to pursue various post-secondary pathways, ultimately contributing to their long-term success and the economic vitality of the region.

### **Activities Accomplished:**

The implementation of the program initiatives has progressed significantly, with several key activities successfully executed, driving positive outcomes for our students. One of the primary goals of the program was to introduce early career exploration and workforce development for middle school students. To this end, a new Career and Technical Education (CTE) position focused on Business and Agricultural Education was established for 6th and 7th-grade students. This role has been instrumental in integrating CTE curriculum into middle school education, offering students early exposure to career pathways and hands-on learning experiences.

The program also prioritized aligning with the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction's (NCDPI) initiative to incorporate computer science skills into the curriculum. As a result, an exploratory middle school computer science course was added, ensuring that students begin developing essential digital skills early in their education. This course has seen strong participation rates, with over 85% of eligible students enrolling in the first year, demonstrating significant interest and engagement in the subject.

Additionally, the program facilitated numerous industry tours and guest speaker sessions, which have been pivotal in broadening students' awareness of various career opportunities. Over 75% of the students in grades 6-8 participated in at least one industry-related activity, providing them with valuable insights into potential career paths. These activities have also fostered relationships between students and local industries, laying the groundwork for future job-shadowing and pre-apprenticeship opportunities.

A major milestone achieved during this period was the partnership with Carolina Gateway Partnership and Edgecombe Community College, which enabled 100% of the Class of 2024 to earn their OSHA 10 certification. This certification is a critical credential that enhances students' employability and demonstrates the program's success in providing tangible, workforce-relevant skills.

### **Academic Progress Made by Students:**

During this grant period, the program has made significant strides in advancing student academic progress and career readiness. One of the key accomplishments has been the successful partnership with Carolina Gateway Partnership and Edgecombe Community College, which enabled 100% of the Class of 2024 to earn their OSHA 10 certification. This achievement not only highlights the program's commitment to equipping students with essential industry-recognized certifications but also demonstrates its impact on enhancing students' future employability.

The integration of guest speakers and industry tours has also played a crucial role in expanding students' understanding of diverse career pathways. By exposing students to real-world professionals and industry environments, the program has broadened their horizons and deepened their engagement with potential career options. This exposure has been instrumental in helping students identify relevant certifications and integrate them into their academic journey, thereby strengthening their preparedness for the workforce.



In terms of academic progress, students who participated in the program have shown marked improvements compared to their peers who did not engage in these activities. The Class of 2024, for example, not only achieved a 100% certification rate but also demonstrated increased confidence in pursuing career-related goals. This suggests that the program's emphasis on career exploration and certification has had a positive impact on students' academic motivation and achievement. As a result, the program is meeting its goal of fostering a culture of career readiness and preparing students for successful transitions from high school to post-secondary education or the workforce.

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### **Pine Springs Preparatory Academy**

#### **Goal of Grant Program:**

Below are the original objectives/goals, strategies, and desired outcomes for the Pine Springs Preparatory Academy Biotech Immersion Opportunity (PSPA-BIO) project:

Objective 1: Four PBL-focused teachers will gain insight into the technical processes, skills required, and career pathways within the biotechnology field, and will learn strategies for developing a comprehensive, anchor PBL project.

- Strategy: Summer immersion experiences with an industry and research partner, CSL-Seqirus (at least 3 days) and the Koci Lab at NC State University (at least 5 days), respectively. Teachers and administrators will receive relevant and engaging training on the development of college and career-oriented curriculum resources from the Kenan Fellows Program for Teacher Leadership (summer 2024).
- Outcome: The development and implementation of the PSPA-BIO program that introduces students to the topic of recombinant protein production, encourages the development of a biotechnology “product” and “company,” and provides opportunities for students to explore career pathways.

Objective 2: Students will gain knowledge, develop technical skills, and apply scientific, mathematical, English, social science, and entrepreneurial concepts related to biotechnology.

- Strategy: Students will participate in a career-aligned anchor PBL project (designed in 2024, implementation in academic year 2024-2025).
- Outcome: Students will begin building the requisite skills for success in their post-secondary college and career pursuits.

Objective 3: Students will increase their awareness of the variety of career pathways available within the biotechnology field.

- Strategy: Students will participate in a career-aligned anchor PBL project and regularly interact with representatives from both industry and research (designed in 2024, implementation in academic year 2024-2025).
- Outcome: Students, and by extension, parents, will grow in their awareness of the need for post-secondary education and begin mapping the relevant pathways to pursue a potential career in biotechnology.

#### **Activities Accomplished:**

As outlined in our application, we selected four teachers (two eighth grade science teachers, a middle school PBL teacher, and schoolwide PBL instructional coach) (hereafter, “project team”) to participate in two biotech immersion experiences and professional development provided by a nationally recognized provider. On May 28, the project team, along with our middle school administrator, participated in a half-day training provided by the Kenan Fellows Program for Teacher Leadership. The training session was held at our middle school. This training was focused on helping the project team prepare for their immersion experiences. Specifically, this initial training challenged the project team to think through how they could leverage the immersion experiences to develop project resources.

Following this training, during the week of June 17-21, the project team spent five days in the Koci Lab at NC State University. With a focus on immunology, this lab provided the project team an opportunity to explore biotechnology concepts, techniques, and instrumentation, as well as a chance to network with university researchers and graduate students who will continue to support the project. After their experience at NCSU, the project team spent three days (June 24-26) at a local biotechnology company, CSL-Seqirus. While there, they explored biotechnology on a macro scale, including an exploration of the various career pathways available within a large biotechnology manufacturing company. CSL-Seqirus is one of the world's largest manufacturers of the flu vaccine.

Following these immersion experiences, the project team participated in another half-day training (July 25) with the Kenan Fellows Program to debrief and begin translating their experiences into curriculum resources.

We believe the project has had a significant impact on project participants, which will equip them to better serve and impact their students. Below are some highlights from a post-pre survey administered to the project team following their immersion experiences:

- 100% of the project team indicated that the immersion experiences at NCSU and CSL-Seqirus were impactful, with 100% indicating an impact level of 5 out of 5 on a Likert-style scale.
- When asked to compare their level of comfort with the following activities before and after their immersion experiences, the project team reported a significant increase in their level of comfort due to their participation:
  - Planning and Implementing PBL Lessons, Teaching STEM Content, Planning Applied STEM Learning Opportunities, Developing Partnerships with Researchers/Industries, and Sharing STEM Career Pathways with Students.

### **Academic Progress Made by Students:**

Our program was designed to first equip and empower teachers with the insights and skills in biotech in order to plan an innovative Project Based Learning (PBL) project to be implemented with our students in the 2024-2025 academic year. Upon receipt of grant funds through the end of the project period, we used funds to purchase new lab equipment to support the Pine Springs Preparatory Academy Biotech Immersion Opportunity (PSPA-BIO) project. Though the turnaround between receipt of grant funds and the end of the project period was short and we navigated some challenges with items being backordered, we were able to procure all the lab equipment outlined in our grant application. Also, during the project period, teachers participating in the PSPA-BIO project through EWIF grant funding spent their summer completing immersion experiences within biotech research (NC State University – Koci Lab; June 17-21) and industry (CSL-Seqirus; June 24-26), as well as with a proven professional development service provider (Kenan Fellows Program for Teacher Leadership). The PD provided by the Kenan Fellows Program was divided into two half day sessions (May 28 and July 25). Following these experiences, participating teachers have spent the remainder of their summer setting up a new lab space with equipment purchased through the grant and curriculum planning for the PSPA Biotech Immersion Opportunity (PSPA-BIO) project. Through the 2024 fall semester, teachers will continue planning for the PSPA-BIO project and begin piloting aspects of the project. Full implementation of the PSPA-BIO project and student evaluation activities will occur in spring 2025. Following implementation and student evaluations, we will have baseline data related to the impact of the project on students' academic progress and will continue to track these data in subsequent academic years.

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## **Purnell Swett High School – Public Schools of Robeson County**

### **Goal of Grant Program:**

JNCG students explore career pathways, local and regional career opportunities, evaluate the outlook for certain jobs, learn about needed education and skills and examine information nationwide. The JNCG curriculum focuses on employability skills needed to be successful in any job.

**Activities Accomplished:**

In addition to amazing outcomes with the follow-up students and the data from the students in 2023-24, the 51 in the class mastered the 37 JAG Competencies at a rate of 92%. During the class students did goal setting, career interest, job attainment and career success work to ensure they are prepared for moving into adulthood. Students were introduced to programs at the Robeson Community College and actually visited UNC- Pembroke more than once to see the programs there. This led to more students enrolling in post-secondary opportunities than ever before.

**Academic Progress Made by Students:**

During the 2023-24 school year- the JNCG program at Purnell Swett had many accomplishments. 51 students were enrolled in the program with 44 being seniors. 100% of the seniors in the program graduated with his/her class. All 51 students saw an increase in their GPA and attendance improved among most.

The JNCG specialist was also following 41 graduates from the Class of 2023. This class also had a 100% graduation rate. After a year of follow-up those graduates were employed at a rate of 63.41%, full time employment at 61.54%, Positive Outcome at 75.61%, Further education rate of 60.98% and a Connectivity Rate of 100%. These outcomes led the JNCG program at Purnell Swett to receive their first JAG National 6 of 6 Award.

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**Randolph County School System****Goal of Grant Program:**

- Provide a JAG Specialist to deliver curriculum on the 37 employability skill competencies, provide individualized academic assistance/support for students to ensure success, and offer educational opportunities that include, but are not limited to, hands-on lessons, whole group discussions, small group discussions, mock interviews, role-playing, and opportunities to put the employability skills into action
- Facilitate experiences for students to be exposed to various careers, guides students through educational requirements, and helps students build job attainment, success and leadership skills.
- Provide students opportunities to connect with various business and industry partners through internships and job shadowing events.
- Provide students with the opportunity to participate in state and national competitions and be involved in the JNCG Career Association at PGHS.
- As a part of the support process with JNCG, participants are also followed for one year post graduation to offer support and resources to address personal challenges, employment issues, exploration of post-secondary options, or support for enlisting into the armed forces.

**Activities Accomplished:**

The implementation of the program is in its initial phase. The JAG Specialist is in place and serving students who are 11th and 12th graders. The number of students being served is small, but expected to grow larger as the program becomes more established. Efforts to analyze areas of celebration and areas of need are underway to help guide the program for the 2024-2025 school year. Program evaluation will also encompass evaluating outcomes using the JAGForce Database, which will occur over the summer. Preliminary data, including the 100% graduation rate for seniors, is quite positive.

**Academic Progress Made by Students:**

This grant has assisted in employing a JAG Specialist at Providence Grove High School to provide relevant and rigorous classroom and work-based learning experiences for select students. The program is in its initial stages and currently serves 19 students, a mixture of 11th and 12 graders at PGHS. The grant funds have allowed for the initial implementation of the Specialist, allowing the program to begin at PGHS, identify students who will benefit from the program, and begin serving the

students according to the JAG NC parameters. Throughout this school year, 89% of the students enrolled in the program either performed the same or better overall academically from semester one to semester two. Of the students enrolled, 22% had an increase in number of courses passed from first semester to second semester. Of those students enrolled, 79% showed an increase in positive attendance behaviors, either an increase in attendance and/or a decrease in tardies from semester one to semester two; 22% of these students showed both a decrease in tardies and an increase in positive attendance behaviors. The graduation rate for seniors enrolled in the JAG program this year at Providence Grove High School (23-24) was 100%. The JAG National Graduation Rate was 90%. Over the course of time, data will be collected to compare JAG students with non-JAG students and their performance. Data for JAG graduates is tracked by the JAG Specialist to ensure post-secondary placement and will be tracked throughout the 24-25 school year. As of 6/30/2024, 80% of the 8 PGHS JAG graduates are employed full-time. The full-time JAG National employment rate is 60%. Achievement data is also compiled at the state level for all of the JNCG programs in North Carolina.

### Rocky Mount Preparatory School

#### Goal of Grant Program:

<i>1. Goal: Administration and Teachers will increase engagement in Professional Development in Workforce Readiness Strategies</i>		
<i>Type of Professional Development</i>	<i>Targeted Group</i>	<i>Desired Outcome</i>
AVID Summer Institute	New teachers/ administrator that will be working with the AVID program	To provide knowledge on the AVID College and Career Readiness Framework. It will provide them the strategies and resources needed to help students fulfill their potential and successfully prepare for college and career.
Beginning of the Year	All teacher and Administrators	To provide information and resources regarding data collection tools, state and local instructional resources as well as the expectations for all students to engage in career readiness activities throughout the school year.
Monthly PLC	All teachers and support instructional staff	To build communities of collaboration and communication based on the use of student data to examine student knowledge and growth toward the progress of AVID and STEM curriculum with the focus on college and career readiness.
<i>2. Goal: Will increase student and staff engagement with Business and Educational Partners</i>		
<i>Type of Engagement</i>	<i>Targeted Group</i>	<i>Desired Outcome</i>
Workforce Readiness Coalition Meetings with STEP (Strategic Twin-Counties Education)	Members of Middle and High school Leadership team	To discuss and plan with Nash and Edgecombe County Schools educational teams as well as local business partners work

		force events that will take place throughout the school year
Work with Educational Partners	High School Leaders and College and Career Administrative Staff	To ensure that scholars who meet the eligibility criteria have the opportunity to take the appropriate free college credit course that are in alignment with their career goals
Meet with Business Partners	Members of Middle and High school Leadership team	Plan and discuss workforce readiness opportunities for middle and high school scholars throughout the school year
College Tours/ Campus Visits	Middle and High School scholars taking AVID or STEM classes/clubs	Scholars will gain an understanding of college life as well as courses that are aligned to certain career areas. This is to provide them a broader scope or awareness of which college or career pathway best matches their interest. Also expose them to various campus activities and resources on college campuses.
<p>Workforce Readiness activities throughout the school year on and off school campus:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Employer in the Foyer</li> <li>• Healthcare Connections</li> <li>• Invention Convention</li> <li>• Lunch with an Engineer</li> <li>• Manufacturing Day</li> <li>• Students@Work (Job Shadowing, internships etc..)</li> </ul>	Middle and High School scholars taking AVID or STEM classes/clubs	Increase their knowledge of workforce career readiness skills needed for different professions. Scholars will participate in activities/events throughout the school year sponsored through the STEP and other business partnerships.
The MSEN Pre-college Saturday Academy Program at NC State.	Middle and High School scholars taking AVID or STEM classes/clubs	To allow the scholars to take pre-college courses and activities on the campus NC State as well as engage in hands-on Science Technology Engineering and Math focus.
Transport CCA scholars to college campus open houses, and classes	11th and 12th grade scholars in College and Career Academy.	To ensure scholars have access to tuition free college courses that are aligned to their career goals.

### **Activities Accomplished:**

#### *Program Overview:*

The Innovation Grant has allowed our Career and Technical Education (CTE) program at Rocky Mount Preparatory School to implement a few important initiatives, all aimed at improving outcomes for students and better preparing them to enter the workforce. The efforts have centered on expanding our

industry partnerships through the collaboration of our College Career Academy (CCA) and the CTE curriculum integrated in each grade level and improving student services.

#### *Increased Industry Partnerships*

Action: Extended agreements with local businesses and industry professionals on internships and mentorship programs.

Result:

- New Partnerships: We have created new relationships with 5 or more local businesses and industry professionals. Growth has occurred in meeting with businesses in the healthcare, information technology, and advanced manufacturing sectors.
- Work-Based Learning Placements: We placed 10 or more students across these new partner organizations, surpassing our initial target of placements.
- Statistics and Outcomes:
- Internship Success Rate: Eighty-five percent of students who completed these work-based learning opportunities reported gaining significant, industry-relevant skills based on pre- and post-internship surveys.

#### *More Support Services for Students*

Intervention: Expansion of an integrative career counseling and academic advising program of CCA and Career and Technical Education.

Status:

- Program Implementation: We introduced the new integrative career counseling and academic advising program early this summer. This encompasses dedicated career counselors and CCA academic advisor individually assigned to student cohorts.
- Workshops and Seminars: Over 5 workshops and seminars on resume building, interview techniques, and job search strategies have been held, with an average attendance of around 75%.

Statistics and Outcomes:

- Student Satisfaction: A recent survey indicates that about 85% of students feel better prepared for post-graduation employment due to the enhanced support services.
- Graduation Rate: Preliminary data suggests a .05% increase in the graduation rate compared to last year, indicating improved student retention and success.

#### *Results Context:*

The success of these initiatives has been made possible by the collaborative efforts of our dedicated staff and the active participation of industry partners, all committed to continuous improvement based on student feedback and industry trends. The positive outcomes observed are clear testimony to the effectiveness of our strategies in meeting current industry needs and preparing students for future careers.

#### *Conclusion:*

Overall, the development of our program initiatives has been successful, with technology integration, industry engagement, and student support all showing qualitative improvement. These advancements have not only enhanced the educational experience but also better positioned our students for successful careers in their chosen fields.

#### **Academic Progress Made by Students:**

The expansion College & Career Academy to 6th-8th graders provided exposure to college and career readiness skills they had not experienced before. The scholars were able to not only learn more about workforce readiness, but they were given opportunities to practice skills in preparation for college and career success. The expansion provided hands-on real-life experiences outside of the classroom. The

scholars were able to experience the day-to-day operations of specific professional careers through conversations with those professionals, virtual simulations of the tasks involved in the job as well close up observations of professionals carrying out the task themselves. They also can experience the impact of being in different work environments as a result of onsite visits.

Through the expansion of the program the scholars now have a sense of knowing that their goals are attainable and practical for them to accomplish on their own. Unlike previous middle school scholars who have transitioned from middle school to high school these scholars now have experience that they use in choosing their career paths prior to graduation. They will have the opportunity to take advantage of the College and Career program or Career and Technical Education program with better understanding of the pathway that is the best fit for them.

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### **Tyrrell County Schools**

#### **Goal of Grant Program:**

Career Tech Innovation Program is a collaboration between Tyrrell, Hyde, Washington County Schools and Beaufort Community College. While connecting the three districts, goals were to develop partnerships, increase the workforce opportunities, increase credentials, work-based learning and pathway options. The regional collaborative plans included working to increase CTE enrollment including career and college course enrollment (CCP) with Beaufort Community College. The BCCC courses will be offered within the tri-county area and reduce travel time for the districts. The program initiatives include teacher externships, professional development, software and curriculum resources as well.

#### **Activities Accomplished:**

Through a collaborative approach involving leadership from all three districts, a leadership team has been established that meets at least twice a month to carefully map out program options and identify the most suitable programs for each district. Each district conducted thorough surveys of students to gather feedback on their interests, ensuring that the selected programs align with their aspirations and the needs of the community.

In addition to gathering student input, we engaged in detailed discussions with BCCC to determine which courses could be feasibly offered to meet the identified needs. These discussions have led to the selection of courses that not only align with student interest but also meet the logistical and resource requirements of our districts.

Furthermore, we have worked closely with the facility management teams to assess classroom suitability for each course. This included evaluating spaces for necessary equipment and supplies, ensuring that each course will be well-supported with the appropriate resources.

This approach has laid a strong foundation for the program, and we are confident that these efforts will lead to successful implementation and positive outcomes for students in all three districts. As we move forward, we will continue to monitor progress, gather data, and adjust as needed to ensure the ongoing success of the initiative.

Current courses and programs include:

- JROTC
- EMT/EMT
- Health Sciences
- Core Construction (Introduction to Trade)
- Welding/HVAC
- Fire and Public Safety

**Academic Progress Made by Students:**

There is no data to report at this time as we are currently in the planning phase. The implementation is scheduled to begin in August, in preparation for the 2024-2025 school year. Further updates and data will be provided as we progress into the implementation phase.

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**Washington County Schools****Goal of Grant Program:**

Career Tech Innovation Program is a collaboration between Tyrrell, Hyde, Washington County Schools and Beaufort Community College. While connecting the three districts, goals were to develop partnerships, increase the workforce opportunities, increase credentials, work-based learning and pathway options. The regional collaborative plans included working to increase CTE enrollment including career and college course enrollment (CCP) with Beaufort Community College. The BCCC courses will be offered within the tri-county area and reduce travel time for the districts. The program initiatives include teacher externships, professional development, software and curriculum resources as well.

**Activities Accomplished:**

Through a collaborative approach involving leadership from all three districts, a leadership team has been established that meets at least twice a month to carefully map out program options and identify the most suitable programs for each district. Each district conducted thorough surveys of students to gather feedback on their interests, ensuring that the selected programs align with their aspirations and the needs of the community.

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Furthermore, we have worked closely with the facility management teams to assess classroom suitability for each course. This included evaluating spaces for necessary equipment and supplies, ensuring that each course will be well-supported with the appropriate resources.

This approach has laid a strong foundation for the program, and we are confident that these efforts will lead to successful implementation and positive outcomes for students in all three districts. As we move forward, we will continue to monitor progress, gather data, and adjust as needed to ensure the ongoing success of the initiative.

Current courses and programs include:

- JROTC
- EMT/EMT
- Health Sciences
- Core Construction (Introduction to Trade)
- Welding/HVAC
- Fire and Public Safety

**Academic Progress Made by Students:**

There is no data to report at this time as we are currently in the planning phase. The implementation is scheduled to begin in August, in preparation for the 2024-2025 school year. Further updates and data will be provided as we progress into the implementation phase.

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**Wilkes County Schools**



**Goal of Grant Program:**

- Graduation Rate of 90% or Higher – 100% of Wilkes Central JNCG seniors graduated.
- Civilian Job Placement/Military Service of 60% or Higher – 82.61% of Wilkes Central students achieved this goal.
- Full-Time Employment of 60% or Higher – 100% of WCHS 2021 JNCG graduates achieved this goal.
- Positive Outcomes of 75% or Higher – as calculated by work, post-secondary education, and military service- 85% of JNCG students in the WCHS Class of 2023 achieved this goal.
- Higher Education Rate of 35% or Higher – 40% of WCHS JNCG students achieved this goal.
- Connectivity Rate of 90% or Higher – 100% connectivity rate for WCHS JNCG students during the follow up period for the Class of 2023

**Activities Accomplished:**

The JNCG curriculum developed by JAG National is delivered in a classroom setting. Students are required to achieve 80% mastery of 37 employability lessons. In addition to the curriculum, the JNCG Specialist work with each student to support their academics in core subjects and to address any one or more of the barriers they face that allowed them into the program.

JNCG includes several initiatives that reinforce the skills taught in the classroom. “Jump Start Jobs Week” is held each semester where local and regional employers come to the class to speak with students about job option and preparation. This past year, companies participating in “Jump Start Jobs Week” included Matt Matthews State Farm Insurance, NC Works, Go-Getter’s Merchandising, State Employees Credit Union, and GE Aerospace, Universal Technical Institute- Mooresville. NC Works representatives worked with our students on resume building, interview skills, and how to have a successful transition to higher education enrollment, employment or military enlistment after high school.

They provided in-depth “tricks and tips” to creating a winning resume and to successfully interviewing and landing a job. The success of these experiences and support led to 9 Class of ‘24 graduates finding full-time employment within and around the county by June 2024.

**Academic Progress Made by Students:**

100% of JNCG seniors graduated this spring. The students credited JNCG for supporting this accomplishment. During the first month of follow-up meetings with students, of 23 recent graduates, five enrolled in Wilkes Community College or another four-year university, 14 graduates are full-time employed. During the school year, we were able to remove an average of one barrier per student including obtaining a drivers license, improving attendance or GPA, or reaching graduation on time. Barriers facing our JNCG students are significant and the average number of challenges is 7.9 97% of JNCG students were lacking marketable skills for the local labor market. 80% brought with them a past record of excessive absences. 60% were not connected to any extracurricular activities. 67% were in need of transportation to and from work or school. 60% had a history of low academic performance.

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**CAREER AND TECHNICAL EDUCATION GRADE EXPANSION GRANT LOCAL REPORTS****Alexander County Schools****Use of Grant Funds:**

The grant funds were used to employ a full time Career Development Coordinator to serve the two middle schools in Alexander County Schools-East Alexander Middle and West Alexander Middle. The middle school CDC worked this year to raise awareness and understanding of CTE with middle school staff, students, and parents, as well as transitioning to support 5th grade students in 5th grade career development. Specific activities completed were:

Created brochure about CTE in Alexander County and handed out at middle school Open Houses

- Created Xello lessons and rollout plan for grades 6th-8th. Attended staff meetings at middle schools to discuss CDPs and Xello
- Met with all students in 6th-8th grade classrooms to set purpose and introduce Xello
- Coordinated a Career Day with guest speakers from various local industries for 6th and 7th Grade students at both middle schools
- Attended parent night at East to share CTE offerings through hands-on activities
- Coordinated 6th Grade CTE Showcase at both middle schools where high school students traveled to middle schools as well as the CTE Career Mobile lab. Students were able to participate in hands-on stations related to high school CTE courses.
- Coordinated CTE Career Mobile lab visit at each of the seven elementary schools where all 5th grade students experienced hands-on stations related to career development.
- Assisted coordinating 8th Grade Elective Classroom visits at the high school based on interest areas
- Coordinated 8th Parent Meeting at East and West about Electives at High School
- Worked with local Extension Office to plan 8th Grade Real Money Real World at both middle schools
- Coordinated 8th Grade Industry Tour
- Periodically checked on Xello lesson completion and sent reminders to admin and teachers. This resulted in all students in grades 6th-9th having a CDP started and career development lessons completed.
- Planned two week Summer camp for middle school students that has been held 7/22-8/1/24 which will expose students to a different pathways/CTE courses each day.
- Coordinated one week Camp Med program in June 2024 for rising 9th grade students
- Worked with 2 middle school teachers (1 at each school) throughout the school year who use Paxton Patterson labs to update materials and resources and support effective implementation

#### **Number of Students Enrolled in CTE Courses as Part of the Grant:**

6th grade students- 339

7th grade students- 321

8th grade students-355

Total=1,015

#### **Number of Students who Subsequently Enrolled in High School CTE Courses:**

In the 2023-2024 school year, 273 of the 328 (83%) ninth grade students were enrolled in at least one CTE course. Top enrollments for ninth graders were Agriscience, Foundations of Health Science, Construction Core, Foods & Nutrition I, and Child Development.

#### **Number of Students who Subsequently Participated in Internships, Cooperative Education, or Apprenticeship Programs as a Result of the Grant:**

We have increased students participating in internships. In 23-24, we had 64 internship placements. We also had 14 students who took an Advanced Studies CTE course. Unfortunately, our pre-apprenticeship numbers declined and we only had 3 participants this year.

#### **Number of Students who Subsequently Earned College Credit (CCP and/or articulated credit) and Approved Industry Certifications or Credentials as a result of the Grant:**

For the third year in a row we have increased the number of credentials earned. While state data has not been finalized, initial reports indicate that we had 358 students earn credentials, while many of those earned duplicate credentials. Our credential attainment rate is around 59.59 %, which was an increase from 47.8% the prior year.

## **Alleghany County Schools**

### **Use of Grant Funds:**

With the PRC 079 grant funds, Alleghany County Schools has significantly enhanced our Career and Technical Education (CTE) programming and resources to benefit sixth and seventh-grade students across all three of our K-8 schools. These funds have been instrumental in several key developments:

- **Hiring a Full-Time Career Development Coordinator (CDC):** The grant allowed us to hire a dedicated CDC, whose role is pivotal in expanding our CTE offerings. The CDC's responsibilities include overseeing the integration of career development initiatives and providing continuous support for both students and teachers.
- **Expansion of Engineering and Technology Courses:** We have introduced Engineering and Technology courses into the sixth-grade curriculum. This early exposure helps students develop critical thinking and problem-solving skills, laying a strong foundation for future STEM education and careers.
- **Enhanced Career Development Opportunities:** The funds have facilitated a broader range of career development opportunities for our students. This includes organizing industry visits, career fairs, and guest speaker sessions that provide real-world insights into various professions.
- **Comprehensive Career Exploration:** We have expanded career exploration activities in grades 6 and 7. These activities are designed to help students identify their interests and strengths early on, guiding them towards suitable career pathways.
- **Additional Support and Resources:** The grant has enabled us to provide more resources, in the form of additional personnel which is essential for modern middle school CTE programs. This ensures that our students in Alleghany County are learning with the instructional support and information relevant to today's job market.

By utilizing the PRC 079 grant funds, Alleghany County Schools has not only expanded its CTE programs but also provided its middle school students with invaluable opportunities for early career exploration and development. This strategic use of funds aligns with our commitment to preparing students for future academic and career success, ensuring they are well-equipped with the skills and knowledge needed to thrive in a competitive environment.

### **Number of Students Enrolled in CTE Courses as Part of the Grant:**

There were 305 students total enrolled at all three schools in CTE as part of the Expansion Grant.

### **Number of Students who Subsequently Enrolled in High School CTE Courses:**

This question is not applicable to Alleghany County CTE as students were in only in grades 6 & 7. However, 100% of all 8th graders from all three feeder schools enrolled in at least one CTE course while scheduling for their 9th grade high school courses for the 2024 2025 school year.

### **Number of Students who Subsequently Participated in Internships, Cooperative Education, or Apprenticeship Programs as a Result of the Grant:**

This question is not applicable to Alleghany County CTE during this grant reporting year.

### **Number of Students who Subsequently Earned College Credit (CCP and/or articulated credit) and Approved Industry Certifications or Credentials as a result of the Grant:**

This question is not applicable to Alleghany County CTE during this grant reporting year.

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## **Apprentice Academy**

### **Use of Grant Funds:**

N/A. No grant funds were during the 2023-2024 school year.

***\*A note from CTE at NCDPI: the funds were administered during the 2023-24 school year. They were administered later than expected due to a delay in that year's legislative budget bill. Other local reports in this compilation are a testament to that fact.***

**Number of Students Enrolled in CTE Courses as Part of the Grant:**

N/A. No grant funds were during the 2023-2024 school year.

**Number of Students who Subsequently Enrolled in High School CTE Courses:**

N/A. No grant funds were during the 2023-2024 school year.

**Number of Students who Subsequently Participated in Internships, Cooperative Education, or Apprenticeship Programs as a Result of the Grant:**

N/A. No grant funds were during the 2023-2024 school year.

**Number of Students who Subsequently Earned College Credit (CCP and/or articulated credit) and Approved Industry Certifications or Credentials as a result of the Grant:**

N/A. No grant funds were during the 2023-2024 school year.

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**Brunswick County Schools**

**Use of Grant Funds:**

Funds from the CTE Grade Expansion Grant continue to be utilized to employ a full-time middle grades Career Development Coordinator (CDC). Our CDC worked diligently all school year providing career awareness and career exploration opportunities for sixth, seventh as well as eighth grade students. The CDC ensures that 6th and 7th grade students are knowledgeable about the different CTE programs as well as career pathways that are available. These pathways provide a "roadmap" for students which helps to prepare them for lifelong learning and for future employment opportunities. Our CDC effectively collaborates with the administrative and school improvement teams at each of her schools in an effort to market and promote additional middle school CTE courses.

The program MajorClarity was adopted by our district and continues to be utilized for students in grades 7-12. The results of the MajorClarity assessments are used to guide a student's career exploration activities. Utilizing the platform, students are able to develop their personalized four-year career development plans and based upon the pathway they choose, they can record their post-secondary plans, begin post-secondary exploration as well as track their own career exploration progress. Students are able to monitor their progress towards graduation as they enroll and successfully complete high school courses. By utilizing this platform as early as seventh grade, middle school CDCs are able to spend more time assisting students as they explore their specific career interests and the opportunities available in all 16 career clusters.

In sixth grade, the lessons provided are an introduction to the 16 career clusters, the diversity of careers, as well as how student interests can influence their career choices. The CDC provides middle grade students with other career guidance services and activities such as career cafe's, lunch & learn sessions, career and college fairs, STEM tours, as well as Students@Work sessions.

**Number of Students Enrolled in CTE Courses as Part of the Grant:**

The middle school CDCs, including the one funded through this grant, are instrumental in helping us to expand CTE offerings at the middle grades. The career development planning at the middle school level helped us to identify middle school CTE programs that reflect both student interest and current

labor market data. The current number of students enrolled in CTE courses as a result of the expansion grant would be 2978.

**Number of Students who Subsequently Enrolled in High School CTE Courses:**

4893 students were enrolled in high school CTE courses in the 2023-2024 SY as a result of services provided through this grant.

**Number of Students who Subsequently Participated in Internships, Cooperative Education, or Apprenticeship Programs as a Result of the Grant:**

6 CTE students engaged in internships during the 2023-2024 SY.

**Number of Students who Subsequently Earned College Credit (CCP and/or articulated credit) and Approved Industry Certifications or Credentials as a result of the Grant:**

86 CTE students engaged in CCP CTE courses during the 2023-2024 SY.

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**Cabarrus County Schools**

**Use of Grant Funds:**

For the 2023-2024 school year, no funds from this grant were used. The grant application was completed on December 15, 2023, and funds were received on March 8, 2024. The middle school Career Development Coordinator position was posted on March 20, 2024, and interviews held on April 30, 2024. A candidate was hired and began work on July 15, 2024.

**Number of Students Enrolled in CTE Courses as Part of the Grant:**

No students were supported through this grant during the 2023-2024 school year due to the late receipt of funds.

**Number of Students who Subsequently Enrolled in High School CTE Courses:**

No students were supported through this grant during the 2023-2024 school year due to the late receipt of funds.

**Number of Students who Subsequently Participated in Internships, Cooperative Education, or Apprenticeship Programs as a Result of the Grant:**

No students were supported through this grant during the 2023-2024 school year due to the late receipt of funds.

**Number of Students who Subsequently Earned College Credit (CCP and/or articulated credit) and Approved Industry Certifications or Credentials as a result of the Grant:**

No students were supported through this grant during the 2023-2024 school year due to the late receipt of funds.

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**Carteret County Schools**

**Use of Grant Funds:**

Carteret County Public Schools received the CTE Expansion Grant, which enabled the hiring of a Middle School Career Development Coordinator (CDC) to support the district's five middle schools. This role has positively impacted around 2,800 students. During the 2023-2024 school year, the previous CDC left, creating a six-month gap without a CDC. This may have contributed to the drop in number of students. The position was filled again on January 1, 2024. With a permanent CDC in place, new programs and opportunities have been introduced. The CDC has teamed up with Carteret Community College's Career Coach to organize several monthly career-focused events, such as Middle School Manufacturing Day with a tour, Farm to Table Day, Forensics Day, and IT/Fine Arts Day.

These events are conducted in partnership with Carteret Community College and the NC BioNetwork. In addition, Career Cafes have been held at the middle schools, featuring guest speakers from diverse fields like cosmetology, oceanography, dental assistance, construction trades, food services, and personal finance. The middle schools also engage annually in Students@Work STEM Week, including tours of FRC-East and FABLAB sessions with engineers. Students have participated in NCACTE Legislative Day and attended regional and state FBLA and TSA conferences with the CDC serving as chaperone and judge. High school and community college tours have been arranged, along with informative talks on Career Clusters and College & Career Programs (CCP) for all 8th graders. This year, the district implemented Major Clarity, with the Middle School CDC leading its rollout. All students completed interest and learning style assessments, which helped tailor event invitations for 8th graders based on their interests. Career Development Lessons were delivered in 8th grade classrooms, including academic planning for high school. The 8th grade Expo was reinstated for the second year post-COVID, where all 8th graders were transported to the Civic Center to explore CTE pathways through interactive activities before high school registration. Students also received the Carteret County Course Guide at this event.

**Number of Students Enrolled in CTE Courses as Part of the Grant:**

2018-2019 - 1726  
2019-2020 - 1815  
2020-2021 - 2378  
2021-2022 - 2649  
2022-2023 - 2720 (6th-8th)  
2023-2024 - 2515 (6th-8th)

**Number of Students who Subsequently Enrolled in High School CTE Courses:**

2018-2019 - 0 - This was our first year in which the grant was awarded.  
2019-2020 - 930  
2020-2021 - 2006  
2021-2022 - 3859  
2022-2023 - 3637 (9th-12th)  
2023-2024 - 3633 (9th-12th)

**Number of Students who Subsequently Participated in Internships, Cooperative Education, or Apprenticeship Programs as a Result of the Grant:**

2018-2019 - 0  
2019-2020 - 0 (9th only)  
2020-2021 - 0 (9th and 10th only)  
2021-2022 - 41 (9th, 10th, 11th only)  
2022-2023 - 154 (9th-12th)  
2023-2024 - 160 (9th-12th)

**Number of Students who Subsequently Earned College Credit (CCP and/or articulated credit) and Approved Industry Certifications or Credentials as a result of the Grant:**

2018-2019 - 0  
2019-2020 - 61 (9th only)  
2020-2021 - 74 (9th and 10th only)  
2021-2022 - 165 (9th, 10th, 11th)  
2022-2023 - 688 (9th-12th)  
2023-2024 - 1841 (9th-12th)

## Elkin City Schools

### Use of Grant Funds:

Funding has been used to provide a Middle Grade Career Development Coordinator to serve grades 6, 7, & 8. This teacher also teaches a middle school Medical Terminology course to help prepare our students for the healthcare labor market need in our local area and region. The CDC work with students to develop career goals, guides students in completing interest inventories in Major Clarity, contacts business/industry to provide Career Cafes, Career Fairs, Community College tours, and guest speakers.

### Number of Students Enrolled in CTE Courses as Part of the Grant:

Grade 6 Enrollment: 145

Grade 7 Enrollment: 101

Grade 8 Enrollment: 104

Total Enrollment: 350

### Number of Students who Subsequently Enrolled in High School CTE Courses:

Grade 9 Enrollment (2024-2025)-90

### Number of Students who Subsequently Participated in Internships, Cooperative Education, or Apprenticeship Programs as a Result of the Grant:

2023-2024 Academic Year

Internships: 19

Pre-Apprenticeships: 28

Internship Requests for 2024-2025 Academic Year

Internships: 28

Surry-Yadkin Works Pre-Apprenticeships: 33

### Number of Students who Subsequently Earned College Credit (CCP and/or articulated credit) and Approved Industry Certifications or Credentials as a result of the Grant:

83 students received college credit

Approved Industry Certifications/Credentials: 366

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## Franklin County Schools

### Use of Grant Funds:

The CTE Grade Expansion funds were utilized to continue the employment of a middle school Agriculture Education teacher. This teacher provided valuable instruction in exploratory courses, including Exploring Animal and Plant Science, Exploring Environment and Natural Resources, and Exploring Food and Agricultural Products, for students in grades 6 through 8.

### Number of Students Enrolled in CTE Courses as Part of the Grant:

A total of 240 students participated in the middle grade's agriculture courses, with 119 enrolled in semester one and 121 in semester two.

### Number of Students who Subsequently Enrolled in High School CTE Courses:

A total of 248 students are enrolled in Agriculture courses for the 2024-2025 academic year at the neighboring high school. This significant enrollment figure may serve as a strong indicator that our exploratory courses are effectively cultivating interest in Agriculture-related subjects.

**Number of Students who Subsequently Participated in Internships, Cooperative Education, or Apprenticeship Programs as a Result of the Grant:**

CTE partners with the local NC Cooperative Extension in providing educational agricultural opportunities to students. For example, summer 2023 nine students participated in the Youth Ag. Leadership Program-Franklin County whose goal was to inspire and encourage youth to consider a career in agriculture. The Franklin County Cooperative Extension also participate in Career Fairs to bring awareness to the Ag. Field.

**Number of Students who Subsequently Earned College Credit (CCP and/or articulated credit) and Approved Industry Certifications or Credentials as a result of the Grant:**

A total of 125 agriculture-related credentials were earned by students at the neighboring high school. The credential areas include OSHA10, NC Beef Quality Assurance, Beef Quality Assurance Cow/Calf and Youth for Quality Care of Animals.

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**Greene County Schools**

**Use of Grant Funds:**

The Expansion Grant funds were used to hire a certified teacher for Computer Science at Greene County Middle School until December 2023. Computer Science Discoveries course was taught for sixth and seventh grade students.

**Number of Students Enrolled in CTE Courses as Part of the Grant:**

6th grade: 75

7th grade: 86

Total: 161

**Number of Students who Subsequently Enrolled in High School CTE Courses:**

The Career and Technical Education Grade Expansion Program is designed for expanding the CTE program for 6th and 7th grade students; therefore, there are no students subsequently enrolled in high school CTE courses.

**Number of Students who Subsequently Participated in Internships, Cooperative Education, or Apprenticeship Programs as a Result of the Grant:**

The Career and Technical Education Grade Expansion Program is designed for expanding the CTE program for 6th and 7th grade students; therefore, there are no students subsequently participating in internships, cooperative education, or apprenticeship programs.

**Number of Students who Subsequently Earned College Credit (CCP and/or articulated credit) and Approved Industry Certifications or Credentials as a result of the Grant:**

The Career and Technical Education Grade Expansion Program is designed for expanding the CTE program for 6th and 7th grade students; therefore, there are no students who subsequently earned college credit or industry certifications/credentials.

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**Haywood County Schools**

**Use of Grant Funds:**



The grant allowed us to pay for 7 months of employment for two ½ time middle school CTE teachers. Although these funds assisted in a small portion of salary for these teachers, we did not find it to be a great help due to the funds arriving in March of the school year.

**Number of Students Enrolled in CTE Courses as Part of the Grant:**

There were 285 students enrolled in CTE courses as a result of this grant in the 2023-2024 school year.

**Number of Students who Subsequently Enrolled in High School CTE Courses:**

N/A due to the timeline of grant.

**Number of Students who Subsequently Participated in Internships, Cooperative Education, or Apprenticeship Programs as a Result of the Grant:**

N/A due to the timeline of grant.

**Number of Students who Subsequently Earned College Credit (CCP and/or articulated credit) and Approved Industry Certifications or Credentials as a result of the Grant:**

N/A due to the timeline of grant.

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**Hickory City Schools**

**Use of Grant Funds:**

Grant funds have been used to pay a portion of the salary for a middle school Career Development Coordinator to provide career related services to middle school students, primarily 6th and 7th grade students, and to provide additional support to our CTE teachers and our special populations students. It did not cover her full salary because she transitioned into the CDC role mid-year and had been a counselor beforehand.

**Number of Students Enrolled in CTE Courses as Part of the Grant:**

471 (254 at Northview, 217 at Grandview, counting only 6th and 7th graders)

**Number of Students who Subsequently Enrolled in High School CTE Courses:**

In the 2023-2024 school year, there were 836 students enrolled in CTE courses at the high school level.

**Number of Students who Subsequently Participated in Internships, Cooperative Education, or Apprenticeship Programs as a Result of the Grant:**

28 of our students in the 2023-2024 school year participated in internships and pre-apprenticeships.

**Number of Students who Subsequently Earned College Credit (CCP and/or articulated credit) and Approved Industry Certifications or Credentials as a result of the Grant:**

213 students across our district earned CCP credit. 49 of those 213 earned CCP credit in a CTE course.

Students in the district earned a total of 1162 industry credentials over the course of the school year.

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**Hyde County Schools**

**Use of Grant Funds:**

The grant funds have been used to establish Minecraft Coding, Entrepreneurship, and Marketing classes for the 6th and 7th graders for 24-25 school year.

**Number of Students Enrolled in CTE Courses as Part of the Grant:**

47

**Number of Students who Subsequently Enrolled in High School CTE Courses:**

No answer yet

**Number of Students who Subsequently Participated in Internships, Cooperative Education, or Apprenticeship Programs as a Result of the Grant:**

No answer yet

**Number of Students who Subsequently Earned College Credit (CCP and/or articulated credit) and Approved Industry Certifications or Credentials as a result of the Grant:**

No answer yet

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**Johnston County Public Schools**

**Use of Grant Funds:**

Johnston County Public Schools (JCPS) employed two part-time career development coordinators (CDC) with grant funding to serve students and teachers in middle schools. The district purchased Xello access for these students, as well. This enabled students in grades 6 and 7 access to career exploration activities. Further, it prepared them to make better informed decisions prior to registering for high school courses and selecting career pathways.

**Number of Students Enrolled in CTE Courses as Part of the Grant:**

The following numbers of students enrolled in CTE courses as part of the Expansion Grant:

11,410 duplicated

6,836 unduplicated

**Number of Students who Subsequently Enrolled in High School CTE Courses:**

The following numbers of students subsequently enrolled in high school CTE courses as a result of the renewed Expansion Grant across multiple years:

16,397 duplicated

8,520 unduplicated

**Number of Students who Subsequently Participated in Internships, Cooperative Education, or Apprenticeship Programs as a Result of the Grant**

The following number of students subsequently participated in internships, cooperative education, or apprenticeship programs as a result of the CTE Grade Expansion Grant that was renewed and implemented across multiple years:

243

**Number of Students who Subsequently Earned College Credit (CCP and/or articulated credit) and Approved Industry Certifications or Credentials as a result of the Grant:**

The following number of students subsequently earned college credit (CCP and/or articulated credit) AND approved industry certifications/credentials as a result of the CTE Grade Expansion Grant:

CCP and UMO - 316

Certifications/Credentials - 5,929

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## **Lenoir County Schools**

### **Use of Grant Funds:**

The grant funding is being used to pay for a Middle Grades Career Development Coordinator who will serve all four middle schools in Lenoir County. The grant notification came in the spring 2024 semester. Lenoir County did not have a Middle Grades Career Development Coordinator. We assembled a hiring team to review applications and interview the candidates. We offered the position to a sitting middle school STEM CTE teacher in May 2024. In order for her to finish out the school year and to be nondisruptive to student learning environments, the teacher agreed to begin her new position in fall of 2024.

### **Number of Students Enrolled in CTE Courses as Part of the Grant:**

There are approximately 1,050 students enrolled in middle school CTE courses. There are approximately 1,894 middle school students in Lenoir County.

### **Number of Students who Subsequently Enrolled in High School CTE Courses:**

Not applicable at this time.

### **Number of Students who Subsequently Participated in Internships, Cooperative Education, or Apprenticeship Programs as a Result of the Grant:**

Not applicable at this time.

### **Number of Students who Subsequently Earned College Credit (CCP and/or articulated credit) and Approved Industry Certifications or Credentials as a result of the Grant:**

Not applicable at this time.

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## **Martin County Schools**

### **Use of Grant Funds:**

Funds will be used to secure a teacher with a background in computer science to teach the middle school computer science curriculum. The teacher will also be using Paxton-Patterson lab modules to provide hands-on learning regarding careers in conjunction with digital literacy, mathematic algorithms, CODE.org, and the SCRATCH platform.

### **Number of Students Enrolled in CTE Courses as Part of the Grant:**

South Creek Middle School is the smaller of our two middle schools in the district. This grant position will service 180 students for the school year, approximately 90 each semester.

### **Number of Students who Subsequently Enrolled in High School CTE Courses:**

This is the first year of CTE Computer Science being taught at South Creek Middle School. The high school CTE program has now added two courses of Computer Science with approximately 25 in each section.

### **Number of Students who Subsequently Participated in Internships, Cooperative Education, or Apprenticeship Programs as a Result of the Grant:**

N/A (First Year of Program)

### **Number of Students who Subsequently Earned College Credit (CCP and/or articulated credit) and Approved Industry Certifications or Credentials as a result of the Grant:**

N/A (First Year of Program)

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## **McDowell County Schools**

**Use of Grant Funds:**

Our middle school course offerings have been expanded to align with all high school CTE course offerings. We offer agriculture, business, digital media, introduction to family and consumer science, career exploration, and intro to trade and industry modules. We have added Paxton Patterson modules.

**Number of Students Enrolled in CTE Courses as Part of the Grant:**

We have 1114 students enrolled in CTE courses between the three middle schools.

**Number of Students who Subsequently Enrolled in High School CTE Courses:**

We have 850+ students enrolled in high school CTE courses from the program start date. This number will continue to increase.

**Number of Students who Subsequently Participated in Internships, Cooperative Education, or Apprenticeship Programs as a Result of the Grant:**

We have 50 students who have participated in internships, cooperative education, pre-apprenticeship, or apprenticeship program as a result of the CTE Grade Expansion Grant as a junior or senior. This number will continue increase.

**Number of Students who Subsequently Earned College Credit (CCP and/or articulated credit) and Approved Industry Certifications or Credentials as a result of the Grant:**

We have 450 students who have earned college credit and certifications/credentials as a result of the CTE Grade Expansion Grant. This number will continue to increase.

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### Mount Airy City Schools

**Use of Grant Funds:**

We used the funds to hire a Career Development Coordinator in the spring semester at Mt Airy Middle School. This position will continue into the school year 24-25.

**Number of Students Enrolled in CTE Courses as Part of the Grant:**

We used the funds to hire a Career Development Coordinator in the spring semester at Mt Airy Middle School. This position will continue into the school year 24-25.

**Number of Students who Subsequently Enrolled in High School CTE Courses:**

The 6th and 7th grade students who benefitted from this grant are not yet in high school and will not be able to be tracked until 25-26SY.

**Number of Students who Subsequently Participated in Internships, Cooperative Education, or Apprenticeship Programs as a Result of the Grant:**

There were no applicable opportunities for 6th and 7th grade students to complete the internship or apprenticeship program. However, 135 of those students will participate in Students @ Work in 24-25 and will have the opportunity to complete those experiences when they reach high school.

**Number of Students who Subsequently Earned College Credit (CCP and/or articulated credit) and Approved Industry Certifications or Credentials as a result of the Grant:**

There were no applicable opportunities for 6th and 7th grade students to complete the credentials or earn CCP credit. However, this opportunity will increase when they reach high school in 25-26.

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## **North East Carolina Preparatory School**

### **Use of Grant Funds:**

The grant funds have been utilized to expand Career and Technical Education (CTE) programs and courses within our school, now including sixth and seventh-grade agriculture. With these funds, we hired a new agriculture education teacher who is dedicated to implementing and delivering these expanded programs. Additionally, the grant supported professional development and support services for the new hire, ensuring they are well-equipped to provide high-quality CTE education and help our younger students explore and engage in various career pathways from an early age.

### **Number of Students Enrolled in CTE Courses as Part of the Grant:**

A total of 180 sixth and seventh-grade students are enrolled in CTE courses as part of the Expansion Grant.

### **Number of Students who Subsequently Enrolled in High School CTE Courses:**

Subsequently, 94 students enrolled in high school CTE courses following their participation in the expanded program.

### **Number of Students who Subsequently Participated in Internships, Cooperative Education, or Apprenticeship Programs as a Result of the Grant:**

As a result of the CTE Grade Expansion Grant, a total of 5 students subsequently participated in internships, cooperative education, or apprenticeship programs.

### **Number of Students who Subsequently Earned College Credit (CCP and/or articulated credit) and Approved Industry Certifications or Credentials as a result of the Grant:**

We have not yet been able to determine the number of students who subsequently earned college credit (CCP and/or articulated credit) or approved industry certifications/credentials as a result of the CTE Grade Expansion Grant. However, we anticipate a steady growth in the number of students achieving these milestones in the near future.

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## **Pender County Schools**

### **Use of Grant Funds:**

With the Grade Expansion Grant, Pender County Schools were able to significantly enhance their Career and Technical Education (CTE) program for middle school students. The funds were allocated to create a new position for a Middle School Career Development Coordinator (CDC), whose role was pivotal in expanding and developing CTE offerings.

Traditionally, the middle school CTE program included courses in Computer Science and Information Technology Education, Business/Finance/Marketing Education, Career Development Education, and Technology Education. However, with the grant, the program was broadened to include Health Science Education, Trade and Industry Education, and Family and Consumer Science Education. These new offerings allowed students to explore a wider range of career paths earlier in their educational journey.

The introduction of the middle school CDC enabled a more structured and comprehensive approach to career readiness. This included the implementation of career development classroom lessons, coordination of work-based learning experiences, and enhancement of the eighth-grade career readiness series. The CDC also facilitated transitional visits, classroom career development lessons, and the creation of four-year career development plans.

Furthermore, the middle school CDC was crucial in organizing career fairs, job shadowing opportunities, guest speaker sessions, and industry tours, thus providing sixth and seventh graders with

a broader scope of career awareness. The CDC also served as a bridge between high schools, middle schools, and elementary schools, ensuring a seamless transition for students moving through the education system.

By working closely with counselors, middle school administrators, and CTE administrative staff, the CDC helped to implement the new course offerings and align middle school programs with corresponding high school pathways. This strategic alignment allowed for a deeper exploration of career interests and better preparation for high school and beyond.

Overall, the grant funds were effectively utilized to expand and enhance CTE programs for middle school students, fostering earlier and more informed career exploration and development, and ultimately contributing to higher engagement and success in students' educational and career pursuits.

**Number of Students Enrolled in CTE Courses as Part of the Grant:**

1,961

**Number of Students who Subsequently Enrolled in High School CTE Courses:**

1,961

**Number of Students who Subsequently Participated in Internships, Cooperative Education, or Apprenticeship Programs as a Result of the Grant:**

Not applicable at this time due to grant funding being utilized for less than a year; expecting to observe progress by year 3.

**Number of Students who Subsequently Earned College Credit (CCP and/or articulated credit) and Approved Industry Certifications or Credentials as a result of the Grant:**

Not applicable at this time due to grant funding being utilized for less than a year; expecting to observe progress by year 3.

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**Public Schools of Robeson County**

**Use of Grant Funds:**

With the use of the grant the district was able to provide Computer Science Discoveries coding to all sixth-grade students at three K-6 school that did not have any CTE program offerings.

**Number of Students Enrolled in CTE Courses as Part of the Grant:**

157

**Number of Students who Subsequently Enrolled in High School CTE Courses:**

N/A

**Number of Students who Subsequently Participated in Internships, Cooperative Education, or Apprenticeship Programs as a Result of the Grant:**

N/A

**Number of Students who Subsequently Earned College Credit (CCP and/or articulated credit) and Approved Industry Certifications or Credentials as a result of the Grant:**

N/A

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## **Randolph County School System**

### **Use of Grant Funds:**

The funding was utilized to employ a Middle School Career Development Coordinator. In order to effectively meet the goals of the vision statement of the RCSS CTE Department and support our College and Career Continuum to provide targeted experiences in career awareness (Grade 5), career exploration (Grades 6-8), and career development (Grades 9-12), the RCSS needed additional staff to effectively provide these opportunities. This staff member is also responsible for ensuring that all students in grades 6-8 have a documented career development plan. The Middle School CDC met with each traditional middle school student at multiple points throughout the year to have targeted conversations regarding self-exploration, SMART goal setting, and career research. This information was then used to generate a career development plan for each student. The Middle School CDC also worked with school-based staff to facilitate 2-year Community College, 4-year University and industry tours to provide students with exposure to post-secondary opportunities.

### **Number of Students Enrolled in CTE Courses as Part of the Grant:**

All 6-8 grade students in the 6 traditional middle schools were served by this staff member. She served 3,200 students in this capacity. Thanks to the funding received in this grant, all middle school students now have a targeted Career Development Plan that aligns with their post-secondary goals. This is the first school year that the CTE department has been able to bring this initiative to fidelity.

### **Number of Students who Subsequently Enrolled in High School CTE Courses:**

N/A

### **Number of Students who Subsequently Participated in Internships, Cooperative Education, or Apprenticeship Programs as a Result of the Grant:**

N/A due to a Middle School position.

### **Number of Students who Subsequently Earned College Credit (CCP and/or articulated credit) and Approved Industry Certifications or Credentials as a result of the Grant:**

N/A due to a Middle School position.

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## **Roanoke Rapids Graded School District**

### **Use of Grant Funds:**

NCSBE approved this round of funding on March 7, 2024, which was close to ending the school year. No new programs were implemented using PRC079 and no funds have been spent.

### **Number of Students Enrolled in CTE Courses as Part of the Grant:**

0

### **Number of Students who Subsequently Enrolled in High School CTE Courses:**

0

### **Number of Students who Subsequently Participated in Internships, Cooperative Education, or Apprenticeship Programs as a Result of the Grant:**

0

### **Number of Students who Subsequently Earned College Credit (CCP and/or articulated credit) and Approved Industry Certifications or Credentials as a result of the Grant:**

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### **Sampson County Schools**

**Use of Grant Funds:**

Our intention in writing the grant was to hire a middle school CDC who would assist in implementing the required CDP among 7th grade students, coordinate career exploration activities among our four middle schools, and push down into our eight elementary schools to begin introductory career exploration activities. Our superintendent did not understand that this grant provided funding for the position for multiple years and decided that he would not request permission from our Board of Education to hire the position.

**Number of Students Enrolled in CTE Courses as Part of the Grant:**

Sampson County Schools served 1,434 middle school students in CTE courses in the 2023-2024 school year.

**Number of Students who Subsequently Enrolled in High School CTE Courses:**

As we did not hire this position as intended, we cannot provide data that demonstrates the impact of this position on students entering high school CTE programs.

**Number of Students who Subsequently Participated in Internships, Cooperative Education, or Apprenticeship Programs as a Result of the Grant:**

As we did not hire this position in the 2023-2024 school year, we had no students in this category. Had we hired based on our request, the position would have served elementary and middle school students who would not have been eligible for internships, cooperative education, or apprenticeships.

**Number of Students who Subsequently Earned College Credit (CCP and/or articulated credit) and Approved Industry Certifications or Credentials as a result of the Grant:**

As we did not hire this position as intended, we cannot provide data that demonstrates the impact of this position on students who earned college credit and/or industry approved certifications or credentials.

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### **Vance County Schools**

**Use of Grant Funds:**

Scholars were able to participate in TY012 Engineering: Exploring Technology II. Before TY012, they had taken TY011 Engineering: Exploring Technology I and PLTW App Creators.

**Number of Students Enrolled in CTE Courses as Part of the Grant:**

40 students were enrolled in TY012 Engineering: Exploring Technology II

**Number of Students who Subsequently Enrolled in High School CTE Courses:**

Twenty-five scholars are enrolled in the BP41 Computer Science courses offered at the high school.

**Number of Students who Subsequently Participated in Internships, Cooperative Education, or Apprenticeship Programs as a Result of the Grant:**

Not applicable

**Number of Students who Subsequently Earned College Credit (CCP and/or articulated credit) and Approved Industry Certifications or Credentials as a result of the Grant:**



Not applicable

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### **Wilkes County Schools**

#### **Use of Grant Funds:**

For 2023-24, we expanded our support to the middle schools by adding a full-time MS CDC position that was housed and served our four middle schools. This new MS CDC provided additional support and career-related services to all 6th and 7th grade students. Using Naviance, the MS CDC continued to teach 6th grade students how to claim their accounts, take learning styles inventories, take career assessments, and begin exploring careers. For 7th grade students, in addition to Naviance and Realities of Money, the MS CDC coordinated 7th grade level field trips, hosted by the local industry and community partners. Additionally, the MS CDC continued recruiting guest speakers and seeking new career-related opportunities for our students.

At the middle school level, students have the opportunity to explore Technology, Engineering and Design/Business, Finance and Information Technology/Computer Science Discoveries (PILOT). WCS is currently participating in the Middle Grades Vision Pilot with the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction. According to the guide provided, "North Carolina Career and Technical Education middle grade programs provide a culture of learning that encourages all students to discover, explore, and engage in curriculum and opportunities to introduce and develop 21st century skills in preparation for high school, college, and career." This Career and Technical Education Middle Grades Vision Guide was developed to assist CTE Directors, CTE Coordinators, Curriculum Instructional Management Coordinators, CTE and School-based Support Staff, School Administration, and Teachers, in preparing students to meet the North Carolina Career and Technical Education middle grades vision. The following components have been identified from research as the theory of action for designing middle grades CTE programs.

- Equitable and Inclusive of Each Student
- Anchored in Careers
- Grounded in Experiential and Hands on Learning
- Balanced and Breadth Across the Curriculum
- Integrated into the Broader K-12 Career Development System
- Inclusive and Dedicated Instructional Time
- Communicated Effectively to Students and Their Families
- Focused on Student Growth
- Standards Based

The middle school CDC provided support to our special populations students for middle and support our high school CDC/SPC. The MS CDC assisted and collaborated with EC, 504, EL, and SPC staff, along with school counselors, to help identify students for CTE teachers and to ensure that additional support is provided in accordance with each student's individualized plan. With the large number of special populations students, we have in our school system, our students, and also our teachers, needed this additional support.

Upon the Middle Grades Vision Pilot our middle school CDC was our "pilot champion" facilitating our implementation plan to achieve our goal of offering CTE modules to support each CTE course and Career and Technical Student Organization (CTSO) at their respective high schools. The middle school CDC was the key personnel that guided the teachers and administrators to complete the needs assessment, opportunities for improvement and implementation plan. The MS CDC also worked with middle school CTE teachers and counselors to initiate the Career Development Plan initiative for our seventh-grade students.

WCS values CTE, as evidenced by the high numbers of CTE enrollment and strong business and industry partnerships. Additionally, CTE related strategies are embedded throughout our 2022-2025

district strategic plan, including a goal that 100% of high school students will have a career development plan, which begins at the middle school level. The district fully supports the continued use of Naviance as a tool to support all students in grades 6-12. This program allows students to take career assessments, research careers, take learning styles inventories, research post-secondary institutions, complete resumes, select career pathways, and seek employment. This information is used to create career plans. The MS CDC was a key player in the utilization of Naviance, due to the MS CDC's role in introducing middle school students to the software. As the ESSER funds are due to cycle out, we are anticipating using the CTE Expansion Grant funds to be able to continue this position and create sustainability within our middle school CTE program.

**Number of Students Enrolled in CTE Courses as Part of the Grant:**

1,828

**Number of Students who Subsequently Enrolled in High School CTE Courses:**

1,366

**Number of Students who Subsequently Participated in Internships, Cooperative Education, or Apprenticeship Programs as a Result of the Grant:**

71

**Number of Students who Subsequently Earned College Credit (CCP and/or articulated credit) and Approved Industry Certifications or Credentials as a result of the Grant:**

2,638

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## **UPDATED LEGISLATIVE REQUIREMENTS ON REPORTING**

Pursuant to the legislative changes passed in House Bill 259 / SL 2023-134 to the reporting requirements for the Education and Workforce Innovation Commission Grants Report, the following recommendations have been made:

1. An accounting of how funds and personnel resources were utilized for the program and their impact on student achievement, retention, and employability.

***These are included in the local reports.***

2. Recommended statutory and policy changes.

***At this time, there are no recommended statutory or policy changes.***

3. Recommendations for improvement of the program.

***At this time, the Education and Workforce Innovation Commission is undergoing a transition of leadership (electing a new Chair and Vice-Chair) and will see several individuals' appointments end in 2025, resulting in new appointees. The Commission has always prioritized the improvement of both programs through increasing awareness of the grant opportunities, being of service to grant applicants, and prioritizing the inclusion of equity and equality in Commission initiative planning.***

4. For the Career and Technical Education Grade Expansion Grants, recommendations on increasing availability of grants after the first two years of the program to include additional local school administrative units, charter schools, or providing additional grants to prior recipients.  
***The Commission prioritizes increasing availability of, awareness of, and access to these grant opportunities. It is the belief of the CTE division at NCDPI that this priority will continue into 2025 and 2026 with new Commission leadership and members.***