



North Carolina's Funding Models

North Carolina provides dual enrollment opportunities to eligible high school students at state public postsecondary institutions through its [Career and College Promise](#) program. CCP includes three dual enrollment opportunities: College Transfer Pathway, Career and Technical Education (CTE) Pathway and Cooperative Innovative High School (CIHS) programs.

The College Transfer Pathway is designed for students who wish to get an early start on a college transfer associate degree that leads to a bachelor's degree, while the CTE Pathway is designed for students who wish to begin a certificate or diploma that leads to an associate degree in an applied science program in a particular technical field or career area. Courses for these two pathways are offered through North Carolina Community College System ([NCCCS](#)) institutions and are taught by community college faculty or by high school instructors meeting community college faculty qualifications. These two pathways are available to students enrolled in public or private secondary schools as well as students who receive home instruction.

Cooperative and Innovative High School programs consist of self-contained public high schools located on community college or university campuses that offer admitted students the opportunity to work concurrently toward completion of both a high school diploma and an associate degree or transferable credits. These programs are established as partnerships between one high school and one state postsecondary institution. Participating institutions may be part of NCCCS, the University of North Carolina System or North Carolina Independent Colleges and Universities.

CIHS programs [target](#) students who are at risk of dropping out of high school, are first-generation college students and/or who would benefit from accelerated learning opportunities, including students traditionally underrepresented in postsecondary education. These schools offer both high school and college courses. College-level courses are taught by college faculty or by high school instructors who meet college faculty qualifications. Only students admitted to CIHS schools can access dual enrollment through these programs.

Who Pays for Career and College Promise?

North Carolina uses a collaborative funding model to support all three opportunities offered through its CCP program. Tuition is waived for students accessing college courses through the program. The state covers the cost of the tuition waiver, compensating participating postsecondary institutions by providing a full-time equivalency allocation for each program participant.

The state funds school districts by allocating Average Daily Membership funds through the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction for all students regardless of their CCP participation status. The costs for fees, books, supplies and transportation related to program participation are the responsibility of the student but may be defrayed wholly or in part by the school district. Most CIHS programs also have access to [additional supplemental funding](#) through the department of public instruction.

Funding for North Carolina's Career and College Promise Program

| | Tuition | Fees | Books/Supplies | Transportation |
|---------------------------|---------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| State | ✓ | | | |
| Student | | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| Postsecondary Institution | | ✓ (Local decision) | | |
| School District | | ✓ (Local decision) | ✓ (Local decision) | ✓ (Local decision) |

✓ **Always** contributes

✓ **Sometimes** contributes

☐ **Never** contributes

Although the state waives tuition for students participating in all three CCP opportunities, the remainder of this case study limits its detailed examination of program funding to the College Transfer Pathway and the CTE Pathway, as these two pathways are accessible to all high school students in the state. Access to CIHS programs is limited to students from targeted populations who are admitted to self-contained public CIHS schools.

State Funding

The state waives tuition costs for all students participating in the program. To compensate public postsecondary institutions for waiving tuition, North Carolina includes students participating in CCP when calculating the full-time equivalent student counts for the institution. It also requires program accountability through institutional legislative reporting, as established by the [Appropriations Act of 2011](#).

Student eligibility requirements for the program have been expanded legislatively on multiple occasions since it was established; the latest expansion occurred in

2019. These expansions have [increased the size and scope](#) of the program. The appropriation amounts are included in the [state budget](#) allocations to postsecondary institutions; because appropriations are tied to student counts, program funding is designed to expand as program participation increases.

The state requires the North Carolina Community College System, the Department of Public Instruction, the University of North Carolina System and the North Carolina Independent Colleges and Universities to submit an annual joint legislative report detailing a variety of expenses, including costs associated with delivering the CCP program. The program cost reporting was previously limited to the amount of tuition waivers and fee reduction; however, the [Appropriations Act of 2021](#) updated reporting requirements, specifying that reporting must now include information on all costs associated with the program.

Nonstate Funding

Although not required by the state, for courses offered through the College Transfer Pathway and the CTE Pathway, school districts and community colleges may contribute to students' non-tuition costs. School districts may choose to cover costs for student fees, books, supplies and transportation. Interviews with department of public instruction staff indicate that many school districts see it as their responsibility to cover student costs beyond tuition. Community colleges may also defray the cost of student fees; NCCCS' Career and College Promise reference manual, accessible through their [CCP website](#), encourages community colleges to reduce student costs in collaboration with school districts.

Direct Student Support

All eligible North Carolina students enrolled in public or private secondary schools as well as students who receive home instruction have tuition-free access to community college courses offered through NCCCS' College Transfer Pathway and CTE Pathway. Students are responsible for the cost of all fees, books and materials and transportation if these are not covered by the local school district or community college. Students are encouraged to coordinate with a school counselor to determine how costs are covered at their school.