

GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA
SESSION 2021

H

1

HOUSE BILL 744

Short Title: CC Workforce Development/Scholarship Pilot. (Public)

Sponsors: Representatives Brown, Richardson, Wray, and Hunt (Primary Sponsors).
For a complete list of sponsors, refer to the North Carolina General Assembly web site.

Referred to: Education - Community Colleges, if favorable, Appropriations, if favorable,
Rules, Calendar, and Operations of the House

May 3, 2021

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT TO ESTABLISH A COMMUNITY COLLEGE SCHOLARSHIP PILOT PROGRAM
IN CERTAIN COUNTIES TO COVER THE COST OF ATTENDANCE FOR HIGH
SCHOOL STUDENTS ENROLLING IN CERTAIN WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT
PROGRAMS.

The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

SECTION 1. Program Established; Purpose. – Within the funds appropriated by Section 4 of this act, the State Board of Community Colleges shall establish a pilot program at the community colleges that serve Mecklenburg County, Halifax County, and Cumberland County to provide scholarships to high school students who graduate from a public high school located in those counties to attend community college programs at no cost to the student. The purpose of the pilot program shall be to provide scholarships for students to attend community colleges to enable those students to become better equipped to tackle the job market and strengthen the State's marketability. The pilot program shall test the feasibility of expanding the program statewide and the potential for realizing significant cost-savings to the State. The pilot program shall operate for five academic years, beginning with the 2022-2023 academic year and ending with the 2026-2027 academic year.

SECTION 2. Selection of Applicants. – The State Board shall establish criteria for the pilot program to award scholarships to students who meet the following:

- (1) In the academic semester prior to enrolling in a community college, graduate with at least a 2.7 unweighted grade point average from a public high school located in one of the counties served by a community college participating in the pilot program.
- (2) Qualify as a resident for tuition purposes under the criteria set forth in G.S. 116-143.1 and in accordance with the coordinated and centralized residency determination process administered by the State Education Assistance Authority.
- (3) Meet enrollment standards of the community college participating in the pilot program.
- (4) Submit a Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) and demonstrate a median household family income that is lower than eighty-five thousand dollars (\$85,000) per year, according to federal methodology in Title IV of the Higher Education Act of 1965, as amended, 20 U.S.C. § 1070, et seq.



- 1 (5) Complete at least 20 hours of community service hours prior to graduation
2 from high school.
- 3 (6) Gain admission to a program of study in one of the following subject areas:
4 science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM), health care,
5 advanced manufacturing, transportation or logistics, information technology,
6 or certain programs with a regional demand, as determined by the State Board.

7 **SECTION 3.** Award of Scholarships. – A student selected for the award of a
8 scholarship under the pilot program shall receive a scholarship in an amount to cover the actual
9 cost of tuition and fees to attend the community college after the determination of awards from
10 any other grants or scholarships received by that student from other State or federal sources. The
11 State Board of Community Colleges shall award scholarships to eligible students in the order in
12 which they are received. The State Board shall award scholarships for subsequent academic
13 periods for scholarship renewals before awarding scholarships to new recipients. A student
14 receiving a scholarship shall be eligible for the renewal of a scholarship if the student continues
15 in a program of study described in subdivision (6) of Section 2 of this act and maintains at least
16 a cumulative 2.5 grade point average.

17 **SECTION 4.** Appropriation. – There is appropriated from the General Fund to the
18 Community Colleges System Office the sum of one million dollars (\$1,000,000) in recurring
19 funds for the 2022-2023 fiscal year to implement the pilot program pursuant to this act, beginning
20 with scholarships awarded for the 2022-2023 academic year for high school students graduating
21 at the end of the 2021-2022 school year. It is the intent of the General Assembly to appropriate
22 from the General Fund to the Community Colleges System Office the sum of one million dollars
23 (\$1,000,000) in additional recurring funds for the 2023-2024 fiscal year for the purpose of
24 awarding scholarships for the 2023-2024 academic year for an additional cohort of high school
25 students graduating at the end of the 2022-2023 school year. Recurring funds appropriated in
26 subsequent fiscal years pursuant to this act shall be made available for successive cohorts of high
27 school students as the students participating in the pilot program complete their course of study
28 at the community colleges during the five-year term of the program.

29 **SECTION 5.** Report. – The State Board of Community Colleges shall report to the
30 Joint Legislative Education Oversight Committee by February 1, 2023, and by February 1 of
31 each year for the duration of the program on the results of the pilot program, including at least
32 the following information:

- 33 (1) Number of students applying and awarded scholarships, including
34 information about student demographics, county of residence, community
35 college, and programs of study.
- 36 (2) Amount of funds expended for scholarships.
- 37 (3) Recommendations on expanding the program, including statewide.

38 **SECTION 6.** Effective Date. – This act becomes effective July 1, 2021, and applies
39 beginning with the award of scholarships for the 2022-2023 academic year.