

§ 115C-64.17. Career and Technical Education Grade Expansion Grants.

(a) CTE Grade Expansion Grants. – 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. Grant funds shall be allocated to selected local school administrative units and charter schools as competitive 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. 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 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 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 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 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 CTE grade expansion 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, as provided in G.S. 115C-64.16(a1). The 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; 2020-78, s. 2.2(b); 2023-134, s. 7.43.)