



Governor Cooper is working to make North Carolina a Top 10 Educated state by 2025. That includes increasing the number of North Carolinians with a higher education degree from 38% to 55%. Governor Cooper has proposed a new scholarship, NC GROW (Getting Ready for Opportunities in the Workforce), that can help us get there.

What is the NC GROW Scholarship?

Free community college paid for by the lottery. Starting in 2018, good students who recently graduated high school would get free tuition to any NC community college. NC GROW would cover last-dollar tuition and fees for students who have used up other financial aid options.

Why Free Community College?

Expanding access to community college will benefit North Carolina's economy. Since the recession, 95% of newly-created jobs have required more education than a high-school diploma. Our state's exceptional community college system provides high-quality workforce training that prepares students for the jobs of today and tomorrow. Companies seeking skilled, educated workers will feel even more confident in expanding or relocating to North Carolina, bringing good-paying jobs and boosting our economy.

Community colleges are accessible. Every North Carolinian lives within a 30-minute drive of a campus. The North Carolina Community College System is the third largest education system in the country by number of campuses and has the lowest tuition rate in the Southeast.

Have Other States Done This?

Minnesota, Oregon and Tennessee have similar programs. Kentucky plans to start one this fall.

In the first year of Tennessee's program—passed into law by a Republican governor and conservative legislature— 58,000 students applied, 15,000 were expected to enroll, and Tennessee had the highest increase of any state in students applying for federal financial aid for community college. In its second year in 2016, Tennessee saw record enrollment at community colleges across the state.

In fact, Tennessee's program is so successful and popular that Republican Governor Bill Haslam has proposed expanding the program to all adults, in addition to the currently eligible high school seniors.

If you like the idea of the NC GROW Scholarship Program, you can contact your legislator and share your support. Find your legislators [here](#).