

Cooperative Innovative High School Program Recommendations

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Career and College Promise

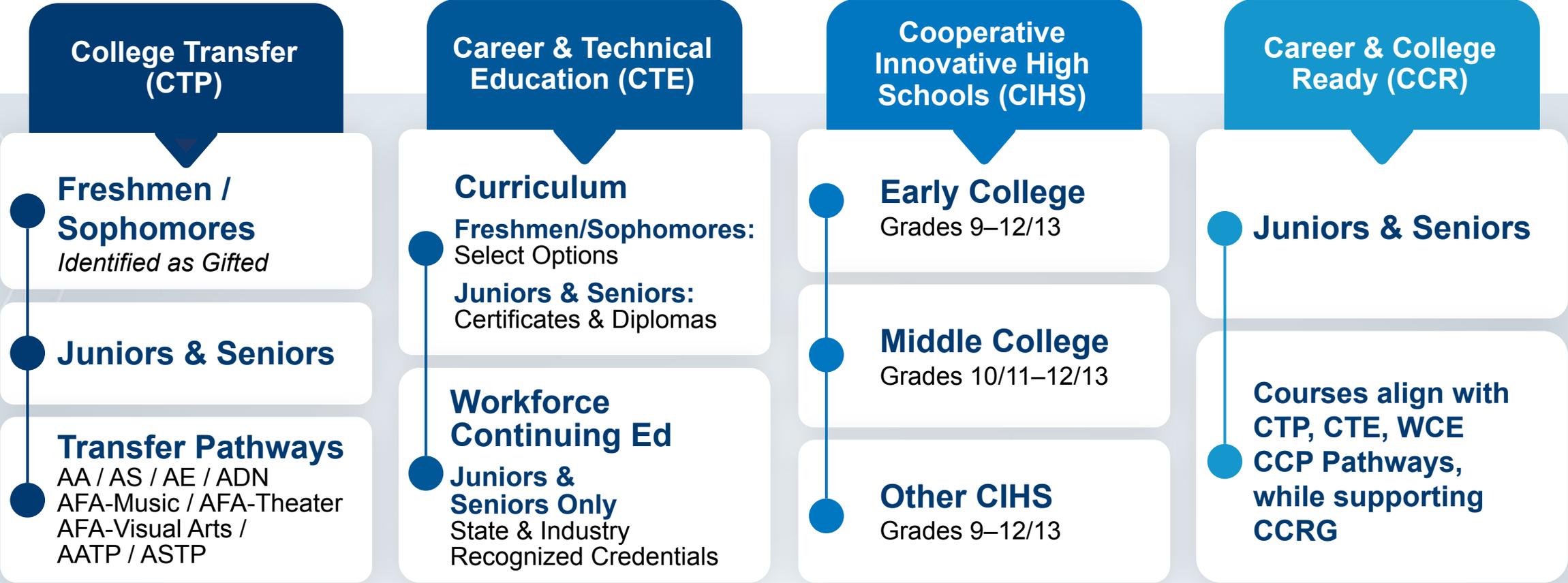
NC Session Law 2011-145

“The purpose of Career and College Promise is to offer ***structured opportunities*** for qualified high school students to dually enroll in community college courses that provide pathways consistent with subsection (b) of this section that lead to a certificate, diploma, or degree as well as provide entry-level jobs skills.”

Career and College Promise

Structured Pathways

NC's program to provide high school students access to post-secondary education, without cost.



CIHS Application Process

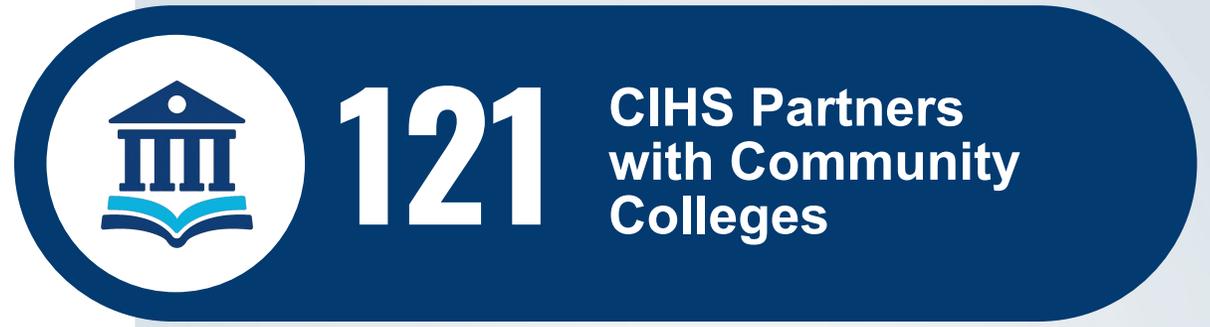
Per legislation, led by the Joint Advisory Committee (JAC): Representatives from NCDPI, NC Community College System, UNC System, NC Independent Colleges and Universities

- Submission of Letter of Intent, June 15
- Applicants Orientation Meeting, June 30
- Technical Assistance and Individual Feedback
- Application submitted, October 10
- JAC Application Review/Clarifications
- JAC Recommendations to the SBE, then to State Board of Community Colleges or independent colleges Governing Board for approval
- Final approval by General Assembly

Cooperative Innovative High Schools (CIHS) 2025-2026

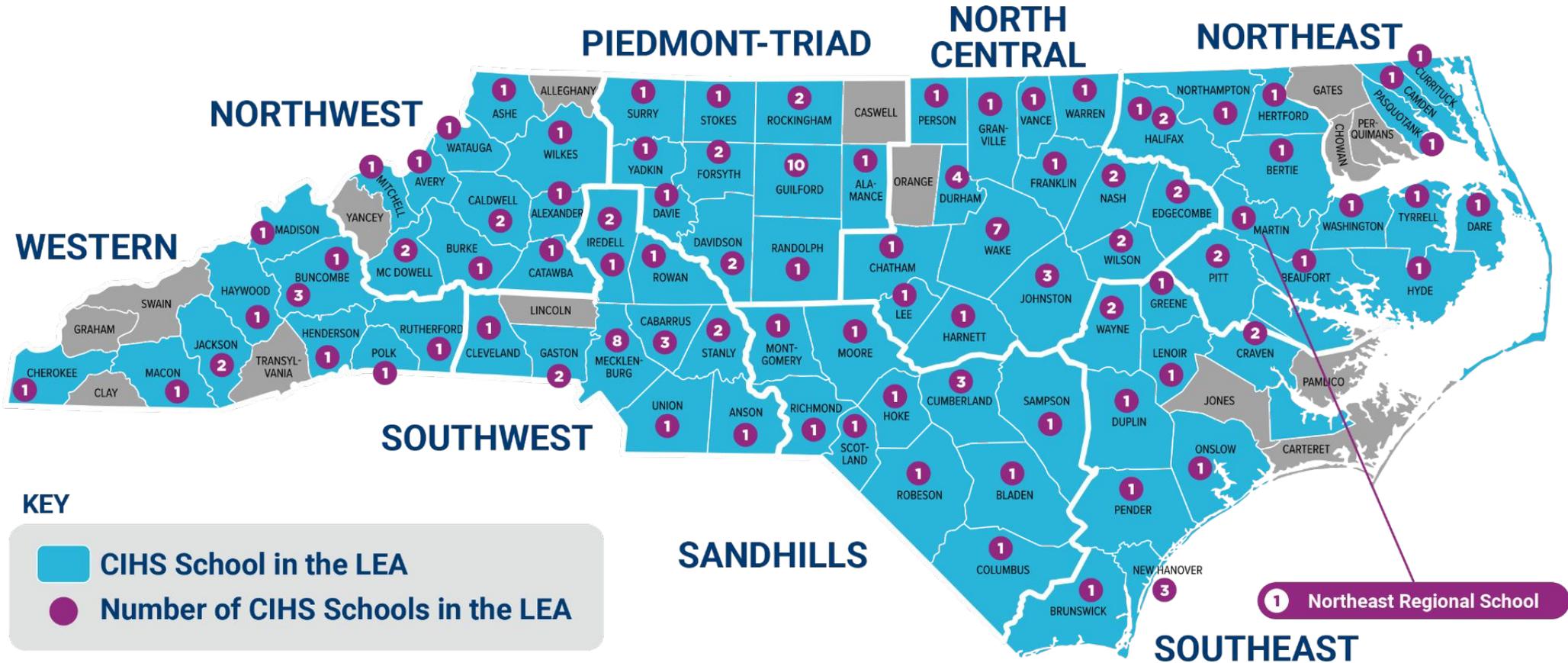
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Current CIHS in Operation



NC Cooperative Innovative High Schools

As of September 2025



NC Session Law 2020-64

Limitation on Approvals

The State Board may only conditionally approve **up to three applications** for cooperative innovative high schools that request additional funds...

The State Board **may prioritize conditional approval of applications** for cooperative innovative high schools located in local school administrative units that **do not already operate a school pursuant to this Part.**

NCDPI received **3 CIHS applications** to open new CIHS and/or request supplemental funding for existing CIHS.

CIHS Applications Status

JAC Recommendations
Summaries are
included in SBE items.

3 CIHS applications are currently being recommended for SBE approval:

- **2 existing CIHS**, partnered with community colleges, are applying for supplemental funding.
- **1 new CIHS**, partnered with an independent college, is applying to open and for supplemental funding.

Applications are on file here at NCDPI, signed by both LEA and partnering Institution of Higher Education.

JAC Recommendations for CIHS Programs

The Joint Advisory Committee recommends approval with additional funding for three CIHS applications:

- **Durham Early College of Health Sciences**, Durham Public Schools and Durham Technical Community College (*existing*)
- **Hertford STEM Early College at Chowan University**, Hertford County Schools with Chowan University
- **School of Inquiry and Life Sciences in Asheville**, Buncombe County Schools with Asheville-Buncombe Technical Community College (*existing*)

Durham Early College of Health Sciences

- **CIHS supplemental funding requested** for the redesign of an existing CIHS from a middle college to an early college serving grades 9-13.
- **Redesign** as a health sciences early college addresses critical need for health care workers in the local economy.
- **Curricular focus** of four career pathways: nursing, allied health, surgical tech, and clinical research.
- **Work-based learning opportunities** and preferred consideration for employment of graduates with Duke Health Systems.
- **Redesign** supported by a grant from **Bloomberg Philanthropies**.
- **Intent** to serve all three CIHS target populations.

Hertford STEM Early College at Chowan University

- Application to **open a new CIHS** serving grades 9-13.
- **Robust recruitment strategies** beginning in elementary years.
- **Pipeline to increase** the percentage of residents with postsecondary credentials.
- **STEM-Focused Pathways** aligned to regional workforce development goals.
- **Career Pathways** include advanced manufacturing, healthcare, agribusiness, and IT/analytics.
- **College Transfer pathways** include Associate of Arts and Associate of Applied Science degrees.
- **Work-Based Learning opportunities**, including apprenticeships leading to employment.
- **Intent to serve all three CIHS target populations.**

School of Inquiry and Life Sciences in Asheville (SILSA)

- **CIHS supplemental funding requested** for the expansion of an existing CIHS to grade 13 and program enhancements, including expanded recruitment, additional student supports, and a dedicated college liaison position.
- **Broad and inclusive recruitment strategies** to serve all three CIHS target populations.
- **Low-barrier, non-selective** student application and admissions process.
- **Inquiry-based learning model** with a life sciences theme and community engagement.
- **Curriculum and work-based learning opportunities** aligned to local and regional workforce needs.
- **Robust student supports**, including personalized onboarding for students and families.
- **Intent** to serve all three CIHS target populations.

Next Steps



SBE Approval



Approval by the NC Community College Board and the Independent College Governing Board



Request for Approval to Operate and Appropriations to NC General Assembly

Questions?

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