

## OPPORTUNITIES TO LEVERAGE FEDERAL FUNDING FOR POSTSECONDARY ATTAINMENT

There are a number of ways that leaders in North Carolina could leverage federal relief funding to further the state's postsecondary attainment goals. Ten recommendations can be found in detail below.

### ESSER II & III

#### ***Overview and Connection to Attainment***

If the state decides to take the full ten percent reservation again, the maximum funding allocation **would be \$160,259,099 for ESSER II and \$360,000,000 for ESSER III**. There is potential under this federal relief stream to support postsecondary attainment in North Carolina. This will require partnership with the NC Department of Public Instruction and State Board of Education.

#### ***Potential Use of Funds***

##### **01. Expand Virtual Work-Based Learning Programs**

- Provide virtual externships and supports to enhance career explorations.
- Expand apprenticeship training opportunities and [promote career readiness](#) for students. Coordination of apprenticeship programs in Kentucky, [Maryland](#), and [South Carolina](#) placed Councils in the Workforce Development departments.
- Offer career exploration in middle school. [Oklahoma and Missouri](#) programs introduced real-world relevant projects, resume experience, and knowledge of career paths like business or agriculture.

##### **02. Provide New CTE Opportunities**

- Build regional collaborations among educators and businesses/industry partners to facilitate the development of CTE programs. [Maryland](#), [Colorado](#), [Iowa](#), [Virginia](#), [Wisconsin](#), and [Michigan](#) created [incentive programs](#) that support apprenticeship training and career readiness.
- Expand CTE programs by providing professional development for CTE educators, providing college and career counseling, and acquiring resources for STEM related programs.
- Introduce high school courses that provide college counseling for CTE careers. [New Jersey](#), [Virginia](#), and [Indiana](#) provide some examples.

##### **03. Enhance Advising Services to Help Students Navigate College and Career**

- Start an online program for college and career development counseling similar to [Missouri](#).
- Develop career exploration workshops for upper elementary and [middle school students](#).
- Build relationships with organizations that provide advising services in both the K-12 and higher education spaces, such as [College Possible](#) and [College Advising Corps](#), thinking about how to scale their services across the state, especially in rural areas. Provide more dedicated funding for school counselors in the K-12 space. [Texas and Pennsylvania](#) established a report card system for identifying criteria of partnerships.

### GEER I

Governor Cooper reserved \$10,072,869 of GEER funds for discretionary purposes that included criteria of “involving multiple institutions or addressing cross-sector needs” – there may be potential here for a cross-sector initiative that supports “seamless transfer programs” as the Governor’s Office noted in their [initial report](#) in August 2020. The Governor has until May 2021 to award funding under this discretionary spending bucket from GEER. It is hard to determine if these discretionary funds have been allocated, but there is potential here for postsecondary attainment support. This may require engaging the [North Carolina Pandemic Recovery Office](#).