Article 4A.

Budgeting, Accounting, and Fiscal Management.

§ 115D-54. Preparation and submission of institutional budget.

(a) By a date determined by the State Board, trustees of each institution shall prepare for submission a budget request as provided in G.S. 115D-54(b) on forms provided by the State Board of Community Colleges. The budget shall be based on estimates of available funds if provided by the funding authorities or as estimated by the institution. The State Current Fund shall be based on available funds. All other funds shall be based on needs as determined by the board of trustees and shall include the following:

(1) State Current Fund.
(2) County Current Fund.
(3) Institutional Fund.
(4) Plant Fund.

(b) The budget shall be prepared and submitted for approval according to the following procedures:

(1) State Current Fund Budget. – The budget request shall contain the items of current operating expenses as provided in G.S. 115D-31 for which State funds are requested. The approving authority for the State current fund budget request shall be the board of trustees and the State Board of Community Colleges.
(2) County Current Fund Budget. – The budget request shall contain the items of current operating expenses, as provided in G.S. 115D-32, for which county funds are requested. The approving authority for the county current fund budget request shall be the board of trustees and the local tax-levying authority. The State Board of Community Colleges shall have approving authority pursuant to G.S. 115D-33 with respect to required local funding.
(3) Institutional Fund Budget. – The budget request shall contain the items of current operating expenses, loan funds, scholarship funds, auxiliary enterprises, State, private, and federal grants and contracts and endowment funds for which institutional funds are requested. The approving authority for the institutional fund budget request shall be the board of trustees of the institution.
(4) Plant Fund Budget. – The budget request shall contain the items of capital outlay, as provided in G.S. 115D-31 and 115D-32, for which funds are requested, from whatever source. The board of trustees shall submit the budget to the local tax-levying authority. The local tax-levying authority shall approve or disapprove, in whole or in part, that portion of the budget requesting local public funds. After approval by the local tax-levying authority, the board of trustees shall submit the budget to the State Board of Community Colleges on a date designated by the State Board. The State Board may approve or disapprove, in whole or in part, that portion of the budget requesting State or federal funds. Plant funds provided for construction and major renovations shall be permanent appropriations until the conclusion of the project for which appropriated.

(c) No public funds shall be provided an institution, either by the tax-levying authority or by the State Board of Community Colleges, except in accordance with the budget provisions of this Article.

(d) The preparation of a budget for and the payment of interest and principal on indebtedness incurred on behalf of an institution shall be the responsibility of the county finance officer or county finance officers of the administrative areas, and the board of trustees of the institution shall have no duty or responsibility in this connection.

(e) "Trust and Agency Fund" means funds held by an institution as custodian or fiscal agent for others such as student organizations, individual students, or faculty members. Trust and agency funds need not be budgeted. (1963, c. 448, s. 23; 1979, c. 462, s. 2; c. 896, s. 13; 1979, 2nd Sess., c. 1130, s. 1; 1981, c. 157, s. 1; 2001-112, s. 1; 2007-484, s. 29(c).)

§ 115D-55. Budget management.

(a) Approval of Budget by Local Tax-Levying Authority. – By a date fixed by the local tax-levying authority, the budget shall be submitted to the local tax-levying authority for approval of that portion within its authority as stated in G.S. 115D-54(b). On or before July 1, or such later date as may be agreeable to the board of trustees, but in no instance later than September 1, the local tax-levying authority shall determine the amount of county revenue to be appropriated to an institution for the budget year. The local tax-levying authority may allocate part or all of an appropriation by purpose, function, or project as defined in the budget manual as adopted by the State Board of Community Colleges.

The local tax-levying authority shall have full authority to call for all books, records, audit reports, and other information bearing on the financial operation of the institution except records dealing with specific persons for which the persons' rights of privacy are protected by either federal or State law.

Nothing in this Article shall be construed to place a duty on the local tax-levying authority to fund a deficit incurred by an institution through failure of the institution to comply with the provisions of this Article or rules and regulations issued pursuant hereto.

(b) Approval of Budget by State Board of Community Colleges. – After notification by the local tax-levying authority of the amount appropriated, the budget shall be submitted to the State Board of Community Colleges on a date designated by the State Board of Community Colleges for approval of that portion within its authority as stated in G.S. 115D-54(b). The State Board of Community Colleges shall approve the budget for each institution in such amount as the State Board decides is available and necessary for the operation of the institution.

The State Board of Community Colleges shall have authority to call for all books, records, audit reports and other information bearing on the financial operation of the institution except records dealing with specific persons for which the persons' rights of privacy are protected by either federal or State law.

Nothing in this Article shall be construed to place a duty on the State Board of Community Colleges to fund a deficit incurred by an institution through failure of the institution to comply with the provisions of this Article or rules and regulations issued pursuant hereto. (1981, c. 157, s. 1; 2001-112, s. 2; 2007-484, s. 29(d).)

§ 115D-56. Final adoption of budget.

Upon notification of approval by the State Board of Community Colleges, the board of trustees shall adopt a budget resolution as defined in the budget manual as adopted by the State Board of Community Colleges, which shall comply with the resolution of the State Board and the appropriations of the tax-levying authorities and all other funding agencies. (1981, c. 157, s. 1.)

§ 115D-57. Interim budget.

In case the adoption of the budget resolution is delayed until after July 1, the board of trustees shall authorize the president, through interim provisions, to pay salaries and the other ordinary expenses of the institution for the interval between the beginning of the fiscal year and the adoption of the budget resolution. Interim provisions so made shall be charged to the proper allocations in the budget resolution. (1981, c. 157, s. 1.)

§ 115D-58. Amendments to the budget; budget transfers.

(a) The State Board of Community Colleges shall adopt rules and regulations governing the amendment of the budget for an institution. The board of trustees may amend the budget at any time after its adoption pursuant to the rules and regulations of the State Board.

(b) If the local tax-levying authority allocates part or all of an appropriation pursuant to G.S. 115D-55, the board of trustees must obtain approval of the local tax-levying authority for an amendment to the budget which increases or decreases the amount of that appropriation allocated to a purpose, function, or project by twenty-five percent (25%) or more from the amount contained in the budget ordinance adopted by the local tax-levying authority or such lesser percentage as specified by the local tax-levying authority in the original budget ordinance, so long as such percentage is not less than ten percent (10%).

(c) The board of trustees may, by appropriate resolution, authorize the president to transfer moneys from one appropriation to another within the same fund, subject to any limitations established by regulations adopted pursuant to this section, and subject to any limitations and procedures prescribed by the board of trustees or State for federal laws or regulations. Any such transfer shall be reported to the board of trustees at its next regular meeting and entered into its minutes. (1981, c. 157, s. 1.)

§ 115D-58.1. Federal contracts and grants.

The board of trustees of any institution may apply for and accept grants from the federal government or any agency thereof, in order to carry out the institution's mission. In exercising this authority, the board of trustees may enter into and carry out contracts with the federal government or any agency thereof, may agree to and comply with any lawful and reasonable condition attached to such a grant including, in the case of a grant from the Economic Development Administration, the granting of a security interest to the Economic Development Administration in any real property or equipment purchased with the grant, limiting the sale or use of the real property or equipment as prescribed by regulations of the Economic Development Administration, and may make expenditures from any funds so granted. The State Board of Community Colleges shall adopt rules and regulations governing the application for and the acceptance of grants under this section. (1981, c. 157, s. 1; 2001-211, s. 1.)

§ 115D-58.2. Allocation of revenue to the institution by the local tax-levying authority.

(a) The local tax-levying authority of each institution shall provide, as needed, funds to meet the monthly expenditures, including salaries and other necessary operating expenses, as set forth in a statement prepared by the board of trustees and in accordance with the approved budget. Upon the basis of the approved budget, the county finance officer shall make available to the institution the moneys requested by the board of trustees no later than the fifteenth day of the month for which funds are requested.

(b) Funds received by the trustees of an institution from insurance payments for loss or damage to buildings shall be used for the repair or replacement of such buildings, or, if the buildings are not repaired or replaced, to reduce proportionally the institutional indebtedness borne by the counties of the administrative area of the institution receiving the insurance payments. If such payments, which are not used to repair or replace institutional buildings, exceed the total institutional indebtedness borne by all counties of the administrative area, such excess funds shall remain to the credit of the institution and shall be applied to the next succeeding plant fund budget until the excess funds shall be expended. Funds received by the trustees of an institution for loss or damage to the contents of buildings shall be divided between the board of trustees and the State Board of Community Colleges in proportion to the value of the lost contents owned by the board of trustees and the State, respectively. Until these funds shall have been expended, they shall either be used for repair or replacement of lost contents or be credited to the institution for succeeding plant and current expense budgets as appropriate. (1963, c. 448, s. 23; 1979, c. 462, s. 2; c. 896, s. 13; 1979, 2nd Sess., c. 1130, s. 1; 1981, c. 157, s. 1.)

§ 115D-58.3. Provision for disbursement of State money.

The deposit of money in the State treasury to the credit of the institution shall be made in monthly installments, and additionally as necessary, at such time and in such manner as may be convenient for the operation of the community college system. Before an installment is credited, the institution shall certify to the Community Colleges System Office, the expenditures to be made by the institution from the State Current Fund during the month.

The Community Colleges System Office shall determine whether the moneys requisitioned are due the institution, and upon determining the amount due, shall cause the requisite amount to be credited to the institution. Upon receiving notice from the Community Colleges System Office that the amount has been placed to the credit of the institution, the institution may issue State warrants up to the amount so certified. Money in the State Current Fund and other moneys made available by the State Board of Community Colleges shall be released only on warrants drawn on the State Treasurer, signed by two officials of the institution designated for this purpose by the board of trustees. (1963, c. 448, s. 23; 1965, c. 448, s. 2; 1979, c. 462, s. 2; c. 896, s. 13; 1979, 2nd Sess., c. 1130, s. 1; 1981, c. 157, s. 1; 1999-84, s. 13.)

§ 115D-58.4. Provisions for disbursement of local money.

All local public funds received by or credited to an institution shall be disbursed on checks signed by the two officials of the institution who shall have been designated by the board of trustees. The officials so designated shall countersign a check only if the funds required by such check are within the amount of funds remaining to the credit of the institution and are within the unencumbered balance of the appropriation for the item of expenditure according to the approved budgets of the institution. Each check shall be accompanied by an invoice, statement, voucher, or other basic document which indicates, to the satisfaction of the signing officials, that the issuance of such check is proper. (1963, c. 448, s. 23; 1965, c. 488, s. 2; 1979, c. 462, s. 2; c. 896, s. 13; 1979, 2nd Sess., c. 1130, s. 1; 1981, c. 157, s. 1.)

§ 115D-58.5. Accounting system.

(a) Each institution shall establish and maintain an accounting system consistent with procedures as prescribed by the Community Colleges System Office and the State Controller, which shows its assets, liabilities, equities, revenues, and expenditures.

(b) Each institution shall be governed in its purchasing of all supplies, equipment, and materials by contracts made by or with the approval of the Purchase and Contract Division of the Department of Administration except as provided in G.S. 115D-58.14. No contract shall be made by any board of trustees for purchases unless provision has been made in the budget of the institution to provide payment thereof. In order to protect the State purchase contracts, it is the duty of the board of trustees and administrative officers of each institution to pay for such purchases promptly in accordance with the contract of purchase. Equipment shall be titled to the State Board of Community Colleges if derived from State or federal funds.

(c) The operations of each institution shall be subject to oversight of the State Auditor pursuant to Article 5A of Chapter 147 of the General Statutes.

(d) Repealed by Session Laws 1983, c. 913, s. 18. (1963, c. 448, s. 23; 1979, c. 462, s. 2; c. 896, s. 13; 1979, 2nd Sess., c. 1130, s. 1; 1981, c. 157, s. 1; 1983, c. 913, s. 18; 1998-68, s. 1; 1999-84, s. 14; 2000-67, s. 7(c).)

§ 115D-58.6. Investment of idle cash.

(a) Definitions. – As used in this section, the following definitions apply:

(1) Cash balance. – The amount equal to all moneys received into institutional fund accounts minus all expenses and withdrawals from those accounts in an official depository of the institution as designated by the local board of trustees consistent with G.S. 115D-58.7.

(2) Official depository. – One or more banks, savings and loan associations, or trust companies in North Carolina that a community college board of trustees has designated consistent with G.S. 115D-58.7.

(a1) Deposits. – The institution may deposit at interest all or part of the cash balance of any fund in an official depository of the institution. Moneys may be deposited at interest in any official depository of the institution in the form of such deposit accounts as may be approved for county governments. In addition, moneys may be deposited in the form of such deposit accounts as provided for a local government or public authority in G.S. 159-30(b1). Investment deposits shall be secured as provided in G.S. 159-31(b).

(b) through (d) Repealed by Session Laws 2011-145, s. 8.20(a), effective July 1, 2011.

(d1) Investments. – The institution may invest all or part of the cash balance of any fund in an official depository of the institution. The institution shall manage investments subject to whatever restrictions and directions the board of trustees may impose. The institution shall have the power to purchase, sell, and exchange securities on behalf of the board of trustees. The investment program shall be so managed that investments and deposits can be converted into cash when needed.

(1) Moneys shall be invested only in the form of investments pursuant to G.S. 159-30(c) to county governments or in any form of investment established or managed by an investment advisor who is registered and in good standing with either the Securities and Exchange Commission or the North Carolina Secretary of State, Securities Division, and is a member of the Securities Investor Protection Corporation. Money in endowment funds may be invested pursuant to G.S. 147-69.2. Provided, however, the institution may elect to deposit at interest any local funds with the State Treasurer for investment as special trust funds pursuant to the provisions of G.S. 147-69.3, and the interest thereon shall accrue to the institution as local funds.

(2) The investment securities listed in G.S. 159-30(c) may be bought, sold, and traded by private negotiation, and the institutions may pay all incidental costs thereof and all reasonable costs of administering the investment and deposit program from local funds. The institution shall be responsible for their safekeeping and for keeping accurate investment accounts and records.

(e) Interest earned on deposits and investments shall be credited to the fund whose cash is deposited or invested. Cash of several funds may be combined for deposit or investment if not otherwise prohibited by law; and when such joint deposits or investments are made, interest earned shall be prorated and credited to the various funds on the basis of the amounts thereof invested, figured according to an average periodic balance or some other sound accounting principle. Interest earned on the deposit or investment of bond funds shall be deemed a part of the bond proceeds.

(f) Registered securities acquired for investment may be released from registration and transferred by signature of the official designated by the board of trustees.

(g) The board of trustees shall appoint an Investment Committee which shall consist of a minimum of three people who have sufficient financial background to review and evaluate investment options. These individuals should have experience in institutional or retail investment management with knowledge of fixed income and public equities. This committee shall make recommendations to the Board on those investment options, as well as monitor the performance of investments once made.

(h) The board of trustees shall discharge their duties with respect to the management and investment of college funds as follows:

(1) Investment decisions shall be solely in the interest of the college and the students, faculty, and staff of the college.

(2) The investments shall be for the exclusive purpose of providing an adequate return to the college.

(3) Investments shall be made with the care, skill, and caution under the circumstances then prevailing which a prudent person acting in a like capacity and familiar with those matters would use in the conduct of an activity of like character and purpose.

(4) Investment decisions shall be made impartially, taking into account the best interest of the college, with special attention to conflicts of interest or potential conflicts of interest.

(5) Investments shall incur only costs that are appropriate and reasonable. (1981, c. 157, s. 1; c. 612, s. 1; 2005-394, s. 3; 2011-145, s. 8.20(a); 2013-305, s. 2.)

§ 115D-58.7. Selection of depository; deposits to be secured.

(a) Each board of trustees shall designate as the official depositories of the institution one or more banks, savings and loan associations or trust companies in this State. It shall be unlawful for any money belonging to an institution, other than moneys required to be deposited with the State Treasurer, to be deposited in any place, bank, savings and loan associations, or trust company other than an official depository except as permitted in G.S. 115D-58.6(a1). However, public moneys may be deposited in official depositories in Negotiable Order of Withdrawal (NOW) accounts where permitted by applicable federal or State regulations.

(b) Money deposited in an official depository or deposited at interest pursuant to G.S. 115D-58.6(a1) shall be secured in the manner prescribed in G.S. 159-31(b). When deposits are

secured in accordance with this subsection, no public officer or employee may be held liable for any losses sustained by an institution because of the default or insolvency of the depository. (1981, c. 157, s. 1; c. 612, s. 1; 2011-145, s. 8.20(b).)

§ 115D-58.8. Facsimile signatures.

The board of trustees may provide by appropriate resolution for the use of facsimile signature machines, signature stamps, or similar devices in signing checks and drafts. The board shall charge some bonded officer or employee with the custody of the necessary machines, stamps, plates, or other devices, and that person and the sureties on his official bond are liable for any illegal, improper, or unauthorized use of them. Rules and regulations governing the use and control of the facsimile signature shall be adopted by the State Board of Community Colleges. (1981, c. 157, s. 1.)

§ 115D-58.9. Daily deposits.

All moneys regardless of source or purpose collected or received by an officer, employee, or agent of an institution shall be deposited intact in accordance with this section. Each officer, employee and agent of an institution whose duty it is to collect or receive any moneys shall deposit his collections and receipts daily. If the board of trustees gives its approval, deposits may be required only when the moneys on hand amount to as much as two hundred fifty dollars ($250.00), but in any event, a deposit shall be made on the last business day of the month. All deposits shall be made in an official depository. Tuition and all revenues declared by law to be State moneys or otherwise required to be deposited with the State Treasurer shall be deposited pursuant to the rules of the State Treasurer pursuant to G.S. 147-77. (1981, c. 157, s. 1.)

§ 115D-58.10. Surety bonds and related insurance.

The State Board of Community Colleges shall determine what State employees and employees of institutions shall give bonds or be insured for the protection of State funds and property and the State Board is authorized to place the bonds, determine adequate insurance coverage, and pay the premiums thereon from State funds.

The board of trustees of each institution shall require all institutional employees authorized to draw or approve checks or vouchers drawn on local funds, and all persons authorized or permitted to receive institutional funds from whatever source, and all persons responsible for or authorized to handle institutional property, to be bonded by a surety company authorized to do business with the State in such amount as the board of trustees deems sufficient for the protection of such property and funds. In lieu of a bond, the board of trustees may obtain and maintain adequate insurance coverage sufficient for the protection of institutional funds and property. The tax-levying authority of each institution shall provide the funds necessary for the payment of the premiums of the bonds or for insurance coverage. (1963, c. 448, s. 23; 1979, c. 462, s. 2; c. 896, s. 13; 1979, 2nd Sess., c. 1130, s. 1; 1981, c. 157, s. 1; 2019-139, s. 1.1.)

§ 115D-58.11. Fire and casualty insurance on institutional buildings and contents.

(a) The board of trustees of each institution, in order to safeguard the investment in institutional buildings and their contents, shall:

(1) Insure and keep insured each building owned by the institution to the extent of not less than eighty percent (80%) of the current insurable value, as determined by the insured and insurer, against loss by the perils embraced in broad form

coverage to include fire, lightning, windstorm, hail, explosion, aircraft or vehicles, riot or civil commotion, smoke, vandalism, sprinkler leakage, sinkhole collapse, volcanic action, falling objects, weight of snow, ice or sleet, or water damage to institutional buildings and properties.

(2) Insure and keep insured equipment and other contents of all institutional buildings that are the property of the institution or the State or which are used in the operation of the institution.

(3) Provide to the Commissioner of Insurance a list of all of its institution's insurable buildings, the equipment and contents of the buildings, and their insurable values by October 1 of each year.

(b) The tax-levying authority of each institution shall provide the funds necessary for the purchase of the insurance required in subsection (a) of this section.

(c) Boards of trustees may purchase insurance from companies duly licensed and authorized to sell insurance in this State or may obtain insurance in accordance with the provisions of Article 31A of Chapter 58 of the General Statutes, "State Insurance of Public Education Property." If the board of trustees of an institution purchases insurance from a company duly licensed and authorized to sell insurance in this State for any insurable building, its equipment, or its contents, the board of trustees shall provide the Commissioner with a copy of the policy of insurance. If the policy of insurance is cancelled, terminated, or changed for any reason, the board of trustees shall notify the Commissioner within five days of the effective date of the cancellation, termination, or change.

(d) If the Commissioner of Insurance determines that any person has willfully failed to comply with the provisions of subsections (a), (b), and (c) of this section, the Commissioner of Insurance may order, for each separate violation, a civil penalty under the procedures in G.S. 58-2-70(d). Every 24 hours without such insurance constitutes a separate offense violation. (1963, c. 448, s. 23; 1979, c. 462, s. 2; 1981, c. 157, s. 1; 2019-176, s. 2(a); 2022-46, s. 6(c).)

§ 115D-58.11A. Flood insurance.

(a) The board of trustees of each institution, in order to safeguard the investment in institutional buildings and their contents, shall insure and keep insured to the extent of not less than eighty percent (80%) of the current insurable value, as determined by the insurer and the insured, of each of its insurable buildings against flood when that property is located, or becomes located in, an area identified on the latest Flood Insurance Rate Map produced by the Federal Emergency Management Agency as area that will be inundated by the flood event having a one percent (1%) chance of being equaled or exceeded in any given year. The board of trustees of each institution shall provide to the Commissioner of Insurance a list of all of its institution's insurable buildings against flood and their insurable values by October 1 of each year.

(b) The tax-levying authority for each institution shall appropriate funds necessary for compliance with the provisions of subsection (a) of this section.

(c) The board of trustees may purchase insurance from companies duly licensed and authorized to sell insurance in this State or may obtain insurance in accordance with the provisions of Article 31A of Chapter 58 of the General Statutes, "State Insurance of Public Education Property." If the board of trustees of an institution purchases insurance from a company duly licensed and authorized to sell insurance in this State for any insurable building against flood, the board of trustees shall provide the Commissioner with a copy of the policy of insurance. If the policy of insurance is cancelled, terminated, or changed for any reason, the board of trustees shall

notify the Commissioner within five days of the effective date of the cancellation, termination, or change.

(d) If the Commissioner of Insurance determines that any person has willfully failed to comply with the provisions of subsections (a), (b), and (c) of this section, the Commissioner of Insurance may order, for each separate violation, a civil penalty under the procedures in G.S. 58-2-70(d). Every 24 hours without such insurance constitutes a separate violation. (2019-176, s. 2(b); 2022-46, s. 6(d).)

§ 115D-58.12. Liability insurance; tort actions against boards of trustees.

(a) Boards of trustees may purchase liability insurance only from companies duly licensed and authorized to sell insurance in this State or from other qualified companies as determined by the Department of Insurance. Each contract of insurance must, by its terms, adequately insure the board of trustees against any and all liability for any damages by reason of death or injury to person or property proximately caused by the negligence or torts of the agents and employees of such board of trustees or institution when acting within the scope of their authority or the course of their employment. Any company which enters into such a contract of insurance with a board of trustees by such act waives any defense based upon the governmental immunity of such board.

(b) Any person sustaining damages, or in case of death, his personal representative, may sue a board of trustees insured under this section for the recovery of such damages in any court of competent jurisdiction in this State, but only in a county of the administrative area of the institution against which the suit is brought; and it shall be no defense to any such action that the negligence or tort complained of was in pursuance of a governmental, municipal, or discretionary function of such board of trustees, to the extent that such board is insured as provided by this section.

(c) Nothing in this section shall be construed to deprive any board of trustees of any defense whatsoever to any action for damages, or to restrict, limit, or otherwise affect any such defense; and nothing in this section shall be construed to relieve any person sustaining damages or any personal representative of any decedent from any duty to give notice of such claim to the board of trustees or commence any civil action for the recovery of damages within the applicable period of time prescribed or limited by law.

(d) No part of the pleadings which relate to or allege facts as to a defendant's insurance against liability shall be read or mentioned in the presence of the trial jury in any action brought pursuant to this section. Liability shall not attach unless the plaintiff shall waive the right to have all issues of law and fact relating to insurance in such action determined by a jury, and such issues shall be heard and determined by the judge without resort to a jury, and the jury shall be absent during any motions, arguments, testimony, or announcements of findings of fact or conclusions of law with respect thereto, unless the defendant shall request jury trial thereon.

(e) The board of trustees of all institutions in this Chapter is authorized to pay as a necessary expense the lawful premiums of liability insurance provided in this section. (1963, c. 448, s. 23; 1979, c. 462, s. 2; 1981, c. 157, s. 1; 1985, c. 489.)

§ 115D-58.13. Vending facilities.

Moneys received by an institution on account of operation of vending facilities shall be deposited, budgeted, appropriated, and expended in accordance with the provisions of this Article. (1983 (Reg. Sess., 1984), c. 1034, s. 170.)

§ 115D-58.14. Purchasing flexibility.

(a) Community colleges may purchase supplies, equipment, and materials from noncertified sources that are available under State term contracts, subject to the following conditions:

(1) The purchase price, including the cost of delivery, is less than the cost under the State term contract;

(2) The cost of the purchase shall not exceed the bid value benchmark established under G.S. 143-53.1; and

(3) The items are the same or substantially similar in quality, service, and performance as items available under State term contracts.

(a1) Notwithstanding the provisions of this section, a community college may purchase, in any lawful manner, an item that is neither available under State term contracts nor substantially similar to an item available under State term contracts.

(b) The State Board of Community Colleges and the Department of Administration shall jointly adopt policies and procedures for monitoring the implementation of this section, including without limitation (i) definitions of substantial similarity, (ii) the content and frequency of reports and audits of such purchases, and (iii) a process for identifying any term contract existing as of October 1, 2009, with respect to which the exercise of purchasing flexibility could constitute a breach of that contract.

In the formation of each new term contract entered into after October 1, 2009, the Department of Administration shall, in its discretion, either provide in the contract for the purchasing flexibility set out in this section or make the term contract inapplicable to community colleges.

(c) The State Board of Community Colleges, in consultation with the Department of Administration, shall review the purchasing process for community colleges and may increase or decrease the purchasing/delegation benchmark for each community college based on the college's overall capabilities, including staff resources, purchasing compliance reviews, and audit reports. The State Board may, in its discretion, reduce a community college's purchasing/delegation benchmark at anytime. The State Board shall not increase a community college's purchasing/delegation benchmark by more than fifteen percent (15%) in any calendar year without the concurrence of the Department of Administration within 60 days of submission. The maximum purchasing/delegation benchmark for a community college shall be one hundred thousand dollars ($100,000). (1998-68, s. 2; 2005-103, s. 5; 2009-132, s. 1.)

§ 115D-58.15. Lease purchase and installment purchase contracts for equipment and real property.

(a) Authority. – Notwithstanding any other provision of law to the contrary, the board of trustees of a community college may use lease purchase or installment purchase contracts to purchase or finance the purchase of equipment or real property as provided in this section. A college shall not have more than five State-funded contracts in effect at any one time.

(b) Contract Approval. – Contracts for more than one hundred thousand dollars ($100,000) or for a term of more than three years shall be subject to review and approval as provided in this subsection. If the source of funds for payment of the obligation by the community college is intended to be local funds, the contract must be approved by resolution of the tax-levying authority, and the authority must acknowledge in writing its understanding that the community college may require appropriations from the tax-levying authority in order to meet the college's obligations under the contract. The tax-levying authority may in each fiscal year appropriate sufficient funds to meet the amounts to be paid during the fiscal year under the contract. The source of funds for lease

purchase or installment purchase contracts for real property shall be local funds. If the source of funds for payment of the obligation by the community college is intended to be State funds, the contract must be approved by resolution of the State Board of Community Colleges. The State Board may in each fiscal year allocate sufficient funds to meet the amounts to be paid during the fiscal year under the contract.

(c) Local Government Commission. – A contract that is subject to approval by the tax-levying authority also shall be subject to approval by the Local Government Commission as provided in Article 8 of Chapter 159 of the General Statutes if the contract:

(1) Extends for five or more years from the date of the contract;

(2) Obligates the board of trustees to pay sums of money to another, regardless of whether the payee is a party to the contract; and

(3) Obligates the board of trustees to pay five hundred thousand dollars ($500,000) or more over the full term of the contract.

(d) Application of Section. – When determining whether a contract is subject to approval under this section the total cost of exercising an option to upgrade property shall be taken into consideration. The term of a contract shall include periods that may be added to the original term through the exercise of an option to renew or extend.

(e) Nonsubstitution Clause. – No contract entered into under this section may contain a nonsubstitution clause that restricts the right of a board of trustees to:

(1) Continue to provide a service or activity; or

(2) Replace or provide a substitute for any property financed or purchased by the contract.

(f) Nonappropriations Clause. – No deficiency judgment may be rendered against any board of trustees, any tax-levying authority, the State Board of Community Colleges, or the State of North Carolina in any action for breach of a contractual obligation authorized by this section. The taxing power of a tax-levying authority and the State is not and may not be pledged directly or indirectly to secure any moneys due under a contract authorized by this section. (1998-111, s. 2; 2007-484, s. 29(e); 2013-310, s. 1.)

§ 115D-58.16. Audits.

(a) Each community college shall be subject to a financial audit a minimum of once every two years. Community colleges may use State funds to contract with the State Auditor or with a certified public accountant to perform the audits. The colleges shall submit the results of the audits to the State Board of Community Colleges. The State Board of Community Colleges may require a community college to be audited annually after the community college has two consecutive financial audits with findings.

The State Board of Community Colleges shall ensure that all colleges are audited in accordance with this section.

(b) Notwithstanding the provisions of Chapter 143D of the General Statutes, a community college shall not be subject to the EAGLE program administered by the Office of the State Controller unless (i) there is a finding of internal control problems in the most recent financial audit of the college or (ii) the State Board of Community Colleges determines that a college should be subject to the program. (2011-145, s. 8.15; 2013-360, s. 10.15(b); 2018-92, s. 1(c).)

§ 115D-58.17. Report on certain recurring programs.

(a) No later than February 15, 2024, and annually thereafter, the State Board of Community Colleges shall report to the Joint Legislative Education Oversight Committee on outcomes related to the following recurring programs:

(1) Minority male mentoring programs, including the Minority Male Success Initiative.

(2) The Rowan-Cabarrus Community College Biotechnology Training Center and Greenhouse at the North Carolina Research Campus in Kannapolis.

(b) Each report required pursuant to this section shall include at least the following information from the prior fiscal year:

(1) Program activities, objectives, and accomplishments.

(2) Itemized expenditures and fund sources.

(3) The impact of the program on its intended purpose. (2023-134, s. 6.3.)