



## **NORTH CAROLINA COMMUNITY COLLEGE SYSTEM**

***Mr. George Fouts***

***Interim President***

April 11, 2016

Mr. John Turcotte, Director  
Program Evaluation Division  
North Carolina General Assembly  
Legislative Office Building, Suite 100  
300 North Salisbury Street  
Raleigh, NC 27603

Dear Mr. Turcotte,

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the Program Evaluation Division's (PED) Review of the North Carolina Guaranteed Admission Program (NCGAP) Report. We appreciate the time and effort your staff put into preparing this Review.

As you know, S.L. 2015-241 required the UNC Board of Governors and the State Board of Community Colleges (SBCC) to jointly report on the impacts of NCGAP. In March, the State Board of Community Colleges voted to "receive the joint NCGAP report" and directed staff to forward the report, accompanied by an addendum approved by the State Board of Community Colleges, to the Joint Legislative Education Oversight Committee, the Office of State Budget and Management, and the Fiscal Research Division of the General Assembly.

In its addendum, the SBCC raised several concerns about the conclusions of the NCGAP Report. Rather than enumerate those concerns here, I have attached a copy of the SBCC's addendum. Although we have had a limited amount of time to review the PED's findings, the concerns and conclusions raised in the Review appear to be consistent with those raised by the SBCC. Therefore, we do not have any additional comment, and as stated in the addendum, community colleges are prepared to implement NCGAP.

However, we do believe it is important to emphasize that the NC Community College System and the SBCC, along with our partners at the University of North Carolina, including President Spellings and the UNC Board of Governors, share the same goals as NCGAP: increased graduation and student success rates coupled with lower costs to students and the State. The Comprehensive Articulation Agreement between our two systems provides a clear pathway for students who attend community colleges and transfer to four-year institutions. In addition, student success and support initiatives are in place at both the System level and at local community colleges.

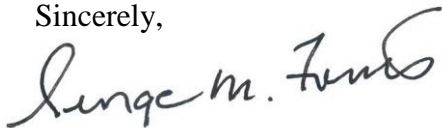
Mr. John Turcotte  
April 11, 2016  
Page 2 of 2

The NC Community College System and the SBCC is committed to increasing degree and credential attainment through additional student success initiatives at our local community colleges and by continuing to build upon the strong relationships we have with all of our education partners. Our strong partnerships and initiatives with UNC have already demonstrated success. UNC Data Dashboard statistics show that community college Associate in Arts/Associate in Science (AA/AS) transfer students had a first year UNC institution GPA comparable to native UNC students. Furthermore, the 2015 UNC Transfer Student report shows that transfer students, regardless of high school GPA, who entered UNC as juniors in 2009, graduated within four years after transfer at a rate of 71 percent, and within the transfer population, NC community college students who obtained an AA/AS degree had the highest graduation rate at 74 percent. Clearly, the NCCCS has a strong and successful transfer program with UNC institutions.

Finally, as stated previously, our colleges are fully prepared and willing to implement NCGAP, but we would also urge the General Assembly to look for ways to incentivize all students, regardless of high school GPA, to take advantage of the seamless community college-to-UNC transfer programs.

Again, thank you for the opportunity to comment.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "George M. Fouts". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned to the left of the printed name.

George Fouts

Attachment: SBCC Addendum to NCGAP Report