



Community and Economic Development in North Carolina and Beyond Blog: CCP Awards a Grant of \$9,400 for High School Drop-out Prevention Research in Caswell County

By CED Guest Author

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Will Lambe is the Director of the Community & Economic Development Program and the Community-Campus Partnership.

The Community-Campus Partnership (CCP) has awarded a \$9,400 grant to School of Education Professor Judith Meece to conduct an analysis of school drop-out events in Caswell County and to work with Superintendent Douglas Barker to design a retention program.

During the 2009-10 school year, there were 37 dropout events reported to NC's Department of Public Instruction from Caswell County. Although the district has reduced dropout events by half since 2005, the loss of approximately 40 students within an academic year is significant for a small, rural community. The superintendent has requested assistance from CCP to develop a high school retention program. Currently, there is little research available to guide the development of such a program in a rural community.

The specific goals of the project are to: (1) conduct interviews with students to understand their reasons for discontinuing their education in the late high school years (Grade 10 and 11); (2) conduct interviews with school counselors and parents to verify information on dropout patterns; (3) analyze interview information for school district personnel; (4) conduct literature searches on effective school retention programs for late adolescent rural youth; and (5) provide recommendations for school- and community based programs.

A report with recommendations will be presented to the Superintendent in September, 2011.

*Will Lambe authored the NC Rural Center report, *Small Towns, Big Ideas*, and he served as Director of the Community and Economic Development Program at the School of Government from 2009 to 2014.*