

Central Carolina Community College

Refer ALL inquiries regarding this RFI to: Brandi Hernandez bhernandez@cccc.edu (919) 718-7419	Request For Information (RFI) # 86-2026-008
	Due Date: February 27, 2026
	Commodity No. and Description: 901017 - Cafeteria services
	Issue Date: February 12, 2026

RFI SUBMITTAL

Vendor responses shall be submitted electronically via the electronic Vendor Portal (eVP), <https://evp.nc.gov>. It is the Vendor's sole responsibility to ensure its response has been received as described in this RFI by the specified time and date of opening. Any response received after the submission deadline may be considered non-conforming and may limit the College's ability to consider them.

NOTICE TO VENDOR

Request for Information (RFI) will be received until **3:00 PM EST** on the day of opening.

QUESTIONS

Submit written questions to Brandi Hernandez by **February 19, 2026, at 3:00 PM EST**. Questions may be submitted by e-mail to bhernandez@cccc.edu. Please insert "**RFI No. 86-2026-008 - Questions**" in the subject matter of your e-mail and reference the section that the question pertains to.

A summary of all questions and answers will be posted to the electronic Vendor Portal (eVP), <https://evp.nc.gov>, as an addendum to this RFI on or about **February 20, 2026**.

EXECUTION

COMPLETE/FORMAL NAME OF VENDOR:		
STREET ADDRESS:	P.O. BOX:	ZIP:
CITY & STATE & ZIP:	TELEPHONE NUMBER:	TOLL FREE TEL. NO:
TYPE OR PRINT NAME & TITLE OF PERSON SIGNING:		
VENDOR'S AUTHORIZED SIGNATURE:	DATE:	E-MAIL:

SECTION I: ADMINISTRATIVE OVERVIEW

Background

Central Carolina Community College (CCCC) is seeking market intelligence to modernize its food and vending ecosystem. Currently, the College maintains a traditional vending presence at all locations, with dedicated Fresh Food Vending machines at the Lee, Harnett, and Chatham Main Campuses. Daily food services on the Lee Main Campus (LMC) are currently operated by the College's Culinary Arts program.

The College is considering a transition of these operations to a professional vendor to provide consistent service and expand fresh food access across all satellite locations. A primary objective is to determine if modern solutions, including but not limited to Micromarkets or Smart-Fridges, can better serve our students and staff.

Campus maps for all College locations are available at: <https://www.cccc.edu/student-life/campuses-parking>. Maps are not necessarily to scale and are for illustrative purposes only.

Purpose

The intent of this RFI is to gather information regarding vendor capabilities for comprehensive vending, micro-markets, full-service food offerings (primarily quick serve and fast casual varieties), and catering. The College seeks solutions balancing cost efficiency, high-quality service delivery, and student experience, rather than prioritizing a single factor. Responses will be used to narrow down service models before issuing a formal RFP.

The College makes no commitment to acquire services under this RFI. This is for planning purposes only and does not constitute a solicitation or a binding contract. The vendor solely bears any costs incurred in preparation and submission.

Schedule of Events

- RFI Issued: February 12, 2026
- Deadline for Questions: February 19, 2026
- Response Deadline: February 27, 2026
- Vendor Meetings: Week of March 9, 2026 (Respondents will be notified of specific times at least one week in advance)

Clarification Questions

Clarification questions regarding this RFI will be accepted until the specified time on the cover sheet of this RFI. All questions must be submitted in writing to the email address specified on the cover sheet of this RFI. An addendum containing clarification questions and their answers will be issued as an addendum via eVP.

Enrollment, staffing counts, and detailed traffic data can be provided during the Vendor Meetings. A group walkthrough of the Lee Main Campus (LMC) kitchen facilities may also be conducted during the Vendor Meetings. Access to satellite locations may be available upon request.

SECTION II: CURRENT STATE & SCOPE OF WORK

Current Inventory and Objectives

The primary objective is to identify a partner capable of managing the LMC transition while scaling services to satellite campuses. The College is specifically interested in your analysis of whether the current "Fresh Food Unit" model at HMC and CMC should be maintained or transitioned to a Micromarket or "Smart Fridge" solution. The College is also looking to entertain other potential alternatives, such as a 'coffee shop', cafe, or prepackaged foods and pastries shop. Furthermore, for LMC, please consider how the existing kitchen infrastructure can be leveraged for both daily café operations and a catering program.

Location	Current Service Level	Goal for Future State
Lee Main Campus (LMC)	Snack/Soda + Fresh Food Units + Student-Run Cougar Café (lunch 2 days/week, light breakfast 1 day/week)	Full-Service On-Demand Hot Food / Catering / Micro- markets / Supplemental Vending
Harnett Main Campus (HMC)	Snack/Soda + Fresh Food Units	Staffed Café (Pre-packaged & Coffee Service) / Micro- market / Supplemental Vending
Chatham Main Campus (CMC)	Snack/Soda + Fresh Food Units + Student-Run Natural Chef Café (lunch 1 day/week)	Staffed Café (Pre-packaged & Coffee Service) / Micro- market / Supplemental Vending
Moore Center, Emergency Services Training Center (ESTC), Harnett Health Science Center (HHSC), Chatham Health Science Center (CHSC), Siler City Center (SCC)	Snack/Soda Only	Standard Vending; Potential opportunity for more at Moore Center as renovation projects progress
Center for Workforce Innovation (CWI), West Harnett (WHC), Auto Restoration	Snack/Soda Only	Telemetry-based / Low Maintenance Vending

Scope of Services

- Tier 0 (Full-Service): On-demand hot food preparation, diverse daily menus, and full catering capabilities utilizing existing kitchen infrastructure
 - Vendors should assume weekday operations only. No weekend service is expected at this time.
- Tier 1 (High Traffic): Staffed café environment focusing on professional coffee service, fresh pre-packaged meals, and pastries; supplemented by unstaffed Micro-markets
- Tier 2 (Moderate Traffic): Standard vending/healthy snacks
- Tier 3 (Intermittent): Telemetry-enabled vending

Vendors are expected to furnish, install, maintain, and retain ownership of all vending, micro-market, and telemetry-enabled equipment installed on campus. College-owned kitchen equipment at LMC will remain under College ownership.

Service Limitations and Reserved Rights (Non-Exclusivity)

To maintain its educational mission and community flexibility, the College reserves the following rights:

- The Culinary Arts program reserves the right to cater internal College events across all campuses.
- The College reserves the right to engage food trucks.
- The College reserves the right to partially limit the exclusivity of external catering services for special events.
- The College reserves the right to implement and maintain self-run vending units in the future as needed.
- The College maintains the right to operate student-led learning environments that may include pop-up food services, specialized café hours, or laboratory-based food production
- The College reserves the right to hold the Dennis A. Wicker and Civic Center location and operations completely apart from the exclusivity provisions of any agreement.

SECTION III: PRELIMINARY ANALYSIS QUESTIONNAIRE

The College recognizes the level of detail requested in this section. Vendors are encouraged to provide concise but complete responses. Responses may reference existing materials, such as brochures or case studies, where appropriate.

Respondents are asked to provide detailed, thoughtful answers to the following questions. The College intends to use this information to better understand vendor capabilities, assess potential operating models, and inform the development of a future formal solicitation.

Fresh Food Production, Menu Diversity & Dietary Accommodation

- Describe your approach to fresh-food production and delivery, including options such as on-site preparation, daily delivery to smart-fridge units, commissary production, or unstaffed micro-market solutions.
- Describe your approach to offering diverse menu options that accommodate various dietary needs, including gluten-free, vegan, vegetarian, dairy-free, and allergen-sensitive selections.
 - How do you ensure these items are consistently available?
 - How are dietary and allergen labels communicated to consumers?
- What is your strategy for ensuring healthy and dietary-specific snacks (e.g., low-sodium, plant-based, gluten-free) are included in standard vending inventories across all tiers of service?
- Provide sample menus representative of offerings for:
 - a staffed café environment (LMC), and
 - fresh-food vending or micro-market environments.

Catering Capabilities & Event Support

- Describe your process for managing high-volume on-campus catering, including Board of Trustees meetings, faculty events, student events, and multi-location service demands.
- Do you provide tiered catering menus that accommodate different budgets and event types?

Technology, Telemetry, Payments & Accessibility

- Do your vending machines, micro-markets, and smart-fridges utilize real-time telemetry? Describe how your team uses telemetry to:
 - monitor inventory,
 - forecast restocking needs, and
 - respond to outages or maintenance needs.
- Describe your point-of-sale (POS) technology, including support for:
 - PCI-DSS compliance,
 - contactless payment,
 - mobile wallet payments,
 - secure data handling, and
 - remote payment-device monitoring.
- Describe how your equipment and micro-market layouts meet ADA accessibility standards, including reach ranges, interface design, lighting, and placement.

Equipment Maintenance, Customer Service & Aesthetics

- Describe your process for refunds and reporting broken equipment, such as use of QR codes, mobile apps, a 24-hour support line, or onsite service personnel.
- The College owns the LMC kitchen equipment. Based on your operational model, would you recommend refreshing or replacing any components? Describe your capability for upfront investment and how such investments are typically structured.
- Describe your flexibility regarding machine aesthetics and co-branding. Would you support co-branding with the College's logo, colors, or campus identity standards?
- Identify any technical specifications or service-level expectations you recommend the College include in a future RFP.

Sustainability, Waste Management & Allergen Controls

- Describe your sustainability practices, including:
 - recyclable or compostable packaging,
 - reduced-plastic initiatives,
 - energy-efficient equipment, and
 - reduction of food waste.
- Describe your waste-management processes, including how you handle:
 - expired product removal,
 - rotation requirements,
 - freshness checks, and
 - waste minimization in micro-market and smart-fridge units.
- Describe your allergen protocols, including labeling, ingredient transparency, and steps you take to minimize cross-contamination during preparation, transportation, and stocking.

Organizational Experience & Comparative Work

- Provide 1–2 case studies of similar multi-location educational or public-sector food-service or vending deployments, highlighting:
 - service scope,
 - equipment mix,
 - operational challenges, and
 - measurable outcomes (e.g., sales performance, uptime, satisfaction ratings).

SECTION IV: INSTRUCTIONS FOR SUBMISSION

The College recognizes that considerable effort may be required in preparing a response to this RFI. However, respondents are advised that this is a request for information only, and not a request for services. Respondents shall bear all costs for preparing their RFI response. Respondents to this RFI are asked to be thorough and concise.

Entities that submit documentation in response to this RFI may be invited to present their ideas. An in-person presentation by an entity that submits documentation or participates in discussions or demonstrations in response to this RFI will not serve as a basis for precluding that entity from responding to any future solicitation regarding vending and food services.

All responses, inquiries, or correspondence relating to or in reference to this RFI, and all documentation submitted by the various respondents, shall become the property of the College when received. The responses to this RFI, any follow-up questions, and presentations to the College may be used to develop any future solicitation.

Respondents should identify any 'Industry Best Practices' or specific technical requirements that the College may have overlooked in this RFI which should be considered for inclusion in a future formal solicitation.

Submission Format Requirements

Responses must be transmitted via eVP as instructed on the cover page.

- Submit one (1) consolidated PDF containing the entire response.
- Supplementary brochures or marketing materials may be included as appendices in the same PDF.
- No page limit, but concise responses are encouraged.
- Use section headers corresponding to this RFI for clarity.

Response

Responses should clearly define how the Vendor's proposed solution(s) would meet the College's business requirements.

Transmittal Letter and General Information

- **Transmittal Letter:** A standard business letter signed by an authorized individual, noting any deviations or proprietary information.
- **Respondent Information:** Company name, history, and primary contact details.

Company and General Information

- **Firm Overview:** Standard marketing materials and an overview of your firm's experience.
- **Product and Service Catalog:** A detailed description of the products, services, and technical capabilities available to the College.
- **Prior Experience:** Provide 1–2 case studies of multi-location educational or public-sector vending or food-service implementations.

Project Understanding and Strategy

- **Project Understanding:** A narrative describing the vendor's understanding of the project and how their services address the College's business requirements. Provide sample menus representative of daily operations for a café setting and fresh-food micro-markets.
- **Strategic Questionnaire:** Provide detailed answers to all prompts listed in "Section III: Preliminary Analysis Questionnaire."

- **Transition Plan:** A high-level strategy for managing the transition from a student-led cafeteria to a professional model, including a "Go-Live" schedule.
- **Strategic Support:** Specific recommendations for maintaining service consistency at satellite or challenging locations, such as West Harnett.
- **Campus Service Continuity:** A definition of how the vendor will maintain a "Non-Exclusive" partnership that allows for Culinary Arts catering, food trucks, and self-run vending units.
- **Data Needs:** A list of specific information (e.g., floor plans, enrollment/employment numbers) required from the College to develop a formal future proposal.

Confidential Information

In accordance with 09 NCAC 06B.0103 the State may maintain confidentiality of certain types of information described in N.C. Gen. Stat. 132-1 et. seq. Such information may include trades secrets defined by N.C. Gen. Stat. 132-1.2. Respondents may designate appropriate portions of its response confidential, consistent with and to the extent permitted under the Rules and Statutes set forth above, by marking the pages containing confidential information with boldface type at the top and bottom of each such page stating "CONFIDENTIAL." By so marking any page, the Respondent warrants that it has formed a good faith opinion, having received such necessary or proper review by counsel and other knowledgeable advisers that the portions marked confidential meet the requirements of the Rules and Statutes set forth above. The State may serve as custodian of Respondent's confidential information and not as an arbiter of claims against Respondent's assertion of confidentiality. If an action is brought pursuant to N.C. Gen. Stat. 132-9 to compel the State to disclose information marked confidential, the Respondent agrees that it will intervene in the action through its counsel and participate in defending the State, including any public official(s) or public employee(s). The Respondent agrees that it shall hold the State and any official(s) and individual(s) harmless from any and all damages, costs, and attorney's fees awarded against the State or official or individual in the action. The State agrees to promptly notify the Respondent in writing of any action seeking to compel disclosure of Respondent's confidential information. The State shall have the right, at its option and expense, to participate in the defense of the action through its counsel. The State shall have no liability to Respondent with respect to the disclosure of Respondent's confidential information ordered by a court of competent jurisdiction pursuant to N.C. Gen. Stat. 132-9 or other applicable law.

All information received in response to the RFI that is marked Confidential will be handled accordingly. The College shall not be liable for or suffer any consequential damages for any proprietary information submitted and not properly identified. Proprietary information will be safeguarded in accordance with the applicable state regulations.