



The NC Restaurant & Lodging Association Foundation is proud to announce the 12th Annual North Carolina ProStart Invitational, to be held in Raleigh on March 8&9, 2026. The event will occur at The Westin Raleigh-Durham Airport, 3931 Macaw Street, Raleigh, NC 27617.

The North Carolina ProStart Invitational showcases the culinary and academic talents of high school ProStart students. The highlight of the event is students participating in one or both team competition formats: Culinary Competition and Management Competition. Winning teams from both the Culinary and Management Competitions will be awarded medals and scholarships to pursue post-secondary education. The first-place team in both competitions will also continue on to the **National ProStart Invitational (April 25-27, 2026 in Baltimore, MD)** to represent North Carolina ProStart. In addition, the North Carolina ProStart Invitational features activities and opportunities that enable students to meet and network with post-secondary representatives and industry partners from around the state.

As we prepare for the 2026 event, we ask for your support in identifying the participating schools. To assist our team with building the most comprehensive event plan and budget, please supply as much information as possible.

General Guidelines

- Schools may send up to two teams: one in the Culinary Competition and one in the Management Competition.
- Teams may have students that compete on teams in both competitions.
- Participating schools are not required to compete in both events.
- Teams must be current ProStart program students attending the same high school or career/technical center.
- Teams are comprised of at least two students with a maximum of four students per team, plus one optional team manager who may step in as the alternate if necessary. This means schools may bring up to 10 students if competing in both competitive events.
- Students may only compete at the North Carolina ProStart Invitational for two years, which may be non-consecutive.
- To participate in the 2026 North Carolina ProStart Invitational, your school must be a confirmed ProStart program and have your school agreement on file with the NC Restaurant & Lodging Association Foundation.
- Specific student registration forms and waivers will be distributed to all schools that file this "Intent to Participate" form.
- Schools awarded first place in management and culinary competitions will be required to attend the Team NC Nationals Boot Camp that will be held between the NC ProStart Invitational and the National ProStart Invitational in the spring. This additional practice will be determined at a later date.

Competition space will only be allocated for teams that commit to participating. Please note that schools are responsible for making travel arrangements and covering transportation and lodging costs for your teachers, chaperones, students, and guests. All competitors and educators are required to stay at the host hotel. [Rooms are available at this link.](#)

The Intent to Participate Form must be signed by the school's ProStart Educator and Principal or CTE Director and returned to the NCRLA Foundation by January 9, 2026.

**Intent to Participate Form
2026 North Carolina ProStart Invitational**

Due Friday, January 9, 2026

Culinary Competition

Yes, our school will participate

estimated number of students estimated educator(s)/chaperon(s)/mentor(s)

No, our school will not be competing in the Culinary Competition

Management Competition

Yes, our school will participate

estimated number of students estimated educator(s)/chaperon(s)/mentor(s)

No, our school will not be competing in the Restaurant Management Competition

Individual Competitions

Yes, our school will participate

estimated number of students estimated educator(s)/chaperon(s)/mentor(s)

No, our school will not be competing in the Individual Competitions

Additional Competition Requirements:

_____(teacher initial) I understand that should our team place first in the culinary or management competition, we will be required to attend the Team NC National Boot Camp sometime in March or April. It will be our responsibility to make arrangements to attend.

_____(teacher initial) I understand that should our team place first in the culinary or management competition, we will be required to compete in the National ProStart Invitational **April 25-27, 2026 in Baltimore, MD** to represent NC. The North Carolina Restaurant Association Foundation will cover the cost of hotel accommodations, team registration, and travel expenses for the competing students and one educator to attend this competition.

Cancellation Policy: Official school registration will occur after this form has been filed. A registration fee is due by January 31, 2026 for each competing student, educator, chaperone, and/or mentor. After official registration, if a team cannot compete, the team must submit a written cancellation to NCRLA Foundation **no later than February 7, 2026**, to receive a refund. Teams that do not meet the cancellation deadline or subsequently withdraw after February 7 will not receive a refund and may not be invited to compete the following year.

School

Signature of School Principal or CTE Director

Name of School ProStart Educator

Phone Number

Please scan and email this form to Courtney Hamm, chamm@ncrla.org by FRIDAY, JANUARY 9, 2026.

North Carolina ProStart Invitational Registration Details

Registration form, student waivers, and dish request forms will be distributed by **JANUARY 12** to all teams that file this Intent to Participate Form.

Important Dates & Reminders	
January 9, 2026	Intent to Participate Form due to chamm@ncrla.org
January 12, 2026	Registration Information, Student Waivers and Dish Request Form distributed to all schools that file an Intent to Participate Form
January 31, 2026	Team Expectations, Registration & Payment due to NCRLA Foundation
February 6, 2026	Culinary Digital Files & Management proposals due to chamm@ncrla.org
February 7, 2026	Team cancellation deadline <i>No roster additions after this date/DROPS only</i>
February 13, 2026	Feedback from NCRLA on proposals
February 18, 2026	All student participation waivers and dish requests due
February 18, 2026	<u>Cut-Off Date to Receive Special Rate at Competition Hotel</u>-ALL Competitors and educators must stay at the host hotel!
February 25, 2026	Updated proposals due (if required)
March 8, 2026	Team Registration/Check-In & Mandatory Team Orientation at Westin Raleigh-Durham Airport
March 9, 2026	2026 NCPI Competition Day & Awards Ceremony at Westin Raleigh-Durham Airport
March/April 2026	NCPI Winners Bootcamp, location TBD
April 25-27, 2026	2026 National ProStart Invitational, Baltimore, MD