

GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA
SESSION 2023

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HOUSE BILL 8
Committee Substitute Favorable 2/14/23

Short Title: Computer Sci. Grad. Requirement.

(Public)

Sponsors:

Referred to:

January 26, 2023

1 A BILL TO BE ENTITLED
2 AN ACT TO REQUIRE INSTRUCTION IN COMPUTER SCIENCE AND COMPLETION OF
3 A COMPUTER SCIENCE COURSE FOR GRADUATION FROM HIGH SCHOOL.

4 The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

5 **SECTION 1.(a)** G.S. 115C-12(9d) reads as rewritten:

6 "(9d) Power to Develop Exit Standards and Graduation Requirements. –

7 a. The Board may develop exit standards that shall be required for high
8 school graduation. The Board shall require the following for high
9 school graduation:

10 1. Successful completion of instruction in cardiopulmonary
11 resuscitation as provided in G.S. 115C-81.25(c)(10).

12 2. A passing grade in the semester course on the Founding
13 Principles of the United States of America and the State of
14 North Carolina described in G.S. 115C-81.45(d)(1).

15 3. A passing grade in a computer science course as provided in
16 G.S. 115C-81.90(c). The computer science course shall fulfill
17 one credit that is not an English, mathematics, science, or
18 social studies credit. Students enrolling in a public high school
19 in this State after completion of the eleventh grade shall be
20 exempt from this requirement.

21 b. The following restrictions apply to the Board regarding ~~Algebra I and~~
22 ~~high school graduation projects;~~ certain graduation requirements:

23 1. The Board shall not adopt or enforce any rule that requires
24 Algebra I as a graduation standard or as a requirement for a
25 high school diploma for any student whose individualized
26 education program (i) identifies the student as learning
27 disabled in the area of mathematics and (ii) states that this
28 learning disability will prevent the student from mastering
29 Algebra I.

30 2. The Board shall not require any student to prepare a high
31 school graduation project as a condition of graduation from
32 high school; local boards of education may, however, require
33 their students to complete a high school graduation as provided
34 in G.S. 115C-47(54a).

35 3. The Board shall not enforce a computer science graduation
36 requirement for any student whose individualized education



1 program states that the student's disability would prevent the
2 student from completing that graduation requirement."

3 **SECTION 1.(b)** When establishing the computer science graduation requirement,
4 the State Board of Education shall not increase the current number of required credits but shall
5 instead decrease the number of required science credits by one.

6 **SECTION 1.(c)** The requirements of G.S. 115C-12(9d)a.3., as amended by this
7 section, apply beginning with students entering the ninth grade in the 2024-2025 school year.

8 **SECTION 2.(a)** Part 1 of Article 8 of Chapter 115C of the General Statutes is
9 amended by adding a new section to read:

10 **"§ 115C-81.90. Computer science.**

11 (a) Required Instruction. – The State Board of Education shall include instruction in
12 computer science in the standard course of study for middle and high school students. Computer
13 science shall mean the study of computers and algorithmic processes, including their (i)
14 principles, (ii) hardware and software designs, (iii) implementation, and (iv) impact on society.

15 (b) Introductory Course. – Each public school unit shall offer to middle school students
16 an elective introductory computer science course that surveys the field of computer science. The
17 State Board of Education, in consultation with the Department of Public Instruction, shall adopt
18 a list of approved courses that fulfill this requirement and make it publicly available on the
19 Department's website.

20 (c) Graduation Requirement. – Each public school unit shall offer to high school students
21 a computer science course which includes instruction in using existing technologies and creating
22 new technologies. The public school unit may offer such a course to middle school students. The
23 State Board of Education, in consultation with the Department of Public Instruction, shall adopt
24 a list of approved courses that fulfill this requirement and make it publicly available on the
25 Department's website. A passing grade in this course, whether taken in middle school or high
26 school, satisfies the graduation requirement established in G.S. 115C-12(9d)a.3.

27 (d) Instructional Setting. – Public school units shall ensure that computer science courses
28 be conducted in an in-person setting when practicable. When an in-person setting is not
29 practicable, computer science courses may be provided through enrollment in remote courses
30 that meet the requirements of Part 11 of Article 16 of this Chapter."

31 **SECTION 2.(b)** The State Board of Education shall adopt the list of approved
32 computer science courses required by G.S. 115C-81.90(c), as enacted by this section, and post it
33 on the Department of Public Instruction's website by July 1, 2023. The State Board of Education
34 shall adopt the list of approved introductory computer science courses required by
35 G.S. 115C-81.90(b), as enacted by this section, and post it on the Department of Public
36 Instruction's website by January 1, 2025.

37 **SECTION 2.(c)** For the 2024-2025 and 2025-2026 school years only, by July 1 of
38 each school year, a public school unit may submit a signed notification to the Department of
39 Public Instruction stating that a computer science course fulfilling the requirements of
40 G.S. 115C-81.90(c), as enacted by this section, was not available to students. This submission
41 waives the requirement to offer such a course for the school year in which the submission is
42 made. Submission of a notification that a course fulfilling G.S. 115C-81.90(c) was not available
43 shall waive the graduation requirement established by G.S. 115C-12(9d)a.3., as enacted by this
44 act, for students entering the ninth grade in the school year in which the notification is submitted.
45 The Department shall maintain a list of public school units that submitted a notification under
46 this section.

47 **SECTION 2.(d)** For the 2025-2026 school year only, by July 1, a public school unit
48 may submit a signed notification to the Department of Public Instruction stating that a computer
49 science course fulfilling the requirements of G.S. 115C-81.90(b), as enacted by this section, was
50 not available to students. The submission waives the requirement to offer such a course for the
51 2025-2026 school year.

1 **SECTION 2.(e)** Subsection (b) of G.S. 115C-81.90, as enacted by this section,
2 applies beginning with the 2025-2026 school year. The remainder of subsection (a) of this section
3 applies beginning with the 2024-2025 school year.

4 **SECTION 3.(a)** G.S. 115C-218.85(a) is amended by adding a new subdivision to
5 read:

6 "(6) A charter school shall provide computer science instruction as required by
7 G.S. 115C-81.90."

8 **SECTION 3.(b)** G.S. 115C-238.66(1) is amended by adding a new sub-subdivision
9 to read:

10 "f. The board of directors shall ensure that computer science instruction
11 is provided as required by G.S. 115C-81.90."

12 **SECTION 3.(c)** G.S. 116-239.8(b)(2) is amended by adding a new sub-subdivision
13 to read:

14 "e. The chancellor shall ensure that computer science instruction is
15 provided as required by G.S. 115C-81.90."

16 **SECTION 3.(d)** Section 6(d) of S.L. 2018-32 is amended by adding a new
17 subdivision to read:

18 "(4b) G.S. 115C-81.90, Computer science."

19 **SECTION 4.** Except as otherwise provided, this act is effective when it becomes
20 law.