

**GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA
SESSION 2001**

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**SENATE BILL 1275
Education/Higher Education Committee Substitute Adopted 7/2/02**

Short Title: Dropout Rdctn/LEA Accountability.

(Public)

Sponsors:

Referred to:

June 6, 2002

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

1 AN ACT TO DIRECT THE STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION TO DEVELOP A
2 PLAN TO IMPROVE THE STATE'S TRACKING OF DROPOUT DATA, TO
3 EXAMINE THE ACCOUNTABILITY FORMULA TO REWARD HIGH
4 SCHOOLS FOR REDUCING THEIR DROPOUT RATE, TO IDENTIFY
5 CURRENT STATE TECHNICAL HIGH SCHOOLS AND CAREER CENTERS
6 AND TO COOPERATE WITH THE STATE BOARD OF COMMUNITY
7 COLLEGES TO ENCOURAGE CONCURRENT ENROLLMENT, TO STUDY
8 THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN ACADEMIC RIGOR AND REDUCING THE
9 DROPOUT RATE, TO ENCOURAGE LOCAL BOARDS OF EDUCATION TO
10 PLACE EXCELLENT, EXPERIENCED TEACHERS IN GRADES SEVEN
11 THROUGH NINE, TO DIRECT THE JOINT LEGISLATIVE EDUCATION
12 OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE TO STUDY WHETHER RAISING THE
13 COMPULSORY ATTENDANCE AGE TO EIGHTEEN WILL REDUCE THE
14 DROPOUT RATE, TO DIRECT THE STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION TO
15 ADOPT A POLICY TO REQUIRE KINDERGARTEN THROUGH EIGHTH
16 GRADE TEACHERS TO TAKE THREE RENEWAL CREDITS IN READING
17 METHODS COURSES, TO DIRECT THE UNC BOARD OF GOVERNORS TO
18 STUDY WHETHER TO REQUIRE AT LEAST TWO READING METHODS
19 COURSES FOR ALL ELEMENTARY EDUCATION MAJORS AND AT LEAST
20 ONE READING METHODS COURSE FOR ALL MIDDLE GRADES
21 EDUCATION MAJORS, TO DIRECT THE JOINT LEGISLATIVE EDUCATION
22 OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE TO STUDY THE FISCAL AND INSTRUCTIONAL
23 ACCOUNTABILITY OF LOCAL SCHOOL ADMINISTRATIVE UNITS, AND
24 TO DIRECT THE STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION TO TAKE OVER ALL
25 POWERS AND DUTIES RELATED TO A SCHOOL WHEN THAT SCHOOL
26 AND ITS LOCAL BOARD OF EDUCATION FAIL TO IMPLEMENT
27 RECOMMENDATIONS OF AN ASSISTANCE TEAM ASSIGNED TO THAT
28 SCHOOL.
29

1 The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

2 **SECTION 1.** G.S. 115C-12 is amended by adding a new subdivision to read:

3 "(27a) Reducing School Dropout Rates. –

4 a. The State Board of Education shall develop a statewide plan to
5 improve the State's tracking of dropout data so that accurate and
6 useful comparisons can be made over time. The plan shall
7 include, at a minimum, how dropouts are counted and the
8 methodology for calculating the dropout rate, the ability to track
9 students' movements among schools and districts, and the
10 ability to provide information on who drops out and why."

11 **SECTION 2.(a)** The State Board of Education shall examine the
12 accountability system for high schools created under the School-Based Management
13 and Accountability Program. In particular, the State Board shall review, and make
14 appropriate changes to, the growth composite for high schools so that the composite
15 includes a growth standard that increases the weight currently given for a change in
16 dropout rates, thus rewarding high schools for reducing dropout rates and improving
17 graduation rates.

18 **SECTION 2.(b)** The State Board of Education, in cooperation with the State
19 Board of Community Colleges, shall identify technical high schools and career centers
20 currently in operation in the State and make recommendations to strengthen concurrent
21 enrollment opportunities with the community colleges. The State Board shall report its
22 findings to the Joint Legislative Education Oversight Committee by December 15,
23 2002.

24 **SECTION 2.(c)** The State Board of Education (Board) shall study the
25 relationship between academic rigor and reducing the school dropout rate. As part of
26 this study, the Board shall include the following:

- 27 (1) The development of a proposal to accelerate the learning of students
28 able to complete high school in three years;
- 29 (2) The elimination of low-level classes at the middle and high school
30 levels;
- 31 (3) The examination of the appropriateness of electives and exploratory
32 courses at the middle school level;
- 33 (4) A review of current vocational courses to determine the rigor of the
34 content; and
- 35 (5) The development of up-to-date standards for vocational/technical
36 teachers.

37 The Board shall report its findings to the Joint Legislative Education
38 Oversight Committee by January 15, 2003.

39 **SECTION 3.** G.S. 115C-47 is amended by adding a new subdivision to read:

40 "(42) Local boards of education are encouraged to adopt policies that require
41 superintendents to assign to the core academic courses in seventh
42 through ninth grades teachers who have at least four years teaching
43 experience and who have received within the last three years an overall
44 rating on a formal evaluation that is at least above standard."

1 **SECTION 4.** The Joint Legislative Education Oversight Committee shall
2 study whether raising the compulsory attendance age to 18 will reduce the dropout rate
3 and increase the high school graduation rate. The Committee shall report its findings
4 and recommendations to the 2003 General Assembly.

5 **SECTION 5.(a)** The State Board of Education shall adopt a policy that
6 requires kindergarten through eighth grade teachers to take three renewal credits in
7 reading methods courses during each five-year license renewal cycle.

8 **SECTION 5.(b)** The University of North Carolina Board of Governors shall
9 study whether to require at least two reading methods courses for all elementary
10 education majors and at least one reading methods course for all middle grades
11 education majors in teacher education programs. As part of the study, the Board shall
12 review the reading methods course requirements by major in the teacher education
13 programs at Appalachian State and East Carolina University. The Board shall report its
14 findings to the Joint Legislative Education Oversight Committee by December 15,
15 2002.

16 **SECTION 6.** The Joint Legislative Education Oversight Committee shall
17 study the fiscal and instructional accountability of local school administrative units. As
18 part of this study, the Committee shall:

- 19 (1) Evaluate the fiscal management and instructional leadership provided
20 by local school administrative units.
- 21 (2) Analyze whether local school administrative units are utilizing their
22 funding and resources in a proper, strategic manner with regard to their
23 at-risk children.
- 24 (3) Evaluate State fiscal controls that are available to ensure that local
25 allocation of funding and resources is cost effective and is
26 appropriately focused on enhancing educational leadership, teaching
27 the standard course of study, and improving student learning.
- 28 (4) Analyze State and local procedures for identifying superintendents,
29 principals, and teachers who need additional training or assistance in
30 order to implement a strategic and cost-effective instructional program
31 that meets the needs of all children, including at-risk children, so that
32 they obtain a sound basic education by achieving grade level or above
33 academic performance.
- 34 (5) Identify current and possible actions that the State may implement in
35 order to correct ineffective instructional leadership or teaching in a
36 school or school system. In particular, the Committee shall ensure that
37 fair and efficient procedures are available to the State for removing
38 ineffective superintendents, principals, or teachers and for replacing
39 them with effective, competent ones.

40 The Committee shall report its findings and any recommendations to the 2003
41 General Assembly.

42 **SECTION 7.** G.S. 115C-105.38 is amended by adding the following new
43 subsection to read:

1 "(b1) Report to the State Board of Education if a school and its local board of
2 education are not responsive to the team's recommendations. A copy of that report shall
3 be made available to the local board and the local board shall have an opportunity to
4 respond. Notwithstanding G.S. 115C-36 and other provisions of this Chapter, if the
5 State Board confirms the school and local board have failed to take appropriate steps to
6 improve student performance at that school, the State Board shall assume all powers and
7 duties previously conferred upon that local board and that school and shall have general
8 control and supervision of all matters pertaining to that school until student performance
9 at the school meets or exceeds the standards set for the school. The State Board may, as
10 it considers appropriate, delegate any powers and duties to that local board or school
11 before the school meets or exceeds those standards."

12 **SECTION 8.** This act is effective when it becomes law.