

**GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA
SESSION 2007**

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**HOUSE BILL 452
Committee Substitute Favorable 3/28/07**

Short Title: Dropout Study.

(Public)

Sponsors:

Referred to:

March 5, 2007

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

1 AN ACT TO IMPLEMENT A RECOMMENDATION OF THE HOUSE SELECT
2 COMMITTEE ON HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION AND DROPOUT RATES TO
3 ESTABLISH THE JOINT LEGISLATIVE STUDY COMMITTEE ON HIGH
4 SCHOOL GRADUATION AND DROPOUT RATES.
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6 The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

7 **SECTION 1.(a)** There is created the Joint Legislative Study Committee on
8 High School Graduation and Dropout Rates. The Committee shall consist of 16
9 members. The Speaker of the House of Representatives shall appoint eight members,
10 and the President Pro Tempore of the Senate shall appoint eight members.

11 The Speaker of the House of Representatives shall appoint a cochair, and the
12 President Pro Tempore of the Senate shall appoint a cochair for the Committee. The
13 Committee may meet at any time upon the joint call of the cochairs. Vacancies on the
14 Committee shall be filled by the same appointing authority as made the initial
15 appointment.

16 The Committee, while in the discharge of its official duties, may exercise all
17 powers provided for under G.S. 120-19 and G.S. 120-19.1 through G.S. 120-19.4. The
18 Committee may contract for professional, clerical, or consultant services as provided by
19 G.S. 120-32.02.

20 Subject to the approval of the Legislative Services Commission, the
21 Committee may meet in the Legislative Building or the Legislative Office Building. The
22 Legislative Services Commission, through the Legislative Services Officer, shall assign
23 professional staff to assist the Committee in its work. The House of Representatives'
24 and the Senate's Supervisors of Clerks shall assign clerical support staff to the
25 Committee, and the expenses relating to the clerical employees shall be borne by the
26 Committee. Members of the Committee shall receive subsistence and travel expenses at
27 the rates set forth in G.S. 120-3.1, 138-5, or 138-6, as appropriate.

28 **SECTION 1.(b)** The Committee shall study the need to raise the compulsory
29 school attendance age, methods for increasing the high school cohort graduation rate,

1 and methods for lowering the dropout rate. In connection with this study, the Committee
2 may consider and report on:

- 3 (1) The impact of dropping out on students;
- 4 (2) The capacity of a 16-year-old to understand the social and economic
5 consequences of dropping out of school;
- 6 (3) The emergence of major high school reform efforts, including Learn
7 and Earn Programs, the New Schools Project, and 21st Century
8 Schools, and the impact they may have on keeping teenagers in school
9 longer;
- 10 (4) The importance to the entire State of every student leaving high school
11 prepared to enter the workforce or succeed in higher education;
- 12 (5) Research on factors related to students' success or lack of success in
13 schools;
- 14 (6) Strategies, programs, and support services that should be provided to
15 enable students to graduate from high school if the compulsory school
16 attendance age is raised, and time lines for implementing those
17 strategies, programs, and support services;
- 18 (7) Related laws and policies that must be addressed to ensure the
19 availability of support services for students;
- 20 (8) The fiscal impact of raising the compulsory attendance age;
- 21 (9) Possible exemptions from the compulsory attendance law for certain
22 students, including those students who fulfill their graduation
23 requirements early and receive a diploma, complete an alternative
24 education program, or whose parents consent to their leaving school
25 before they graduate or reach the maximum compulsory school
26 attendance age;
- 27 (10) The potential fiscal impact of raising the compulsory school
28 attendance age on the Department of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency
29 Prevention and the Department of Correction;
- 30 (11) The compulsory attendance law in other states and the experiences of
31 other states that have raised the compulsory school attendance age;
- 32 (12) Input from school personnel and from dropouts and students at risk of
33 dropping out;
- 34 (13) Any changes that are needed to the definition of a dropout and any
35 changes in data collection to ensure consistency and accuracy in
36 reporting the dropout rate;
- 37 (14) Proven strategies and early intervention programs that can be
38 implemented to prevent at-risk youth from dropping out, especially in
39 the middle grades;
- 40 (15) Data on the number and demographics of students who drop out before
41 the ninth grade;
- 42 (16) The importance of requiring every student to meet with a professional
43 counselor for an exit interview to find out why students are dropping
44 out; and

1 (17) The importance of making sure that at-risk students are counseled
2 about all of the support services, including alternative schools and
3 extra assistance, that are available to help them meet their graduation
4 requirements.

5 **SECTION 1.(c)** The Committee shall submit a report of its findings and
6 recommendations, including any legislative recommendations, to the 2008 Regular
7 Session of the 2007 General Assembly or to the 2009 General Assembly upon its
8 convening. The Committee shall terminate on the convening of the 2009 General
9 Assembly.

10 **SECTION 1.(d)** Of the funds appropriated to the General Assembly, the
11 Legislative Services Commission shall allocate funds for the expenses of the Committee
12 established by this section.

13 **SECTION 2.** This act is effective when it becomes law.