

GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA
SESSION 2007

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SENATE DRS55245-LE-50A* (1/18)

Short Title: Science Safety in the Public Schools.

(Public)

Sponsors: Senator Cowell.

Referred to:

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT TO IMPLEMENT SCIENCE SAFETY MEASURES IN THE PUBLIC SCHOOLS.

The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

SECTION 1. Chapter 115C of the General Statutes is amended by adding a new section to read:

"§ 115C-81.3. Science safety requirements.

(a) Prior to July 1, 2008, and annually thereafter, each local board of education shall certify to the State Board of Education that its high school science laboratories are equipped with appropriate personal protective equipment for students and teachers.

(b) Each local board of education shall ensure that its high schools and middle schools comply with all State Board of Education policies related to science laboratory safety, including the requirement that an appropriate administrative person be designated as the science safety officer."

SECTION 2. G.S. 115C-296(b) reads as rewritten:

"(b) It is the policy of the State of North Carolina to maintain the highest quality teacher education programs and school administrator programs in order to enhance the competence of professional personnel certified in North Carolina. To the end that teacher preparation programs are upgraded to reflect a more rigorous course of study, the State Board of Education, as lead agency in coordination and cooperation with the University Board of Governors, the Board of Community Colleges and such other public and private agencies as are necessary, shall continue to refine the several certification requirements, standards for approval of institutions of teacher education, standards for institution-based innovative and experimental programs, standards for implementing consortium-based teacher education, and standards for improved efficiencies in the administration of the approved programs. The certification program shall provide for initial certification after completion of preservice training, continuing

1 certification after three years of teaching experience, and certificate renewal every five
2 years thereafter, until the retirement of the teacher. The last certificate renewal received
3 prior to retirement shall remain in effect for five years after retirement.

4 The State Board of Education, as lead agency in coordination with the Board of
5 Governors of The University of North Carolina and any other public and private
6 agencies as necessary, shall continue to raise standards for entry into teacher education
7 programs.

8 The State Board of Education, in consultation with local boards of education and the
9 Board of Governors of The University of North Carolina, shall evaluate and modify, as
10 necessary, the academic requirements for students preparing to teach science in middle
11 and high schools to ensure that there is adequate preparation in issues related to science
12 laboratory safety.

13 The State Board of Education, in consultation with the Board of Governors of The
14 University of North Carolina, shall evaluate and develop enhanced requirements for
15 continuing certification. The new requirements shall reflect more rigorous standards for
16 continuing certification and to the extent possible shall be aligned with quality
17 professional development programs that reflect State priorities for improving student
18 achievement.

19 The State Board of Education, in consultation with local boards of education and the
20 Board of Governors of The University of North Carolina, shall reevaluate and enhance
21 the requirements for renewal of teacher certificates. The State Board shall consider
22 modifications in the certificate renewal achievement and to make it a mechanism for
23 teachers to renew continually their knowledge and professional skills. The State Board
24 shall adopt new standards for the renewal of teacher certificates by May 15, 1998.

25 The standards for approval of institutions of teacher education shall require that
26 teacher education programs for all students include demonstrated competencies in (i)
27 the identification and education of children with disabilities and (ii) positive
28 management of student behavior and effective communication techniques for defusing
29 and deescalating disruptive or dangerous behavior. The State Board of Education shall
30 incorporate the criteria developed in accordance with G.S. 116-74.21 for assessing
31 proposals under the School Administrator Training Program into its school
32 administrator program approval standards.

33 All North Carolina institutions of higher education that offer teacher education
34 programs, masters degree programs in education, or masters degree programs in school
35 administration shall provide performance reports to the State Board of Education. The
36 performance reports shall follow a common format, shall be submitted according to a
37 plan developed by the State Board, and shall include the information required under the
38 plan developed by the State Board."

39 **SECTION 3.** G.S. 115C-521 is amended by adding a new subsection to
40 read:

41 "(c1) No local board of education shall invest any money in any new middle or
42 high school building until the plans for the science areas of the building have been
43 reviewed and certified to meet accepted professional standards for school laboratories,
44 preparation rooms, and stockrooms. The review and certification of the plans may be

1 done by the State Board of Education or by any other entity that is licensed or
2 authorized by the State Board to do so."

3 **SECTION 4.** This act is effective when it becomes law.