

GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA  
SESSION 2011

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SENATE BILL 724

Short Title: An Act to Improve Public Education. (Public)

Sponsors: Senators Stein, Tillman; Blake, Brock, Brown, Brunstetter, Daniel, Hartsell, Hise, Hunt, Purcell, Rucho, Soucek, and Stevens.

Referred to: Education/Higher Education.

April 20, 2011

1 A BILL TO BE ENTITLED  
2 AN ACT TO IMPLEMENT VARIOUS EDUCATION REFORMS.  
3 The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

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5 **TEACHER PREPARATION**

6 **SECTION 1.** G.S. 115C-296(b) reads as rewritten:

7 "(b) It is the policy of the State of North Carolina to maintain the highest quality teacher  
8 education programs and school administrator programs in order to enhance the competence of  
9 professional personnel certified in North Carolina. To the end that teacher preparation  
10 programs are upgraded to reflect a more rigorous course of study, the State Board of Education,  
11 as lead agency in coordination and cooperation with the University Board of Governors, the  
12 Board of Community Colleges and such other public and private agencies as are necessary,  
13 shall continue to refine the several certification requirements, standards for approval of  
14 institutions of teacher education, standards for institution-based innovative and experimental  
15 programs, standards for implementing consortium-based teacher education, and standards for  
16 improved efficiencies in the administration of the approved programs. The certification  
17 program shall provide for initial certification after completion of preservice training, continuing  
18 certification after three years of teaching experience, and certificate renewal every five years  
19 thereafter, until the retirement of the teacher. The last certificate renewal received prior to  
20 retirement shall remain in effect for five years after retirement. The certification program shall  
21 also provide for lifetime certification after 50 years of teaching.

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

25 To further ensure that teacher preparation programs are upgraded to reflect a more rigorous  
26 course of study, the State Board of Education, in consultation with the Board of Governors of  
27 The University of North Carolina, shall (i) increase the credit requirements and number of  
28 years required to complete a teacher preparation program, (ii) require students preparing to  
29 teach in elementary schools to complete courses in the teaching of reading and mathematics  
30 that are aligned with the State Board's philosophy and approach for teaching these subjects, and  
31 (iii) require all students to receive training in technology available in North Carolina schools  
32 that measures and predicts expected student improvement, such as EVAAS, Graduation  
33 Resiliency Software, 3-D reading, and the Student Diagnostic Pilot Program.

34 The State Board of Education, in consultation with local boards of education and the Board  
35 of Governors of The University of North Carolina, shall evaluate and modify, as necessary, the



1 academic requirements for students preparing to teach science in middle and high schools to  
2 ensure that there is adequate preparation in issues related to science laboratory safety.

3 The State Board of Education, in consultation with the Board of Governors of The  
4 University of North Carolina, shall evaluate and develop enhanced requirements for continuing  
5 certification. The new requirements shall reflect more rigorous standards for continuing  
6 certification and to the extent possible shall be aligned with quality professional development  
7 programs that reflect State priorities for improving student achievement.

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

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

21 All North Carolina institutions of higher education that offer teacher education programs,  
22 masters degree programs in education, or masters degree programs in school administration  
23 shall provide performance reports to the State Board of Education. The performance reports  
24 shall follow a common format, shall be submitted according to a plan developed by the State  
25 Board, and shall include the information required under the plan developed by the State Board."  
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## 27 ENHANCE USE OF EVAAS

28 **SECTION 2.** G.S. 115C-205.27(a) reads as rewritten:

29 "(a) In order to improve student performance, each school shall develop a school  
30 improvement plan that takes into consideration the annual performance goal for that school that  
31 is set by the State Board under G.S. 115C-105.35 and the goals set out in the mission statement  
32 for the public schools adopted by the State Board of Education. The principal of each school,  
33 representatives of the assistant principals, instructional personnel, instructional support  
34 personnel, and teacher assistants assigned to the school building, and parents of children  
35 enrolled in the school shall constitute a school improvement team to develop a school  
36 improvement plan to improve student performance. Representatives of the assistant principals,  
37 instructional personnel, instructional support personnel, and teacher assistants shall be elected  
38 by their respective groups by secret ballot. Unless the local board of education has adopted an  
39 election policy, parents shall be elected by parents of children enrolled in the school in an  
40 election conducted by the parent and teacher organization of the school or, if none exists, by the  
41 largest organization of parents formed for this purpose. Parents serving on school improvement  
42 teams shall reflect the racial and socioeconomic composition of the students enrolled in that  
43 school and shall not be members of the building-level staff. Parental involvement is a critical  
44 component of school success and positive student achievement; therefore, it is the intent of the  
45 General Assembly that parents, along with teachers, have a substantial role in developing  
46 school improvement plans. To this end, school improvement team meetings shall be held at a  
47 convenient time to assure substantial parent participation.

48 All school improvement plans shall be, to the greatest extent possible, data-driven. School  
49 improvement teams shall use the Education Value Added Assessment System (EVAAS) or a  
50 compatible and comparable system approved by the State Board of Education, to analyze  
51 student data to identify root causes for ~~problems and~~ problems, to determine actions to address

1 ~~them~~ them, and to appropriately place students in courses such as Algebra I. School  
2 improvement plans shall contain clear, unambiguous targets, explicit indicators and actual  
3 measures, and expeditious time frames for meeting the measurement standards."  
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#### 5 **PRESCHOOL PROGRAMS FOR AT-RISK CHILDREN**

6 **SECTION 3.** It is a goal of the General Assembly to provide preschool programs  
7 to all at-risk children.  
8

#### 9 **TRANSITION TEAMS FOR AT-RISK CHILDREN**

10 **SECTION 4.** G.S. 115C-105.41 reads as rewritten:

11 "**§ 115C-105.41. Students who have been placed at risk of academic failure; personal**  
12 **education plans; plans; transition teams and transition plans.**

13 (a) Local school administrative units shall identify students who are at risk for  
14 academic failure and who are not successfully progressing toward grade promotion and  
15 graduation, beginning no later than the fourth grade. Identification shall occur as early as can  
16 reasonably be done and can be based on grades, observations, State assessments, and other  
17 factors, including reading on grade level, that impact student performance that teachers and  
18 administrators consider appropriate, without having to await the results of end-of-grade or  
19 end-of-course tests. No later than the end of the first quarter, or after a teacher has had up to  
20 nine weeks of instructional time with a student, a personal education plan for academic  
21 improvement with focused intervention and performance benchmarks shall be developed or  
22 updated for any student at risk of academic failure who is not performing at least at grade level,  
23 as identified by the State end-of-grade test and other factors noted above. Focused intervention  
24 and accelerated activities should include research-based best practices that meet the needs of  
25 students and may include coaching, mentoring, tutoring, summer school, Saturday school, and  
26 extended days. Local school administrative units shall provide these activities free of charge to  
27 students. Local school administrative units shall also provide transportation free of charge to all  
28 students for whom transportation is necessary for participation in these activities.

29 Local school administrative units shall give notice of the personal education plan and a  
30 copy of the personal education plan to the student's parent or guardian. Parents should be  
31 included in the implementation and ongoing review of personal education plans.

32 Local school administrative units shall certify that they have complied with this section  
33 annually to the State Board of Education. The State Board of Education shall periodically  
34 review data on the progress of identified students and report to the Joint Legislative Education  
35 Oversight Committee.

36 No cause of action for monetary damages shall arise from the failure to provide or  
37 implement a personal education plan under this section.

38 (b) Local boards of education shall adopt and implement plans for the creation of  
39 transition teams and transition plans for students at risk, as defined by the State Board of  
40 Education, to assist them in making a successful transition between the elementary school and  
41 middle school years and between the middle school and high school years."  
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#### 43 **LENGTHENING THE SCHOOL DAY AND SCHOOL YEAR IN CERTAIN SCHOOLS**

44 **SECTION 5.(a)** It is the goal of the General Assembly, available funds permitting,  
45 to phase in longer school days and longer school years in the 25 high schools identified by the  
46 State Board of Education as having the highest dropout rates in North Carolina and in the  
47 elementary and middle schools whose students move into those high schools. In identifying  
48 those high schools, the State Board of Education shall not consider charter schools or  
49 alternative schools because students move into those schools from, at a minimum, an entire  
50 local school administrative unit.

1           **SECTION 5.(b)** For the 2013-2014 school year, it is the intent of the General  
2 Assembly to extend the length of school days in the 25 identified high schools and in the  
3 elementary and middle schools whose students move into those high schools.

4           **SECTION 5.(c)** For the 2014-2015 school year, it is the intent of the General  
5 Assembly to further extend the length of the school days in the 25 identified high schools and  
6 in the elementary and middle schools whose students move into those high schools and to add  
7 two instructional days to the school year in those schools.

8           **SECTION 5.(d)** The State Board of Education shall report to the General  
9 Assembly by January 1, 2012, on its recommendation on how long the school day and school  
10 year should be extended.

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12 **STUDY GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS FOR STUDENTS WHO DO NOT PLAN**  
13 **TO CONTINUE EDUCATION BEYOND HIGH SCHOOL**

14           **SECTION 6.** The State Board of Education shall reconsider the high school  
15 graduation requirements for students who do not plan to continue education beyond high  
16 school. For some of these students, a five-year program might be needed in order for them to  
17 meet graduation requirements. For other students, a reassessment of existing requirements  
18 might be in order to determine what, at a minimum, is needed for a sound, basic education and  
19 whether the current graduation requirements are reasonable for students not planning to  
20 continue education beyond high school.

21           The State Board of Education shall report the results of this study to the Joint  
22 Legislative Education Oversight Committee by March 15, 2012.

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24 **EFFECTIVE DATE**

25           **SECTION 7.** This act is effective when it becomes law.