

**GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA
SESSION 2001**

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**SENATE BILL 1275
Education/Higher Education Committee Substitute Adopted 7/2/02
House Committee Substitute Favorable 8/21/02**

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
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1 RECOMMENDATIONS OF AN ASSISTANCE TEAM ASSIGNED TO THAT
2 SCHOOL.

3 The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

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

6 "(27a) Reducing School Dropout Rates. – The State Board of Education shall
7 develop a statewide plan to improve the State's tracking of dropout
8 data so that accurate and useful comparisons can be made over time.
9 The plan shall include, at a minimum, how dropouts are counted and
10 the methodology for calculating the dropout rate, the ability to track
11 students' movements among schools and districts, and the ability to
12 provide information on who drops out and why."

13 **SECTION 1.(b)** The State Board of Education shall make a report on this
14 plan to the Joint Legislative Education Oversight Committee by December 15, 2002.

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

22 **SECTION 2.(b)** The State Board of Education, in cooperation with the State
23 Board of Community Colleges, shall identify technical high schools and career centers
24 currently in operation in the State and make recommendations to strengthen concurrent
25 enrollment opportunities with the community colleges. The State Board shall report its
26 findings to the Joint Legislative Education Oversight Committee by December 15,
27 2002.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

13 **SECTION 5.(b)** The University of North Carolina Board of Governors shall
14 study whether to require at least two reading methods courses for all elementary
15 education majors and at least one reading methods course for all middle grades
16 education majors in teacher education programs. The study also shall examine
17 appropriate reading-teaching pedagogy and reading-teaching methods to be required in
18 these courses. As part of the study, the Board shall review the reading methods course
19 requirements by majors in the teacher education programs at Appalachian State and East
20 Carolina University. The Board shall report its findings to the Joint Legislative
21 Education Oversight Committee by December 15, 2002.

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

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

1 ineffective superintendents, principals, or teachers and for replacing
2 them with effective, competent ones.

3 The Committee shall report its findings and any recommendations to the 2003
4 General Assembly.

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

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

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