

1 portion of these funds is used for mentor training and for release time
2 and substitute teachers while mentors and teachers mentored are
3 meeting;

4 (1a) Shall, if the school serves students in kindergarten or first grade,
5 include a plan for preparing students to read at grade level by the time
6 they enter second grade. The plan shall require kindergarten and first
7 grade teachers to notify parents or guardians when their child is not
8 reading at grade level and is at risk of not reading at grade level by the
9 time the child enters second grade. The plan may include the use of
10 assessments to monitor students' progress in learning to read, strategies
11 for teachers and parents to implement that will help students improve
12 and expand their reading, and provide for the recognition of teachers
13 and strategies that appear to be effective at preparing students to read
14 at grade ~~level~~. level;

15 (2) Shall include a plan to address school safety and discipline concerns in
16 accordance with the safe school plan developed under Article 8C of
17 this Chapter;

18 (3) May include a decision to use State funds in accordance with
19 G.S. 115C-105.25;

20 (4) Shall include a plan that specifies the effective instructional practices
21 and methods to be used to improve the academic performance of
22 students identified as at risk of academic failure or at risk of dropping
23 out of school;

24 (5) May include requests for waivers of State laws, rules, or policies for
25 that school. A request for a waiver shall meet the requirements of
26 G.S. ~~115C-105.26~~. 115C-105.26;

27 (6) Shall include a plan to provide a duty-free lunch period for every
28 teacher on a daily basis or as otherwise approved by the school
29 improvement team; and

30 (7) Shall include a plan to provide unencumbered instructional planning
31 time for every teacher, with the goal of providing an average of at least
32 five hours of planning time per week.

33 (c) Support among affected staff members is essential to successful
34 implementation of a school improvement plan to address improved student performance
35 at that school. The principal of the school shall present the proposed school
36 improvement plan to all of the principals, assistant principals, instructional personnel,
37 instructional support personnel, and teacher assistants assigned to the school building
38 for their review and vote. The vote shall be by secret ballot. The principal shall submit
39 the school improvement plan to the local board of education only if the proposed school
40 improvement plan has the approval of a majority of the staff who voted on the plan.

41 (d) The local board of education shall accept or reject the school improvement
42 plan. The local board shall not make any substantive changes in any school
43 improvement plan that it accepts. If the local board rejects a school improvement plan,
44 the local board shall state with specificity its reasons for rejecting the plan; the school

1 improvement team may then prepare another plan, present it to the principals, assistant
2 principals, instructional personnel, instructional support personnel, and teacher
3 assistants assigned to the school building for a vote, and submit it to the local board to
4 accept or reject. If no school improvement plan is accepted for a school within 60 days
5 after its initial submission to the local board, the school or the local board may ask to
6 use the process to resolve disagreements recommended in the guidelines developed by
7 the State Board under G.S. 115C-105.20(b)(5). If this request is made, both the school
8 and local board shall participate in the process to resolve disagreements. If there is no
9 request to use that process, then the local board may develop a school improvement plan
10 for the school. The General Assembly urges the local board to utilize the school's
11 proposed school improvement plan to the maximum extent possible when developing
12 such a plan.

13 (e) A school improvement plan shall remain in effect for no more than three
14 years; however, the school improvement team may amend the plan as often as is
15 necessary or appropriate. If, at any time, any part of a school improvement plan
16 becomes unlawful or the local board finds that a school improvement plan is impeding
17 student performance at a school, the local board may vacate the relevant portion of the
18 plan and may direct the school to revise that portion. The procedures set out in this
19 subsection shall apply to amendments and revisions to school improvement plans."

20 **SECTION 2.** G.S. 115C-105.26(b) reads as rewritten:

21 "(b) When requested as part of a school improvement plan, the State Board of
22 Education may grant waivers of:

- 23 (1) State laws pertaining to class ~~size, teacher certification, and the~~
24 ~~duty free period for classroom teachers under G.S. 115C 301.1; size~~
25 and teacher certification; and
26 (2) State rules and policies, except those pertaining to public school State
27 salary schedules and employee benefits for school employees, the
28 instructional program that must be offered under the Basic Education
29 Program, the system of employment for public school teachers and
30 administrators set out in G.S. 115C-287.1 and G.S. 115C-325, health
31 and safety codes, compulsory attendance, the minimum lengths of the
32 school day and year, and the Uniform Education Reporting System."

33 **SECTION 3.** This act becomes effective July 1, 2005, and applies to school
34 improvement plans beginning with the 2006-2007 school year.