

**GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA
SESSION 2011**

**SESSION LAW 2012-77
SENATE BILL 724**

AN ACT TO IMPLEMENT VARIOUS EDUCATION REFORMS.

The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

TEACHER PREPARATION

SECTION 1. G.S. 115C-296 reads as rewritten:

"§ 115C-296. Board sets licensure requirements; reports; lateral entry and mentor programs.

...

(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 certification after three years of teaching experience, and certificate renewal every five years thereafter, until the retirement of the teacher. The last certificate renewal received prior to retirement shall remain in effect for five years after retirement. The certification program shall also provide for lifetime certification after 50 years of teaching.

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

To further ensure that teacher preparation programs remain current and reflect a rigorous course of study that is aligned to State and national standards, the State Board of Education, in consultation with the Board of Governors of The University of North Carolina, shall ensure students preparing to teach in elementary schools (i) have adequate coursework in the teaching of reading and mathematics; (ii) are assessed prior to certification to determine that they possess the requisite knowledge in scientifically based reading and mathematics instruction that is aligned with the State Board's expectations; (iii) continue to receive preparation in applying formative and summative assessments within the school and classroom setting through technology-based assessment systems available in North Carolina schools that measure and predict expected student improvement; and (iv) are prepared to integrate arts education across the curriculum.

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

The State Board of Education, in consultation with the Board of Governors of The University of North Carolina, shall evaluate and develop enhanced requirements for continuing certification. The new requirements shall reflect more rigorous standards for continuing



certification and to the extent possible shall be aligned with quality professional development programs that reflect State priorities for improving student achievement.

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

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

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

...

(c1) The State Board of Community Colleges may provide a program of study for lateral entry teachers to complete the coursework necessary to earn a teaching license. To this end, the State Board of Education, in consultation with the State Board of Community Colleges, shall establish a competency-based program of study for lateral entry teachers to be implemented within the Community College System no later than May 1, 2006. This program must meet standards set by the State Board of Education. To ensure that programs of study for lateral entry remain current and reflect a rigorous course of study that is aligned to State and national standards, the State Board of Education shall ensure that (i) adequate coursework in the teaching of reading and mathematics is available for lateral entry teachers seeking certification in elementary education; (ii) lateral entry teachers are assessed prior to certification to determine that they possess the requisite knowledge in scientifically based reading and mathematics instruction that is aligned with the State Board's expectations; (iii) all lateral entry teachers continue to receive preparation in applying formative and summative assessments within the school and classroom setting through technology-based assessment systems available in North Carolina schools that measure and predict expected student improvement; and (iv) are prepared to integrate arts education across the curriculum.

The State Board of Community Colleges and the State Board of Education shall jointly identify the community college courses and the teacher education program courses that are necessary and appropriate for inclusion in the community college program of study for lateral entry teachers. To the extent possible, any courses that must be completed through an approved teacher education program shall be taught on a community college campus or shall be available through distance learning.

In order to participate in the community college program of study for lateral entry teachers, an individual must hold at least a bachelors degree from a regionally accredited institution of higher education.

An individual who successfully completes this program of study and meets all other requirements of licensure set by the State Board of Education shall be recommended for a North Carolina teaching license.

...."

ENHANCE USE OF EVAAS

SECTION 2. G.S. 115C-105.27(a) reads as rewritten:

"(a) In order to improve student performance, each school shall develop a school improvement plan that takes into consideration the annual performance goal for that school that is set by the State Board under G.S. 115C-105.35 and the goals set out in the mission statement for the public schools adopted by the State Board of Education. The principal of each school, representatives of the assistant principals, instructional personnel, instructional support personnel, and teacher assistants assigned to the school building, and parents of children

enrolled in the school shall constitute a school improvement team to develop a school improvement plan to improve student performance. Representatives of the assistant principals, instructional personnel, instructional support personnel, and teacher assistants shall be elected by their respective groups by secret ballot. Unless the local board of education has adopted an election policy, parents shall be elected by parents of children enrolled in the school in an election conducted by the parent and teacher organization of the school or, if none exists, by the largest organization of parents formed for this purpose. Parents serving on school improvement teams shall reflect the racial and socioeconomic composition of the students enrolled in that school and shall not be members of the building-level staff. Parental involvement is a critical component of school success and positive student achievement; therefore, it is the intent of the General Assembly that parents, along with teachers, have a substantial role in developing school improvement plans. To this end, school improvement team meetings shall be held at a convenient time to assure substantial parent participation.

All school improvement plans shall be, to the greatest extent possible, data-driven. School improvement teams shall use the Education Value Added Assessment System (EVAAS) or a compatible and comparable system approved by the State Board of Education, to analyze student data to identify root causes for ~~problems and problems~~, to determine actions to address ~~them~~, and to appropriately place students in courses such as Algebra I. School improvement plans shall contain clear, unambiguous targets, explicit indicators and actual measures, and expeditious time frames for meeting the measurement standards."

PRESCHOOL PROGRAMS FOR AT-RISK CHILDREN

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

TRANSITION TEAMS FOR AT-RISK CHILDREN

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

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

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

Local school administrative units shall give notice of the personal education plan and a copy of the personal education plan to the student's parent or guardian. Parents should be included in the implementation and ongoing review of personal education plans. If a student's school report card provides all the information required in a personal education plan, then no further personal education plan is mandated for the student.

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

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

(b) Local boards of education shall adopt and implement plans for the creation of transition teams and transition plans for students at risk, as defined by the State Board of

Education, to assist them in making a successful transition between the elementary school and middle school years and between the middle school and high school years."

END SUNSET TO LEA "BASIS OF KNOWLEDGE" ABOUT A CHILD WITH A DISABILITY

SECTION 5. Section 5 of S.L. 2010-36 reads as rewritten:

"SECTION 5. Section 3 of this act becomes effective January 1, 2009, ~~and expires June 1, 2013, 2009.~~ The remainder of this act is effective when it becomes law."

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

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

The State Board of Education shall report the results of this study to the Joint Legislative Education Oversight Committee by March 15, 2013.

STATEWIDE EDUCATION INITIATIVES

SECTION 7.(a) Consistent with Section 7.8 of S.L. 2010-31, to continue the State's progress in increasing student achievement, graduation rates, and students' career- and college-readiness, by August 31, 2014, the State Board of Education shall implement the statewide education reform initiatives described in the State's successful Race to the Top application. These initiatives shall include the following:

- (1) Transition to new standards and assessments. – The State Board shall continue to provide for professional development designed to ensure that all teachers understand and are prepared to help students meet the new common core and essential standards, and are able to use related summative assessments effectively and appropriately to measure students' attainment of those standards.
- (2) Establishment of an Instructional Improvement System. – The State Board shall establish a statewide Instructional Improvement System that will use technology to provide portals for students, teachers, parents, and school and district administrators to access data and resources to inform decision making related to instruction, assessment, and career and college goals.
- (3) Establishment of the North Carolina education cloud technology infrastructure. – As the next wave of the successful School Connectivity Initiative, the State Board shall provide statewide shared education technology infrastructure, services, and tools for school districts and charter schools to achieve robust, reliable service and cost-effectiveness.
- (4) Full rollout and enhancement of the North Carolina Educator Evaluation System. – The State Board shall continue to provide professional development designed to ensure that all teachers and principals are prepared to use the statewide Educator Evaluation System, which is being enhanced through a collaborative, multiyear development process to include formal, standard measures of the extent to which educators facilitate growth in student achievement.
- (5) Provision of performance incentives to teachers in the lowest-achieving schools to improve recruitment and retention. – In order to improve recruitment and retention of effective teachers in the lowest-achieving schools, the State Board shall provide teachers in those schools opportunities to earn school and/or classroom-level incentives based on student performance.
- (6) Establishment of regional leadership academies. – The State Board shall establish three leadership academies to increase the number of principals

- qualified to lead transformational change in lowest-achieving schools in both rural and urban areas.
- (7) Expansion of teacher recruitment and licensure programs to support low-performing schools. – The State Board shall increase the number of Teach for America teachers in lowest-achieving districts and schools; establish the NC Teacher Corps, modeled after Teach for America, to further increase the number of effective teachers in lowest-achieving districts and schools; and establish a new Induction Support Program for New Teachers that will provide comprehensive support for novice teachers in low-achieving districts and schools.
 - (8) Provision of effective teachers for schools through virtual and blended courses. – The State Board shall develop a model through which to develop and deploy virtual and blended Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (STEM) courses to give students at risk of low performance in core math and science subjects access to effective teachers and innovative instructional approaches.
 - (9) Provision of aligned professional development and establishment of professional development system. – The State Board shall do the following:
 - a. Create, train, and support a cadre of teacher and principal professional development leaders to establish sustainable local and regional professional development capacity statewide.
 - b. Develop resources (for workshops, professional learning communities, virtual courses, webinars, etc.) to support effective professional development activities.
 - c. Provide professional development regarding new standards and assessments, teacher and principal evaluation tools, data literacy, and use of any new technology tools created through the Race to the Top initiatives.
 - d. Expand online professional development infrastructure to provide high-quality online professional development accessible to all educators statewide.
 - e. Evaluate professional development activities to determine the impact on teaching practices and student achievement, and to inform continuous improvement of professional development activities.
 - (10) Expansion of District and School Transformation work to turn around the lowest-achieving schools. – The State Board shall expand its successful District and School Transformation services to reach more schools and districts needing intensive, multiyear support to build capacity for sustained improvement.
 - (11) Establish STEM thematic high schools and network. – The State Board shall establish four STEM anchor schools, each focused on an area of North Carolina economic development, and use the anchor schools as centers for professional development, curriculum development, technology use, and innovation in order to support the spread of STEM focus in North Carolina schools.

SECTION 7.(b) The State Board of Education shall report to the Joint Education Oversight Committee by September 15, 2012, and semiannually thereafter through September 15, 2014, on the State Board's progress toward implementing the above initiatives.

SECTION 7.(c) This section expires July 1, 2014. The State Board of Education may continue any initiatives identified in this section if it receives continued funding for the initiatives.

EFFECTIVE DATE

SECTION 8. This act is effective when it becomes law.
In the General Assembly read three times and ratified this the 19th day of June,
2012.

s/ Walter H. Dalton
President of the Senate

s/ Thom Tillis
Speaker of the House of Representatives

s/ Beverly E. Perdue
Governor

Approved 4:26 p.m. this 26th day of June, 2012