

GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA

SESSION 1997

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SENATE BILL 1487

Short Title: Expand Public School Technology.

(Public)

Sponsors: Senator Lee.

Referred to: Appropriations.

May 28, 1998

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT TO APPROPRIATE FUNDS TO EXPAND THE PUBLIC-PRIVATE PARTNERSHIP TO EXPAND TECHNOLOGY IN NORTH CAROLINA PUBLIC SCHOOLS, INCLUDING A VOCATIONAL EDUCATION COMPUTER RECYCLING PILOT PROGRAM.

The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

Section 1. (a) There is appropriated from the General Fund to the State Board of Education the sum of one million dollars (\$1,000,000) for the 1998-99 fiscal year to expand a public-private partnership to encourage, promote, and expand technology in North Carolina Public Schools.

(b) The purposes of the public-private partnership are to enlist public, private, and volunteer sectors to develop creative means of bringing technology to North Carolina Public School classrooms at minimal cost and expense to the State and its taxpayers:

(1) Help schools wire classrooms with high-speed data wire that enables them to connect to school networks as well as the Internet.

(2) Develop a plan to increase the number of computers, computing equipment, and networking equipment in North Carolina Public Schools.

- 1 (3) Develop a plan that will assure every school can connect to the Internet
2 so that this tool is made available equally to all children in North
3 Carolina Public Schools.
- 4 (4) Help develop programs to train teachers and other educators in the use
5 of technology.
- 6 (5) Develop Internet-based learning programs designed to assist teachers in
7 the job of helping young people learn.
- 8 (6) Test and evaluate the benefits of each of the projects; investigate and
9 develop other means of using computer-based technology in
10 classrooms; and assure that this information is available to educators.
- 11 (c) Pursuant to subdivision (2) of subsection (b) of this section, the vocational
12 education computer recycling pilot program shall be expanded. The purposes of the pilot
13 program are to:
- 14 (1) Develop and implement high school vocational education programs that
15 train students to test, repair, reconfigure, upgrade, and maintain donated
16 computers.
- 17 (2) Enhance a community's opportunities for economic development by
18 providing vocational education students with educational, job, and
19 hireability skills as well as skills in computer technology.
- 20 (3) Provide upgraded computers to schools, consistent with State-approved
21 local school technology plans at a cost of four hundred dollars (\$400.00)
22 to six hundred dollars (\$600.00) per unit rather than new computers
23 costing around three thousand dollars (\$3,000) each.
- 24 (4) Help communities support their schools by encouraging business and
25 industry to donate computer components to schools or sell them at
26 greatly reduced prices.
- 27 (5) The State Board of Education, after consultation with ExplorNet, shall
28 select additional local administrative units to participate in the computer
29 recycling program. In selecting the pilot units, the State Board shall
30 consider (i) indicators of the readiness of a unit to participate in the
31 program, (ii) the degree of community support for such a program, and
32 (iii) indicators of the need for the program in the community, such as
33 lack of comparable training or resources in the community.
- 34 (6) The Information Resources Management Commission, in consultation
35 with the State Board of Education, shall review and modify its standards
36 for technical components of local school technology purchases to
37 facilitate the implementation of the programs.
- 38 (d) The State Board of Education shall contract with the nonprofit corporation,
39 ExplorNet, to administer the programs.
- 40 (e) The provisions of Article 3 of Chapter 143 of the General Statutes do not
41 apply to contracts for supplies, materials, equipment, and contractual services to
42 implement these programs. The Department of Administration may make its services

1 available to the State Board of Education, when requested by the State Board of
2 Education.

3 (f) The State Board of Education shall evaluate the educational components of
4 the programs.

5 The State Board's contract with ExplorNet shall require ExplorNet to evaluate
6 the technical components of the program and to submit the results of its evaluation to the
7 Information Resources Management Commission for review and comment by May 15,
8 1999. The Information Resources Management Commission shall submit the evaluation
9 done by ExplorNet and the Commission's comments on it to the State Board of Education
10 by August 15, 1999.

11 The State Board of Education shall report the results of these evaluations to the
12 Joint Legislative Education Oversight Committee by September 15, 1999.

13 Section 2. This act becomes effective July 1, 1998.