

**GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA**

**SESSION 1997**

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**SENATE BILL 560\***

Short Title: Expand Technology in Schools.

(Public)

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Sponsors: Senator Lee.

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Referred to: Education/Higher Education.

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April 1, 1997

**A BILL TO BE ENTITLED**

**AN ACT TO APPROPRIATE FUNDS TO ESTABLISH A 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 five hundred thousand dollars (\$500,000) for the 1997-98 fiscal year and the sum of five hundred thousand dollars (\$500,000) for the 1998-99 fiscal year to establish 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, a vocational  
12       education computer recycling pilot program shall be established. The purposes of the  
13       pilot 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; and
- 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 seven 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, 1997.