

GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA
SESSION 2001

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SENATE BILL 1275*

Short Title: Dropout Rcdtn/LEA Accountability. (Public)

Sponsors: Senators Dalton; Carter, Dannelly, Garrou, Lucas, and Robinson.

Referred to: Education/Higher Education.

June 6, 2002

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT TO DIRECT THE STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION TO DEVELOP A PLAN TO IMPROVE THE STATE'S TRACKING OF DROPOUT DATA, TO EXAMINE THE ACCOUNTABILITY FORMULA TO REWARD HIGH SCHOOLS FOR REDUCING THEIR DROPOUT RATE, TO IDENTIFY CURRENT STATE TECHNICAL HIGH SCHOOLS AND CAREER CENTERS AND TO COOPERATE WITH THE STATE BOARD OF COMMUNITY COLLEGES TO ENCOURAGE CONCURRENT ENROLLMENT, TO STUDY THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN ACADEMIC RIGOR AND REDUCING THE DROPOUT RATE, TO ENCOURAGE LOCAL BOARDS OF EDUCATION TO PLACE EXCELLENT, EXPERIENCED TEACHERS IN GRADES SEVEN THROUGH NINE, TO DIRECT THE JOINT LEGISLATIVE EDUCATION OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE TO STUDY THE FISCAL AND INSTRUCTIONAL ACCOUNTABILITY OF LOCAL SCHOOL ADMINISTRATIVE UNITS, AND TO DIRECT THE STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION TO TAKE OVER ALL POWERS AND DUTIES RELATED TO A SCHOOL WHEN THAT SCHOOL AND ITS LOCAL BOARD OF EDUCATION FAIL TO IMPLEMENT RECOMMENDATIONS OF AN ASSISTANCE TEAM ASSIGNED TO THAT SCHOOL.

The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

SECTION 1. G.S. 115C-12 is amended by adding a new subsection to read:

"(27a) Reducing School Dropout Rates –

- a. The State Board of Education shall develop a statewide plan to improve the State's tracking of dropout data so that accurate and useful comparisons can be made over time. The plan shall include, at a minimum, how dropouts are counted and the methodology for calculating the dropout rate, the ability to track students' movements among schools and districts, and the ability to provide information on who drops out and why."

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

8 **SECTION 2.(b)** The State Board of Education, in cooperation with the State
9 Board of Community Colleges, shall identify technical high schools and career centers
10 currently in operation in the State and make recommendations to strengthen concurrent
11 enrollment opportunities with the community colleges. The State Board shall report its
12 findings to the Joint Legislative Education Oversight Committee by December 15,
13 2002.

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

- 17 (1) The development of a proposal to accelerate the learning of students
18 able to complete high school in three years;
- 19 (2) The elimination of low-level classes at the middle and high school
20 levels;
- 21 (3) The examination of the appropriateness of electives and exploratory
22 courses at the middle school level;
- 23 (4) A review of current vocational courses to determine the rigor of the
24 content; and
- 25 (5) The development of up-to-date standards for vocational/technical
26 teachers.

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

29 **SECTION 3.** G.S. 115C-47 is amended by adding a new subsection to read:
30 "(42) Local boards of education are encouraged to adopt policies that require
31 superintendents to assign to the core academic courses in seventh
32 through ninth grades teachers who have at least four years teaching
33 experience and who have received within the last three years an overall
34 rating on a formal evaluation that is at least above standard."

35 **SECTION 4.** The Joint Legislative Education Oversight Committee shall
36 study the fiscal and instructional accountability of local school administrative units. As
37 part of this study, the Committee shall:

- 38 (1) Evaluate the fiscal management and instructional leadership provided
39 by local school administrative units and identify whether too much
40 fiscal and instructional flexibility has been delegated to them.
- 41 (2) Determine whether local school administrative units are utilizing their
42 funding and resources in a proper, strategic manner with regard to their
43 at-risk children.

- 1 (3) Evaluate State fiscal controls that are available to ensure that local
2 allocation of funding and resources is cost-effective and is
3 appropriately focused on enhancing educational leadership, teaching
4 the standard course of study, and improving student learning.
- 5 (4) Analyze State and local procedures for identifying superintendents,
6 principals, and teachers who need additional training or assistance in
7 order to implement a strategic and cost-effective instructional program
8 that meets the needs of all children, including at-risk children, so that
9 they obtain a sound basic education by achieving grade level or above
10 academic performance.
- 11 (5) Identify current sanctions that the State may impose in order to correct
12 ineffective instructional leadership or teaching in a school or school
13 system. In particular, the Committee shall ensure that fair and efficient
14 procedures are available to the State for removing ineffective
15 superintendents, principals, or teachers and for replacing them with
16 effective, competent ones.

17 As part of its inquiry into the accountability of local school systems for their
18 instructional and fiscal management, the Committee may explore whether local boards
19 of education should continue to be elected bodies or whether they should be appointed
20 bodies. If the Committee determines they should be appointed, the Committee should
21 identify appropriate procedures and appointing authorities.

22 The Committee shall report its findings and any recommendations to the 2003
23 Session of the General Assembly.

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

26 "(b1) Report to the State Board of Education if a school and its local board of
27 education are not responsive to the team's recommendations. Notwithstanding G.S.
28 115C-36 and other provisions of this Chapter, if the State Board confirms the school
29 and local board have failed to take appropriate steps to improve student performance at
30 that school, the State Board shall assume all powers and duties previously conferred
31 upon that local board and that school and shall have general control and supervision of
32 all matters pertaining to that school until student performance at the school meets or
33 exceeds the standards set for the school. The State Board may, as it considers
34 appropriate, delegate any powers and duties to that local board or school before the
35 school meets or exceeds those standards."

36 **SECTION 6.** This act is effective when it becomes law.