

GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA  
SESSION 2023

HOUSE BILL 166  
RATIFIED BILL

AN ACT TO ALLOW AMERICAN INDIAN STUDENTS TO WEAR CULTURAL OBJECTS  
AT PUBLIC SCHOOL GRADUATION CEREMONIES.

The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

**SECTION 1.** The title of Article 29D of Chapter 115C of the General Statutes reads as rewritten:

"Article 29D.

~~"Student Prayer and Religious Activity-Activity and Cultural Expression."~~

**SECTION 2.** Article 29D of Chapter 115C of the General Statutes is amended by adding a new section to read:

**"§ 115C-407.40. Cultural expression at graduation ceremonies.**

A student that is, or is eligible to be, enrolled as a member of a State or federally recognized Indian Tribe shall be allowed to wear objects of cultural significance as part of the student's regalia at any graduation ceremony for a school within a public school unit in which the student is a graduating participant. For purposes of this section, objects of cultural significance are defined as bird feathers and plumes."

**SECTION 3.(a)** G.S. 115C-218.75 is amended by adding a new subsection to read:

"(k) Cultural Expression at Graduation Ceremonies. – A charter school shall comply with G.S. 115C-407.40 at all graduation ceremonies."

**SECTION 3.(b)** G.S. 115C-238.66 is amended by adding a new subdivision to read:

"(19) Cultural expression at graduation ceremonies. – A regional school shall comply with G.S. 115C-407.40 at all graduation ceremonies."

**SECTION 3.(c)** G.S. 116-239.8(b) is amended by adding a new subdivision to read:

"(22) Cultural expression at graduation ceremonies. – A laboratory school shall comply with G.S. 115C-407.40 at all graduation ceremonies."

**SECTION 3.(d)** Section 6(d)(22) of S.L. 2018-32 reads as rewritten:

"(22) Article 29D, ~~Student Prayer and Religious Activity-Activity and Cultural Expression.~~"



**SECTION 4.** This act is effective when it becomes law.  
In the General Assembly read three times and ratified this the 12<sup>th</sup> day of June, 2023.

s/ Phil Berger  
President Pro Tempore of the Senate

s/ Erin Paré  
Presiding Officer of the House of Representatives

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Roy Cooper  
Governor

Approved \_\_\_\_\_ .m. this \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 2023