

GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA
SESSION 2023

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HOUSE BILL 206

Short Title: Increase Dropout Age/Completion Indicator. (Public)

Sponsors: Representatives Elmore, Clemmons, Lambeth, and Setzer (Primary Sponsors).
For a complete list of sponsors, refer to the North Carolina General Assembly web site.

Referred to: Education - K-12, if favorable, Rules, Calendar, and Operations of the House

February 28, 2023

1 A BILL TO BE ENTITLED
2 AN ACT TO RAISE THE COMPULSORY SCHOOL ATTENDANCE AGE TO EIGHTEEN
3 YEARS OLD OVER A FIVE-YEAR PERIOD AND TO ESTABLISH A COMPLETION
4 RATE INDICATOR FOR SCHOOL PERFORMANCE GRADES.

5 The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

6
7 **PART I. RAISE DROPOUT AGE TO 16 YEARS AND SIX MONTHS FOR THE**
8 **2024-2025 SCHOOL YEAR**

9 **SECTION 1.(a)** G.S. 115C-378(a) reads as rewritten:

10 "(a) Every parent, ~~guardian-guardian~~, or custodian in this State having charge or control
11 of a child between the ages of (i) seven years and (ii) 16 years and six months shall cause the
12 child to attend school continuously for a period equal to the time which the public school to
13 which the child is assigned shall be in ~~session-session~~, unless the child graduates from high
14 school. Every parent, guardian, or custodian in this State having charge or control of a child under
15 age seven who is enrolled in a public school in grades kindergarten through two shall also cause
16 the child to attend school continuously for a period equal to the time which the public school to
17 which the child is assigned shall be in session unless the child has withdrawn from school."

18 **SECTION 1.(b)** G.S. 115C-238.66(3) reads as rewritten:

19 "(3) School attendance. – Every parent, guardian, or other person in this State
20 having charge or control of a child who is enrolled in the regional school and
21 who is less than 16 years and six months of age shall cause such child to attend
22 school continuously for a period equal to the time that the regional school shall
23 be in ~~session-session~~, unless the child graduates from high school. No person
24 shall encourage, entice, or counsel any child to be unlawfully absent from the
25 regional school. Any person who aids or abets a student's unlawful absence
26 from the regional school shall, upon conviction, be guilty of a Class 1
27 misdemeanor. The principal shall be responsible for implementing such
28 additional policies concerning compulsory attendance as shall be adopted by
29 the board of directors, including regulations concerning lawful and unlawful
30 absences, permissible excuses for temporary absences, maintenance of
31 attendance records, and attendance counseling."

32 **SECTION 1.(c)** G.S. 116-235(b)(2) reads as rewritten:

33 "(2) School Attendance. – Every parent, guardian, or other person in this State
34 having charge or control of a child who is enrolled in the School and who is
35 less than 16 years and six months of age shall cause such child to attend school



1 continuously for a period equal to the time which the School shall be in
2 ~~session-session, unless the child graduates from high school.~~ No person shall
3 encourage, entice, or counsel any child to be unlawfully absent from the
4 School. Any person who aids or abets a student's unlawful absence from the
5 School shall, upon conviction, be guilty of a Class 1 misdemeanor. The
6 Chancellor of the School shall be responsible for implementing such
7 additional policies concerning compulsory attendance as shall be adopted by
8 the Board of Trustees, including regulations concerning lawful and unlawful
9 absences, permissible excuses for temporary absences, maintenance of
10 attendance records, and attendance counseling."

11 **SECTION 1.(d)** G.S. 116-239.8(b)(5) reads as rewritten:

12 "(5) School attendance. – Every parent, guardian, or other person in this State
13 having charge or control of a child who is enrolled in the laboratory school
14 and who is less than 16 years and six months of age shall cause such child to
15 attend school continuously for a period equal to the time that the laboratory
16 school shall be in ~~session-session, unless the child graduates from high school.~~
17 No person shall encourage, entice, or counsel any child to be unlawfully
18 absent from the laboratory school. Any person who aids or abets a student's
19 unlawful absence from the laboratory school shall, upon conviction, be guilty
20 of a Class 1 misdemeanor. The principal shall be responsible for implementing
21 such additional policies concerning compulsory attendance as shall be adopted
22 by the chancellor, including regulations concerning lawful and unlawful
23 absences, permissible excuses for temporary absences, maintenance of
24 attendance records, and attendance counseling."

25 **SECTION 1.(e)** G.S. 7B-1501(27) reads as rewritten:

26 "(27) Undisciplined juvenile. –
27 a. A juvenile who, while less than 16 years and six months of age but at
28 least 10 years of age, is unlawfully absent from school; or is regularly
29 disobedient to and beyond the disciplinary control of the juvenile's
30 parent, guardian, or custodian; or is regularly found in places where it
31 is unlawful for a juvenile to be; or has run away from home for a period
32 of more than 24 hours; or
33 b. A juvenile who is between (i) 16 or 17 years and six months of age
34 and (ii) 18 years of age and who is regularly disobedient to and beyond
35 the disciplinary control of the juvenile's parent, guardian, or custodian;
36 or is regularly found in places where it is unlawful for a juvenile to be;
37 or has run away from home for a period of more than 24 hours."

38 **SECTION 1.(f)** G.S. 143B-805(20) reads as rewritten:

39 "(20) Undisciplined juvenile. –
40 a. A juvenile who, while less than 16 years and six months of age but at
41 least 10 years of age, is unlawfully absent from school; or is regularly
42 disobedient to and beyond the disciplinary control of the juvenile's
43 parent, guardian, or custodian; or is regularly found in places where it
44 is unlawful for a juvenile to be; or has run away from home for a period
45 of more than 24 hours; or
46 b. A juvenile who is between (i) 16 or 17 years and six months of age
47 and (ii) 18 years of age and who is regularly disobedient to and beyond
48 the disciplinary control of the juvenile's parent, guardian, or custodian;
49 or is regularly found in places where it is unlawful for a juvenile to be;
50 or has run away from home for a period of more than 24 hours."
51

PART II. RAISE DROPOUT AGE TO 17 YEARS FOR THE 2025-2026 SCHOOL YEAR

SECTION 2.(a) G.S. 115C-378(a), as amended by Section 1(a) of this act, reads as rewritten:

"(a) Every parent, guardian, or custodian in this State having charge or control of a child between the ages of (i) seven years and (ii) ~~16-17 years and six months~~ shall cause the child to attend school continuously for a period equal to the time which the public school to which the child is assigned shall be in session, unless the child graduates from high school. Every parent, guardian, or custodian in this State having charge or control of a child under age seven who is enrolled in a public school in grades kindergarten through two shall also cause the child to attend school continuously for a period equal to the time which the public school to which the child is assigned shall be in session unless the child has withdrawn from school."

SECTION 2.(b) G.S. 115C-238.66(3), as amended by Section 1(b) of this act, reads as rewritten:

"(3) School attendance. – Every parent, guardian, or other person in this State having charge or control of a child who is enrolled in the regional school and who is less than ~~16-17 years and six months~~ of age shall cause such child to attend school continuously for a period equal to the time that the regional school shall be in session, unless the child graduates from high school. No person shall encourage, entice, or counsel any child to be unlawfully absent from the regional school. Any person who aids or abets a student's unlawful absence from the regional school shall, upon conviction, be guilty of a Class 1 misdemeanor. The principal shall be responsible for implementing such additional policies concerning compulsory attendance as shall be adopted by the board of directors, including regulations concerning lawful and unlawful absences, permissible excuses for temporary absences, maintenance of attendance records, and attendance counseling."

SECTION 2.(c) G.S. 116-235(b)(2), as amended by Section 1(c) of this act, reads as rewritten:

"(2) School Attendance. – Every parent, guardian, or other person in this State having charge or control of a child who is enrolled in the School and who is less than ~~16-17 years and six months~~ of age shall cause such child to attend school continuously for a period equal to the time which the School shall be in session, unless the child graduates from high school. No person shall encourage, entice, or counsel any child to be unlawfully absent from the School. Any person who aids or abets a student's unlawful absence from the School shall, upon conviction, be guilty of a Class 1 misdemeanor. The Chancellor of the School shall be responsible for implementing such additional policies concerning compulsory attendance as shall be adopted by the Board of Trustees, including regulations concerning lawful and unlawful absences, permissible excuses for temporary absences, maintenance of attendance records, and attendance counseling."

SECTION 2.(d) G.S. 116-239.8(b)(5), as amended by Section 1(d) of this act, reads as rewritten:

"(5) School attendance. – Every parent, guardian, or other person in this State having charge or control of a child who is enrolled in the laboratory school and who is less than ~~16-17 years and six months~~ of age shall cause such child to attend school continuously for a period equal to the time that the laboratory school shall be in session, unless the child graduates from high school. No person shall encourage, entice, or counsel any child to be unlawfully absent from the laboratory school. Any person who aids or abets a student's unlawful absence from the laboratory school shall, upon conviction, be guilty of a Class

1 1 misdemeanor. The principal shall be responsible for implementing such
2 additional policies concerning compulsory attendance as shall be adopted by
3 the chancellor, including regulations concerning lawful and unlawful
4 absences, permissible excuses for temporary absences, maintenance of
5 attendance records, and attendance counseling."

6 **SECTION 2.(e)** G.S. 7B-1501(27), as amended by Section 1(e) of this act, reads as
7 rewritten:

8 "(27) Undisciplined juvenile. –

- 9 a. A juvenile who, while less than ~~16-17~~ years ~~and six months~~ of age but
10 at least 10 years of age, is unlawfully absent from school; or is
11 regularly disobedient to and beyond the disciplinary control of the
12 juvenile's parent, guardian, or custodian; or is regularly found in places
13 where it is unlawful for a juvenile to be; or has run away from home
14 for a period of more than 24 hours; or
15 b. A juvenile who is between (i) ~~16-17~~ years ~~and six months~~ of age and
16 (ii) 18 years of age and who is regularly disobedient to and beyond the
17 disciplinary control of the juvenile's parent, guardian, or custodian; or
18 is regularly found in places where it is unlawful for a juvenile to be; or
19 has run away from home for a period of more than 24 hours."

20 **SECTION 2.(f)** G.S. 143B-805(20), as amended by Section 1(f) of this act, reads as
21 rewritten:

22 "(20) Undisciplined juvenile. –

- 23 a. A juvenile who, while less than ~~16-17~~ years ~~and six months~~ of age but
24 at least 10 years of age, is unlawfully absent from school; or is
25 regularly disobedient to and beyond the disciplinary control of the
26 juvenile's parent, guardian, or custodian; or is regularly found in places
27 where it is unlawful for a juvenile to be; or has run away from home
28 for a period of more than 24 hours; or
29 b. A juvenile who is between (i) ~~16-17~~ years ~~and six months~~ of age and
30 (ii) 18 years of age and who is regularly disobedient to and beyond the
31 disciplinary control of the juvenile's parent, guardian, or custodian; or
32 is regularly found in places where it is unlawful for a juvenile to be; or
33 has run away from home for a period of more than 24 hours."

34
35 **PART III. RAISE DROPOUT AGE TO 17 YEARS AND SIX MONTHS FOR THE**
36 **2026-2027 SCHOOL YEAR**

37 **SECTION 3.(a)** G.S. 115C-378(a), as amended by Section 2(a) of this act, reads as
38 rewritten:

39 "(a) Every parent, guardian, or custodian in this State having charge or control of a child
40 between the ages of (i) seven years and (ii) 17 years and six months shall cause the child to attend
41 school continuously for a period equal to the time which the public school to which the child is
42 assigned shall be in session, unless the child graduates from high school. Every parent, guardian,
43 or custodian in this State having charge or control of a child under age seven who is enrolled in
44 a public school in grades kindergarten through two shall also cause the child to attend school
45 continuously for a period equal to the time which the public school to which the child is assigned
46 shall be in session unless the child has withdrawn from school."

47 **SECTION 3.(b)** G.S. 115C-238.66(3), as amended by Section 2(b) of this act, reads
48 as rewritten:

49 "(3) School attendance. – Every parent, guardian, or other person in this State
50 having charge or control of a child who is enrolled in the regional school and
51 who is less than 17 years and six months of age shall cause such child to attend

1 school continuously for a period equal to the time that the regional school shall
2 be in session, unless the child graduates from high school. No person shall
3 encourage, entice, or counsel any child to be unlawfully absent from the
4 regional school. Any person who aids or abets a student's unlawful absence
5 from the regional school shall, upon conviction, be guilty of a Class 1
6 misdemeanor. The principal shall be responsible for implementing such
7 additional policies concerning compulsory attendance as shall be adopted by
8 the board of directors, including regulations concerning lawful and unlawful
9 absences, permissible excuses for temporary absences, maintenance of
10 attendance records, and attendance counseling."

11 **SECTION 3.(c)** G.S. 116-235(b)(2), as amended by Section 2(c) of this act, reads as
12 rewritten:

13 "(2) School Attendance. – Every parent, guardian, or other person in this State
14 having charge or control of a child who is enrolled in the School and who is
15 less than 17 years and six months of age shall cause such child to attend school
16 continuously for a period equal to the time which the School shall be in
17 session, unless the child graduates from high school. No person shall
18 encourage, entice, or counsel any child to be unlawfully absent from the
19 School. Any person who aids or abets a student's unlawful absence from the
20 School shall, upon conviction, be guilty of a Class 1 misdemeanor. The
21 Chancellor of the School shall be responsible for implementing such
22 additional policies concerning compulsory attendance as shall be adopted by
23 the Board of Trustees, including regulations concerning lawful and unlawful
24 absences, permissible excuses for temporary absences, maintenance of
25 attendance records, and attendance counseling."

26 **SECTION 3.(d)** G.S. 116-239.8(b)(5), as amended by Section 2(d) of this act, reads
27 as rewritten:

28 "(5) School attendance. – Every parent, guardian, or other person in this State
29 having charge or control of a child who is enrolled in the laboratory school
30 and who is less than 17 years and six months of age shall cause such child to
31 attend school continuously for a period equal to the time that the laboratory
32 school shall be in session, unless the child graduates from high school. No
33 person shall encourage, entice, or counsel any child to be unlawfully absent
34 from the laboratory school. Any person who aids or abets a student's unlawful
35 absence from the laboratory school shall, upon conviction, be guilty of a Class
36 1 misdemeanor. The principal shall be responsible for implementing such
37 additional policies concerning compulsory attendance as shall be adopted by
38 the chancellor, including regulations concerning lawful and unlawful
39 absences, permissible excuses for temporary absences, maintenance of
40 attendance records, and attendance counseling."

41 **SECTION 3.(e)** G.S. 7B-1501(27), as amended by Section 2(e) of this act, reads as
42 rewritten:

43 "(27) Undisciplined juvenile. –
44 a. A juvenile who, while less than 17 years and six months of age but at
45 least 10 years of age, is unlawfully absent from school; or is regularly
46 disobedient to and beyond the disciplinary control of the juvenile's
47 parent, guardian, or custodian; or is regularly found in places where it
48 is unlawful for a juvenile to be; or has run away from home for a period
49 of more than 24 hours; or
50 b. A juvenile who is between (i) 17 years and six months of age and (ii)
51 18 years of age and who is regularly disobedient to and beyond the

1 disciplinary control of the juvenile's parent, guardian, or custodian; or
2 is regularly found in places where it is unlawful for a juvenile to be; or
3 has run away from home for a period of more than 24 hours."

4 **SECTION 3.(f)** G.S. 143B-805(20), as amended by Section 2(f) of this act, reads as
5 rewritten:

6 "(20) Undisciplined juvenile. –

7 a. A juvenile who, while less than 17 years and six months of age but at
8 least 10 years of age, is unlawfully absent from school; or is regularly
9 disobedient to and beyond the disciplinary control of the juvenile's
10 parent, guardian, or custodian; or is regularly found in places where it
11 is unlawful for a juvenile to be; or has run away from home for a period
12 of more than 24 hours; or

13 b. A juvenile who is between (i) 17 years and six months of age and (ii)
14 18 years of age and who is regularly disobedient to and beyond the
15 disciplinary control of the juvenile's parent, guardian, or custodian; or
16 is regularly found in places where it is unlawful for a juvenile to be; or
17 has run away from home for a period of more than 24 hours."

18
19 **PART IV. RAISE DROPOUT AGE TO 18 YEARS FOR THE 2027-2028 SCHOOL YEAR**

20 **SECTION 4.(a)** G.S. 115C-378(a), as amended by Section 3(a) of this act, reads as
21 rewritten:

22 "(a) Every parent, guardian, or custodian in this State having charge or control of a child
23 between the ages of (i) seven years and (ii) ~~17-18 years and six months~~ shall cause the child to
24 attend school continuously for a period equal to the time which the public school to which the
25 child is assigned shall be in session, unless the child graduates from high school. Every parent,
26 guardian, or custodian in this State having charge or control of a child under age seven who is
27 enrolled in a public school in grades kindergarten through two shall also cause the child to attend
28 school continuously for a period equal to the time which the public school to which the child is
29 assigned shall be in session unless the child has withdrawn from school."

30 **SECTION 4.(b)** G.S. 115C-238.66(3), as amended by Section 3(b) of this act, reads
31 as rewritten:

32 "(3) School attendance. – Every parent, guardian, or other person in this State
33 having charge or control of a child who is enrolled in the regional school and
34 who is less than ~~17-18 years and six months~~ of age shall cause such child to
35 attend school continuously for a period equal to the time that the regional
36 school shall be in session, unless the child graduates from high school. No
37 person shall encourage, entice, or counsel any child to be unlawfully absent
38 from the regional school. Any person who aids or abets a student's unlawful
39 absence from the regional school shall, upon conviction, be guilty of a Class
40 1 misdemeanor. The principal shall be responsible for implementing such
41 additional policies concerning compulsory attendance as shall be adopted by
42 the board of directors, including regulations concerning lawful and unlawful
43 absences, permissible excuses for temporary absences, maintenance of
44 attendance records, and attendance counseling."

45 **SECTION 4.(c)** G.S. 116-235(b)(2), as amended by Section 3(c) of this act, reads as
46 rewritten:

47 "(2) School Attendance. – Every parent, guardian, or other person in this State
48 having charge or control of a child who is enrolled in the School and who is
49 less than ~~17-18 years and six months~~ of age shall cause such child to attend
50 school continuously for a period equal to the time which the School shall be
51 in session, unless the child graduates from high school. No person shall

1 encourage, entice, or counsel any child to be unlawfully absent from the
 2 School. Any person who aids or abets a student's unlawful absence from the
 3 School shall, upon conviction, be guilty of a Class 1 misdemeanor. The
 4 Chancellor of the School shall be responsible for implementing such
 5 additional policies concerning compulsory attendance as shall be adopted by
 6 the Board of Trustees, including regulations concerning lawful and unlawful
 7 absences, permissible excuses for temporary absences, maintenance of
 8 attendance records, and attendance counseling."

9 **SECTION 4.(d)** G.S. 116-239.8(b)(5), as amended by Section 3(d) of this act, reads
 10 as rewritten:

11 "(5) School attendance. – Every parent, guardian, or other person in this State
 12 having charge or control of a child who is enrolled in the laboratory school
 13 and who is less than ~~17-18 years and six months~~ of age shall cause such child
 14 to attend school continuously for a period equal to the time that the laboratory
 15 school shall be in session, unless the child graduates from high school. No
 16 person shall encourage, entice, or counsel any child to be unlawfully absent
 17 from the laboratory school. Any person who aids or abets a student's unlawful
 18 absence from the laboratory school shall, upon conviction, be guilty of a Class
 19 1 misdemeanor. The principal shall be responsible for implementing such
 20 additional policies concerning compulsory attendance as shall be adopted by
 21 the chancellor, including regulations concerning lawful and unlawful
 22 absences, permissible excuses for temporary absences, maintenance of
 23 attendance records, and attendance counseling."

24 **SECTION 4.(e)** G.S. 7B-1501(27), as amended by Section 3(e) of this act, reads as
 25 rewritten:

26 "(27) Undisciplined juvenile. – A
 27 a. ~~A~~-juvenile who, while less than ~~17-18 years and six months~~ of age but
 28 at least 10 years of age, is unlawfully absent from school; or is
 29 regularly disobedient to and beyond the disciplinary control of the
 30 juvenile's parent, guardian, or custodian; or is regularly found in places
 31 where it is unlawful for a juvenile to be; or has run away from home
 32 for a period of more than 24 ~~hours; or~~ hours.
 33 b. ~~A juvenile who is between (i) 17 years and six months of age and (ii)~~
 34 ~~18 years of age and who is regularly disobedient to and beyond the~~
 35 ~~disciplinary control of the juvenile's parent, guardian, or custodian; or~~
 36 ~~is regularly found in places where it is unlawful for a juvenile to be; or~~
 37 ~~has run away from home for a period of more than 24 hours."~~

38 **SECTION 4.(f)** G.S. 143B-805(20), as amended by Section 3(f) of this act, reads as
 39 rewritten:

40 "(20) Undisciplined juvenile. – A
 41 a. ~~A~~-juvenile who, while less than ~~17-18 years and six months~~ of age but
 42 at least 10 years of age, is unlawfully absent from school; or is
 43 regularly disobedient to and beyond the disciplinary control of the
 44 juvenile's parent, guardian, or custodian; or is regularly found in places
 45 where it is unlawful for a juvenile to be; or has run away from home
 46 for a period of more than 24 ~~hours; or~~ hours.
 47 b. ~~A juvenile who is between (i) 17 years and six months of age and (ii)~~
 48 ~~18 years of age and who is regularly disobedient to and beyond the~~
 49 ~~disciplinary control of the juvenile's parent, guardian, or custodian; or~~
 50 ~~is regularly found in places where it is unlawful for a juvenile to be; or~~
 51 ~~has run away from home for a period of more than 24 hours."~~

1 SECTION 4.(g) Section 8.21 of S.L. 2016-94 is repealed.

2
3 **PART V. COMPLETION RATE INDICATOR FOR SCHOOL PERFORMANCE**
4 **GRADES**

5 SECTION 5.(a) G.S. 115C-83.15(b)(2) is amended by adding a new sub-subdivision
6 to read:

7 *"i. One half of a point for each percent of students who meet one of the*
8 *following criteria within five years of entering high school:*

9 1. Graduate from high school.

10 2. Earn an adult high school diploma.

11 3. Earn an adult high school equivalency diploma."

12 SECTION 5.(b) G.S. 115C-83.16(a)(2)b. is amended by adding a new
13 sub-sub-subdivision to read:

14 "5. The percentage of students who meet one of the following
15 criteria within five years of entering high school:

16 I. Graduate from high school.

17 II. Earn an adult high school diploma.

18 III. Earn an adult high school equivalency diploma."

19 SECTION 5.(c) G.S. 115C-12 is amended by adding a new subdivision to read:

20 "(27b) Duty to Provide Dropout Data to the State Board of Community Colleges. –
21 For the purposes of calculating the high school completion rate required by
22 G.S. 115C-83.15(b)(2)i., by June 15 of each year, the State Board of
23 Education shall provide the State Board of Community Colleges with
24 identifying information for any students who meet the following criteria:

25 a. The student unenrolled from a public school unit before graduation or
26 completion of a program of study without transferring to another
27 secondary school.

28 b. The student entered high school no more than five years earlier."

29 SECTION 5.(d) G.S. 115D-5(a2) reads as rewritten:

30 "(a2) The State Board of Community Colleges shall comply with the following provisions
31 ~~of~~ to ensure an efficient exchange of information between education agencies in the State:

32 (1) The provisions of G.S. 116-11(10a) to plan and implement an exchange of
33 information between the public schools and the institutions of higher
34 education in the State.

35 (2) By July 15 of each year, for students included in the data provided pursuant
36 to G.S. 115C-12(27b), the State Board of Community Colleges shall provide
37 the State Board of Education with the dates that students earned an adult high
38 school equivalency diploma."

39
40 **PART VI. EFFECTIVE DATE**

41 SECTION 6. This act is effective as follows:

42 (1) Section 1 of this act becomes effective July 1, 2023, and applies beginning
43 with the 2024-2025 school year.

44 (2) Section 2 of this act becomes effective July 1, 2024, and applies beginning
45 with the 2025-2026 school year.

46 (3) Section 3 of this act becomes effective July 1, 2025, and applies beginning
47 with the 2026-2027 school year.

48 (4) Section 4 of this act becomes effective July 1, 2026, and applies beginning
49 with the 2027-2028 school year.

- 1 (5) Section 5 of this act is effective when it becomes law and applies to school
2 performance scores and grades issued based on data from the 2023-2024
3 school year.
4 (6) The remainder of this act is effective when it becomes law.