

GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA
SESSION 2025

H

1

HOUSE BILL 488

Short Title: Modify School Performance Grades. (Public)

Sponsors: Representatives Riddell, Rhyne, Paré, and Johnson-Hostler (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

March 25, 2025

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED
AN ACT TO MODIFY SCHOOL PERFORMANCE GRADES TO PROVIDE THAT ALL
SCHOOLS RECEIVE A GRADE FOR SCHOOL ACHIEVEMENT AND A GRADE FOR
SCHOOL GROWTH.

The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

PART I. ESTABLISH SEPARATE ACHIEVEMENT AND GROWTH GRADES

SECTION 1.1. G.S. 115C-12(9) reads as rewritten:

"(9) Miscellaneous Powers and Duties. – All the powers and duties exercised by the State Board of Education shall be in conformity with the Constitution and subject to such laws as may be enacted from time to time by the General Assembly. Among such duties are:

...

c1. To issue an annual "report card" for the State and for each local school administrative unit, assessing each unit's efforts to improve student performance based on the growth in performance of the students in each school and taking into account progress over the previous years' level of performance and the State's performance in comparison with other states. This assessment shall take into account factors that have been shown to affect student performance and that the State Board considers relevant to assess the State's efforts to improve student performance. The annual "report card" for each local school administrative unit shall include the following:

1. The State Board shall award, in accordance with G.S. 115C-83.15, an overall numerical school achievement, growth, and performance score on a scale of zero to 100 achievement and school growth scores and a separate corresponding performance school achievement and school growth letter grade grades of A, B, C, D, or F earned by each school within the local school administrative unit. The school performance score and grade achievement and growth scores and grades shall reflect the measures required for achievement and growth, respectively, by G.S. 115C-83.15, in measures such as student performance on annual subject-specific assessments, college and workplace readiness measures,



* H 4 8 8 - V - 1 *

graduation rates, and student progress in achieving English language proficiency. In addition, the State Board shall award separate ~~performance~~ scores and grades for the following:

- I. School ~~performance~~ achievement and school growth of certain subgroups of students as provided in G.S. 115C-83.15.
- II. For schools serving students in any grade from kindergarten to eighth grade, school achievement and school growth performance in reading and mathematics respectively.

...."

SECTION 1.2. G.S. 115C-47(58) reads as rewritten:

"(58) To Inform the Public About the North Carolina School Report Cards Issued by the State Board of Education. – Each local board of education shall ensure that the report card issued for it by the State Board of Education receives wide distribution to the local press or is otherwise provided to the public. Each local board of education shall ensure that the ~~overall~~ school ~~performance~~ score achievement and growth scores and grade-grades earned by each school in the local school administrative unit for the current and previous four school years ~~is-are~~ prominently displayed on the Web site of the local school administrative unit. If any school in the local school administrative unit earned ~~an overall~~ a school ~~performance~~ achievement or growth grade of D or F, the local board of education shall provide notice of the grade in writing to the parent or guardian of all students enrolled in that school."

SECTION 1.3. G.S. 115C-83.15 reads as rewritten:

"§ 115C-83.15. School ~~achievement, growth, performance~~ scores, achievement scores, growth scores, and grades.

(a) School Scores and Grades. – The State Board of Education shall award school ~~achievement, growth, and performance~~ achievement and school growth scores and ~~an~~ associated ~~performance~~ grade-grades as required by G.S. 115C-12(9)c1., and calculated as provided in this section.

...

(b1) Calculation of School Achievement Grades. – For all schools, the score for school achievement, as provided in subsection (b) of this section, shall be used to determine the school achievement grade. The school achievement grade shall be based on the following scale and shall not be modified to add any other designation related to other performance measures, such as a "plus" or "minus":

- (1) A score of at least 85 is equivalent to a school achievement grade of A.
- (2) A score of at least 70 is equivalent to a school achievement grade of B.
- (3) A score of at least 55 is equivalent to a school achievement grade of C.
- (4) A score of at least 40 is equivalent to a school achievement grade of D.
- (5) A score of less than 40 is equivalent to a school achievement grade of F.

(c) Calculation of the School Growth Score. – Using the Education Value-Added Assessment System (EVAAS), the State Board shall calculate the overall growth score earned by schools. In calculating the total growth score earned by schools, the State Board of Education shall weight student growth on the achievement measures as provided in subsection (b) of this section that have available growth values; provided that for schools serving students in grades nine through 12, the growth score shall only include growth values for measures calculated under sub-subdivisions a. and b. of subdivision (2) of subsection (b) of this section. The numerical values used to determine whether a school has met, exceeded, or has not met expected growth

shall be translated to a 100-point scale and used for school reporting purposes as provided in G.S. 115C-12(9)c1., 115C-218.65, 115C-238.66, and 116-239.8.

(c1) Calculation of School Growth Grades. – For all schools, the score for school growth, as provided in subsection (c) of this section, shall be converted by the State Board of Education to a 100-point scale and used to determine the school growth grade. The school growth grade shall be based on the following scale and shall not be modified to add any other designation related to other performance measures, such as a "plus" or "minus":

(1) A score of at least 90 is equivalent to a school growth grade of A.

(2) A score of at least 80 is equivalent to a school growth grade of B.

(3) A score of at least 70 is equivalent to a school growth grade of C.

(4) A score of at least 60 is equivalent to a school growth grade of D.

(5) A score of less than 60 is equivalent to a school growth grade of F.

~~(d) Calculation of the Overall School Performance Scores and Grades.~~ – The State Board of Education shall calculate the overall school performance score by adding the school achievement score, as provided in subsection (b) of this section, and the school growth score, as determined using EVAAS as provided in subsection (c) of this section, earned by a school. The school achievement score shall account for eighty percent (80%), and the school growth score shall account for twenty percent (20%) of the total sum. For all schools, the total school performance score shall be converted to a 100-point scale and used to determine an overall school performance grade. The overall school performance grade shall be based on the following scale and shall not be modified to add any other designation related to other performance measures, such as a "plus" or "minus":

~~(1) A school performance score of at least 85 is equivalent to an overall school performance grade of A.~~

~~(2) A school performance score of at least 70 is equivalent to an overall school performance grade of B.~~

~~(3) A school performance score of at least 55 is equivalent to an overall school performance grade of C.~~

~~(4) A school performance score of at least 40 is equivalent to an overall school performance grade of D.~~

~~(5) A school performance score of less than 40 points is equivalent to an overall school performance grade of F.~~

(d1) Establishment of Subgroups of Students. – The State Board shall establish the minimum number of students in a subgroup served by a school that is necessary to disaggregate information on student performance and to determine a subgroup performance score achievement and subgroup growth scores and grade-associated grades for the following subgroups of students:

(1) Economically disadvantaged students.

(2) Students from major racial and ethnic groups.

(3) Children with disabilities.

(4) English learners.

(d2) Calculation of the School Performance Scores and Achievement and School Growth Scores and Corresponding Grades for Certain Subgroups of Students Served by a School. – In addition to the ~~overall school performance achievement and school growth scores and corresponding grades~~ awarded under subsections (b) through (c1) of this section, for each school that serves a minimum number of students in a subgroup of students listed in subsection (d1) of this section, the State Board of Education shall calculate school ~~performance achievement and school growth~~ scores and shall determine a corresponding school performance grade-grades for each subgroup using the same method as set forth in ~~subsection (d) subsections (b) through (c1)~~ of this section. School ~~performance achievement and school growth~~ scores for subgroups of students shall not be included in the calculation of the ~~overall school performance achievement~~

and school growth scores and corresponding grades under ~~subsection (d)~~ subsections (b) through (c1) of this section.

(d3) ~~Report of Subgroup Performance Scores and School Achievement and School Growth Scores and Corresponding Grades.~~ – The subgroup ~~performance~~ school achievement and school growth scores and associated grades shall be reported separately on the annual school report card provided under G.S. 115C-12(9)c1., 115C-218.65, 115C-238.66, and 116-239.8 in a way that provides the following information:

- (1) For the current year and the previous two years, the achievement score for each subgroup of students defined in subsection (d1) of this section for the school.
- (2) The statewide average achievement score for each subgroup defined in subsection (d1) of this section.
- (3) The difference between the achievement score for all students in the school and the achievement score for each subgroup that meets the minimum number of students defined in subsection (d1) of this section.
- (4) Based on the information reported in subdivision (3) of this subsection, the State Board shall determine and identify schools that are closing achievement gaps, experiencing a widening of gaps, or seeing no significant gap changes.

...
(f) ~~Indication of Growth.~~ – In addition to awarding the ~~overall~~ school scores for ~~achievement, growth, and performance and the performance grade, achievement and growth and associated grades,~~ using EVAAS, the State Board shall designate that a school has met, exceeded, or has not met expected growth. The designation of student growth shall be clearly displayed in the annual school report card provided under G.S. 115C-12(9)c1., 115C-218.65, 115C-238.66, and 116-239.8.

(g) Access to Annual Report Card Information on the Department's Web Site. – Beginning with data collected in the 2017-2018 school year, the State Board of Education shall provide user-friendly access to the public on the annual report cards issued for local school administrative units and individual schools provided under G.S. 115C-12(9)c1., 115C-218.65, 115C-238.66, and 116-239.8 through the Department of Public Instruction's Web site. The annual report card shall be designed and organized to display the following information more prominently than any other information:

- (1) A summary for each local school administrative unit and for each individual school of the school ~~performance~~ achievement and growth grades, whether the school has met, exceeded, or has not met expected growth, and any other information required to be provided as part of the annual report card.
- (2) The percentage of schools receiving ~~an overall~~ a school ~~performance~~ achievement letter grade of A, B, C, D, or F earned by each school located within a local school administrative unit and statewide.
- (2a) The percentage of schools receiving a school growth letter grade of A, B, C, D, or F earned by each school located within a local school administrative unit and statewide.
- (3) The number and percentage of schools that have met, exceeded, or have not met expected growth by each school located within a local school administrative unit and statewide.
- (4) A Web page for each individual school that prominently displays the school's ~~performance~~ achievement and growth grades, whether the school has met, exceeded, or has not met expected growth, and the school's ~~performance~~ achievement and growth scores in a way that is easy for the user to read.
- (5) The ability to easily compare annual report card information, including school ~~performance~~ achievement and growth grades and whether schools have met,

exceeded, or have not met expected growth, for local school administrative units and for individual schools for a time span of at least three years."

SECTION 1.4. G.S. 115C-83.17 reads as rewritten:

"§ 115C-83.17. Definitions.

The following definitions apply in this Part:

- (1) Achievement score. – A numerical score ~~on a scale of zero to 100~~ that is based on the sum of points earned by a school or by a subgroup of students pursuant to G.S. 115C-83.15.
- (2) Growth score. – A numerical score measuring student growth calculated for a school or for a subgroup of students pursuant to G.S. 115C-83.15.
- (3) ~~Overall school performance grade. School grades.~~ – The letter ~~grade~~ grades earned by a school for achievement and growth for all students served by a school pursuant to ~~G.S. 115C-83.15(d)~~ G.S. 115C-83.15(b1) and (c1).
- (4) ~~Overall school performance score. School scores.~~ – The numerical ~~score~~ scores earned by a school ~~that is calculated by adding the school achievement score and the school growth score earned by a school for achievement and growth~~ pursuant to ~~G.S. 115C-83.15(d)~~ G.S. 115C-83.15(b) and (c).
- (5) ~~Subgroup performance grade. grades.~~ – The letter ~~grade~~ grades earned by a school for achievement and growth for a subgroup of students served by the school pursuant to G.S. 115C-83.15(d2).
- (6) ~~Subgroup performance score. scores.~~ – The numerical ~~score~~ scores earned by a school ~~that is calculated by adding the for subgroup achievement score and the subgroup growth score earned by a school that are converted to a 100-point scale~~ pursuant to G.S. 115C-83.15(d2)."

PART II. CONFORMING CHANGES

SECTION 2.1. G.S. 115C-83.16 reads as rewritten:

"§ 115C-83.16. School performance indicators for the purpose of compliance with federal law.

(a) The State Board of Education shall use the school ~~performance achievement and growth~~ scores and grades as calculated required under G.S. 115C-83.15 to satisfy the federal requirement under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, as amended by the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), P.L. 114-95, to meaningfully differentiate the performance of schools on an annual basis. For the purpose of compliance with federal law, the State Board of Education shall calculate the overall school performance score by adding the school achievement score and the school growth score earned by a school. The school achievement score shall account for eighty percent (80%), and the school growth score shall account for twenty percent (20%) of the total sum. Additionally, the indicators shall be defined as follows:

...

(b) Notwithstanding subsection (a) of this section and only for the purpose of conforming with ESSA, the State Board may label measures as indicators different from those described in subsection (a) of this section; ~~provided that each measure shall be calculated in accordance with the requirements of G.S. 115C-83.15 section.~~

SECTION 2.2. G.S. 115C-105.37 reads as rewritten:

"§ 115C-105.37. Identification of low-performing schools.

(a) Identification of Low-Performing Schools. – The State Board of Education shall identify low-performing schools on an annual basis. Low-performing schools are those that earn ~~an overall a school performance achievement~~ grade of D or F and a school growth score of "met expected growth" or "not met expected growth" as defined by G.S. 115C-83.15.

(a1) Plan for Improvement of Low-Performing Schools. – If a school has been identified as low-performing as provided in this section and the school is not located in a local school

administrative unit identified as low-performing under G.S. 115C-105.39A, the following actions shall be taken:

(1) The superintendent shall proceed under G.S. 115C-105.39.

(2) Within 30 days of the initial identification of a school as low-performing by the State Board, the superintendent shall submit to the local board of education a preliminary plan for improving ~~both the school performance grade and school growth score, grades,~~ including how the superintendent and other central office administrators will work with the school and monitor the school's progress.

...

(b) Parental Notice of Low-Performing School Status. – Each school that the State Board identifies as low-performing shall provide written notification to the parents and guardians of students attending that school within 30 days of the identification that includes the following information:

(1) A statement that the State Board of Education has found that the school has earned ~~an overall a school performance achievement~~ grade of D or F and a school growth score of "met expected growth" or "not met expected growth" and has been identified as a low-performing school as defined by ~~G.S. 115C-105.37, this section.~~ The statement shall include an explanation of the school ~~performance grades and growth scores.~~ achievement and growth scores and grades.

(2) The school ~~performance grade and growth score~~ achievement and growth scores and grades earned.

(3) Information about the preliminary plan developed under subsection (a1) of this section and the availability of the final plan on the local school administrative unit's Web site.

(4) The meeting date for when the preliminary plan will be considered by the local board of education.

(5) A description of any additional steps the school is taking to improve student performance."

SECTION 2.3. G.S. 115C-105.39A reads as rewritten:

"§ 115C-105.39A. Identification of low-performing local school administrative units.

(a) Identification of Low-Performing Local School Administrative Units. – The State Board of Education shall identify low-performing local school administrative units on an annual basis. A low-performing local school administrative unit is a unit in which the majority of the schools in that unit that earned ~~an overall school performance grade and school growth score~~ achievement and growth scores and grades as provided in G.S. 115C-83.15 have been identified as low-performing schools, as provided in G.S. 115C-105.37.

(b) Plan for Improvement of Low-Performing Local School Administrative Units. – Once a local school administrative unit has been identified as low-performing under this section, the following actions shall be taken:

(1) The superintendent shall proceed under G.S. 115C-105.39.

(2) Within 30 days of the identification of a local school administrative unit as low-performing by the State Board, the superintendent shall submit to the local board of education a preliminary plan for improving ~~both the school performance grade and school growth score~~ achievement and growth scores and grades of each low-performing school in the unit, including how the superintendent and other central office administrators will work with each low-performing school and monitor the low-performing school's progress and how current local school administrative unit policy should be changed to improve student achievement throughout the local school administrative unit.

The plan shall also include specific strategies to improve early childhood learning along with measurable goals.

...

(c) Parental Notice of Low-Performing Local School Administrative Unit Status. – Each local school administrative unit that the State Board identifies as low-performing shall provide written notification to the parents and guardians of all students attending any school in the local school administrative unit within 30 days of the identification that includes the following information:

- (1) A statement that the State Board of Education has found that a majority of the schools in the local school administrative unit have earned ~~an overall a school performance achievement~~ grade of D or F and a school growth score of "met expected growth" or "not met expected growth" and have been identified as low-performing schools as defined by G.S. 115C-105.37. The statement shall also include an explanation of the school ~~performance grades and school growth scores achievement and growth scores and grades.~~
- (2) The percentage of schools identified as low-performing.
- (3) Information about the preliminary plan developed under subsection (b) of this section and the availability of the final plan on the local school administrative unit's Web site.
- (4) The meeting date for when the preliminary plan will be considered by the local board of education.
- (5) A description of any additional steps the local school administrative unit and schools are taking to improve student performance.
- (6) For notifications sent to parents and guardians of students attending a school that is identified as low-performing under G.S. 115C-105.37, a statement that the State Board of Education has found that the school has earned ~~an overall a school performance achievement~~ grade of D or F and a school growth score of "met expected growth" or "not met expected growth" and has been identified as a low-performing school as defined by G.S. 115C-105.37. This notification also shall include the ~~overall school performance grade and school growth score the school achievement and growth scores and grades~~ earned and an explanation of the school ~~performance grades and school growth scores achievement and growth scores and grades.~~

SECTION 2.4. G.S. 115C-218.65 reads as rewritten:

"§ 115C-218.65. North Carolina School Report Cards.

A charter school shall ensure that the report card issued for it by the State Board of Education receives wide distribution to the local press or is otherwise provided to the public. A charter school shall ensure that the ~~overall school performance score achievement and growth scores and grade grades~~ earned by the charter school for the current and previous four school years ~~is are~~ prominently displayed on the school Web site. If a charter school earned ~~an overall a school performance achievement or growth~~ grade of D or F, the charter school shall provide notice of the grade in writing to the parent or guardian of all students enrolled in that school."

SECTION 2.5. G.S. 115C-218.94(a) reads as rewritten:

"(a) Identification of Low-Performing Charter Schools. – The State Board of Education shall identify low-performing charter schools on an annual basis. Low-performing charter schools are those that earn ~~an overall a school performance achievement~~ grade of D or F and a school growth score of "met expected growth" or "not met expected growth" as defined by G.S. 115C-83.15."

SECTION 2.6. G.S. 115C-238.66(11) reads as rewritten:

"(11) North Carolina School Report Cards. – A regional school shall ensure that the report card issued for it by the State Board of Education receives wide

1 distribution to the local press or is otherwise provided to the public. A regional
2 school shall ensure that the ~~overall-school performance score achievement and~~
3 ~~growth scores~~ and ~~grade-grades~~ earned by the regional school for the current
4 and previous four school years ~~is~~ are prominently displayed on the school Web
5 site. If a regional school earned ~~an overall-a school performance achievement~~
6 ~~or growth~~ grade of D or F, the regional school shall provide notice of the grade
7 in writing to the parent or guardian of all students enrolled in that school."

8 **SECTION 2.7.** G.S. 116-239.8(b)(14) reads as rewritten:

9 "(14) North Carolina school report cards. – A laboratory school shall ensure that the
10 report card issued for it by the State Board of Education receives wide
11 distribution to the local press or is otherwise provided to the public. A
12 laboratory school shall ensure that the ~~overall-school performance score~~
13 ~~achievement and growth scores~~ and ~~grade-grades~~ earned by the laboratory
14 school for the current and previous four school years ~~is~~ are prominently
15 displayed on the school Web site. If a laboratory school earned ~~an overall-a~~
16 school ~~performance achievement or growth~~ grade of D or F, the laboratory
17 school shall provide notice of the grade in writing to the parent or guardian of
18 all students enrolled in that school."

19 **SECTION 2.8.** G.S. 116-239.13(3) reads as rewritten:

20 "(3) Public school student achievement data, including school ~~performance grades~~
21 ~~and student achievement scores and student growth,~~ achievement and growth
22 scores and grades at each laboratory school."
23

24 **PART III. EFFECTIVE DATE AND APPLICABILITY CLAUSE**

25 **SECTION 3.** This act becomes effective January 1, 2026, and applies to school
26 achievement grades, growth grades, and report cards issued based on data from the 2025-2026
27 school year.