

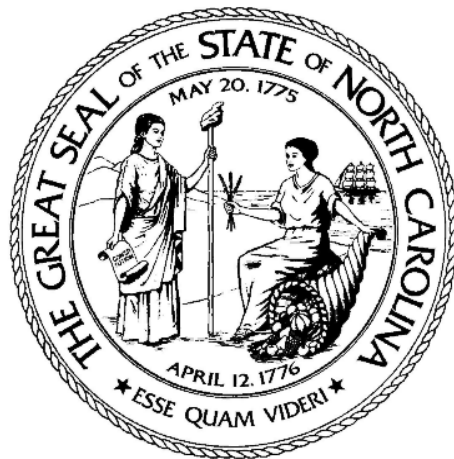
JOINT LEGISLATIVE COMMISSION

ON

DROPOUT PREVENTION

AND

HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION



**INTERIM REPORT TO THE
2010 SESSION OF THE
2009 GENERAL ASSEMBLY**

A LIMITED NUMBER OF COPIES OF THIS REPORT IS AVAILABLE
FOR DISTRIBUTION THROUGH THE LEGISLATIVE LIBRARY.

ROOMS 2126, 2226
STATE LEGISLATIVE BUILDING
RALEIGH, NORTH CAROLINA 27611
TELEPHONE: (919) 733-7778

OR

ROOM 500
LEGISLATIVE OFFICE BUILDING
RALEIGH, NORTH CAROLINA 27603-5925
TELEPHONE: (919) 733-9390

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Letter of Transmittal	1
Commission Membership.....	2
Authorizing Legislation.....	4
Commission Proceedings.....	6
Summary of Study Commission Proceedings.....	8
Findings and Recommendations.....	11
 LEGISLATIVE PROPOSAL I – A BILL TO BE ENTITLED AN ACT TO AMEND THE CRITERIA USED BY THE COMMITTEE ON DROPOUT PREVENTION TO AWARD THE DROPOUT PREVENTION GRANTS, TO DIRECT THE COMMITTEE ON DROPOUT PREVENTION TO USE EVALUATIONS FROM PRIOR GRANT CYCLES TO IDENTIFY EVIDENCE-BASED PROGRAMMATIC ELEMENTS THAT ARE EFFECTIVE AND REPLICABLE, AND TO ALLOCATE FUNDS TO STUDY HIGH SCHOOLS THAT HAVE SIGNIFICANTLY REDUCED THEIR DROPOUT RATE TO IDENTIFY PROGRAMS THAT MERIT REPLICATION AND ASSESS THE PROGRESS OF PROGRAMS THAT ARE NO LONGER RECEIVING DROPOUT PREVENTION GRANTS, AS RECOMMENDED BY THE JOINT LEGISLATIVE COMMISSION ON DROPOUT PREVENTION AND HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION	15
 LEGISLATIVE PROPOSAL II – A BILL TO BE ENTITLED AN ACT TO DIRECT THE STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION TO ESTABLISH A BLUE RIBBON TASK FORCE TO STUDY THE IMPACTS OF RAISING THE COMPULSORY ATTENDANCE AGE FOR PUBLIC SCHOOL ATTENDANCE PRIOR TO COMPLETION OF A HIGH SCHOOL DIPLOMA FROM SIXTEEN TO SEVENTEEN OR EIGHTEEN, AS RECOMMENDED BY THE JOINT LEGISLATIVE COMMISSION ON DROPOUT PREVENTION AND HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION	17
 LEGISLATIVE PROPOSAL III – A BILL TO BE ENTITLED AN ACT TO APPROPRIATE FUNDS FOR COMMUNITIES IN SCHOOLS OF NORTH CAROLINA, INC., PROGRAMS AND SERVICES AND TO PLACE NO FEWER THAN ONE HUNDRED GRADUATION COACHES IN EITHER MIDDLE OR HIGH SCHOOLS, AS RECOMMENDED BY THE JOINT LEGISLATIVE COMMISSION ON DROPOUT PREVENTION AND HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION	19

LEGISLATIVE PROPOSAL IV – A BILL TO BE ENTITLED AN ACT TO DIRECT THE STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION TO DEVELOP A GROWTH MODEL FOR ESTABLISHING SHORT-TERM ANNUAL GOALS FOR IMPROVING THE FOUR-YEAR COHORT GRADUATION RATE, AND TO ESTABLISH A LONG-TERM GOAL OF INCREASING THE STATEWIDE FOUR-YEAR COHORT GRADUATION RATE21

LEGISLATIVE PROPOSAL V – A BILL TO BE ENTITLED AN ACT TO REQUIRE LOCAL SCHOOL ADMINISTRATIVE UNITS TO IDENTIFY STUDENTS AT RISK OF ACADEMIC FAILURE AND NOT SUCCESSFULLY PROGRESSING TOWARDS GRADUATION NO LATER THAN THE FOURTH GRADE AND TO PROVIDE PERSONAL EDUCATION PLANS FOR THOSE STUDENTS, AND TO REQUIRE LOCAL SCHOOL ADMINISTRATIVE UNITS TO ANNUALLY REPORT TO THE STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION ON THE STRATEGIES AND SUCCESS OF FOCUSED INTERVENTION FOR THOSE STUDENTS, AS RECOMMENDED BY THE JOINT LEGISLATIVE COMMISSION ON DROPOUT PREVENTION AND HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION22

APPENDIX A – DROPOUT PREVENTION GRANT LEGISLATION 2007-2009.....24

APPENDIX B – OUTCOMES OF THE 2009 LEGISLATIVE PROPOSALS.....34

STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA



JOINT LEGISLATIVE COMMISSION ON DROPOUT PREVENTION AND
HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION

April 15, 2010

TO THE MEMBERS OF THE 2010 SESSION OF THE 2009 GENERAL ASSEMBLY:

Attached for your consideration is the interim report to the 2010 Session of the 2009 General Assembly. This report was prepared by the Joint Legislative Commission on Dropout Prevention and High School Graduation pursuant to Session Law 2007-323, Sec. 7.32.(f) of the 2007 General Assembly, as amended by S.L. 2008-181, Part XXXV.

Respectfully submitted,

Representative Earline Parmon, Chair

Senator Don Davis, Chair

***Joint Legislative Commission on Dropout Prevention and
High School Graduation***

Sen. Albin B. Swindell IV
North Carolina Senate
300 N. Salisbury Street, Room 629
Raleigh, NC 27603-5925
(919) 733-3030

Member

Rep. Pat B. Hurley
North Carolina House of Representatives
300 N. Salisbury Street, Room 607
Raleigh, NC 27603-5925
(919) 733-5865

Member

Sen. Jerry W. Tillman
North Carolina Senate
300 N. Salisbury Street, Room 628
Raleigh, NC 27603-5925
(919) 733-5870

Member

Rep. Cullie M. Tarleton
North Carolina House of Representatives
16 W. Jones Street, Room 2221
Raleigh, NC 27601-1096
(919) 733-7727

Member

Staff to Commission

Dee Atkinson, Research Division
Drupti Chauhan, Research Division
Shirley Iorio, Research Division
Sara Kamprath, Research Division
Kara McCraw, Research Division
(919) 733-2578

Pat Christmas, Commission Assistant
Monica Yelverton, Commission Assistant

Authorizing Legislation

S.L. 2007-323, sec. 7.32.(f)

SECTION 7.32.(f) Joint Legislative Commission on Dropout Prevention and High School Graduation. –

- (1) There is created the Joint Legislative Commission on Dropout Prevention and High School Graduation (Commission) to be composed of 16 members, eight appointed by the President Pro Tempore of the Senate and eight appointed by the Speaker of the House of Representatives. The President Pro Tempore and the Speaker shall each designate a cochair from their appointees. Vacancies shall be filled in the same manner as the original appointments were made.
- (2) The cochairs shall jointly call the first meeting of the Commission. A quorum of the Commission is a majority of its members.
- (3) The Commission shall:
 - a. Evaluate initiatives and programs designed to reduce the dropout rate and increase the number of students who graduate from high school prepared to further their postsecondary education or enter the workforce.
 - b. Review the research on factors related to students' success in school.
 - c. Evaluate the grants awarded under subsection (d) of this section and recommend whether any of the programs and initiatives that received one of these grants has potential for success and should be expanded or replicated.
 - d. Study the emergence of major middle school and high school reform efforts, including Learn and Earn Programs, the New Schools Initiative, and 21st Century Schools, and the impact they may have on the dropout rate.
 - e. Examine strategies, programs, and support services that should be provided if the compulsory school attendance age is raised to enable students to graduate from high school and time lines for implementing those strategies, programs, and support services.
 - f. Following a review of the courses required for graduation and the current system of awarding credit for those courses, determine whether changes should be made that better recognize the different learning rates and other needs of students.
 - g. Determine which interventions and other strategies, such as accelerated learning, tutoring, mentoring, or small class sizes, when employed as a substitute to grade retention or as a subsequent measure to grade retention, are the most effective at enabling these students to remain in school and graduate.
 - h. Study any other issue that the Commission considers relevant and appropriate.
- (4) The Legislative Services Commission, through the Legislative Services Officer, shall assign professional and clerical staff to assist in the work of the Joint Legislative Commission on Dropout Prevention and High School Graduation. The expenses of employment of the clerical staff shall be borne by the Joint Legislative Commission on Dropout Prevention and High School Graduation.
- (5) The Commission may meet at various locations around the State in order to promote greater public participation in its deliberations. The Legislative Services Commission, through the Legislative Services Officer, shall grant to the Joint Legislative Commission on Dropout Prevention and High School

- Graduation adequate meeting space in the State Legislative Building or the Legislative Office Building.
- (6) Members of the Commission shall be paid per diem, subsistence, and travel allowances as follows:
 - a. Members who are also members of the General Assembly, at the rate established in G.S. 120-3.1;
 - b. Members who are officials or employees of the State or local government agencies, at the rate established in G.S. 138-6; and
 - c. All other members, at the rate established in G.S. 138-5.
 - (7) The Commission, while in the discharge of its official duties, may exercise all powers provided for under G.S. 120-19 and Article 5A of Chapter 120 of the General Statutes. The Commission may contract for professional, clerical, or consultant services as provided by G.S. 120-32.02.
 - (8) The Commission may submit an interim report, including any recommendations and proposed legislation, to the Joint Legislative Education Oversight Committee and the General Assembly by May 1, 2008, and shall submit a final written report of its findings and recommendations on or before the convening of the 2009 Session of the General Assembly. All reports shall be filed with the President Pro Tempore of the Senate, the Speaker of the House of Representatives, and the Legislative Librarian. Upon filing its final report, the Commission shall terminate.

S.L. 2008-181, Part XXXV

PART XXXV. CHANGE REPORTING REQUIREMENTS OF THE JOINT LEGISLATIVE COMMISSION ON DROPOUT PREVENTION AND HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION (S.B. 1806 – Malone)

SECTION 35.1. Section 7.32 (f)(8) of S.L. 2007-323 reads as rewritten:

- "(8) The Commission ~~may submit an interim report, including any recommendations and proposed legislation, to the Joint Legislative Education Oversight Committee and the General Assembly by May 1, 2008,~~ and shall submit ~~a final~~ an interim written report of its findings and recommendations on or before the convening of the 2009 Session of the General Assembly. ~~The Commission may submit an interim report, including any recommendations and proposed legislation, to the Joint Legislative Education Oversight Committee and the General Assembly by May 1, 2010, and shall submit a final written report of its findings and recommendations on or before the convening of the 2011 Session of the General Assembly.~~ All reports shall be filed with the President Pro Tempore of the Senate, the Speaker of the House of Representatives, and the Legislative Librarian. Upon filing its final report, the Commission shall terminate."

S.L. 2008-107, Sec. 7.14

SECTION 7.14.(f) Dropout Prevention Network. – In addition to its other duties, the Joint Legislative Commission on Dropout Prevention and High School Graduation, established under Section 7.32 of S.L. 2007-323, shall study the development of an effective network for the purpose of sharing best practices among the grant recipients, the public schools, and other interested organizations. The Commission shall consider interactive Web sites, electronic information sharing, professional development opportunities, conferences, and other means that it believes would be effective. The Commission may consult with the Department of Public Instruction and the Committee on Dropout Prevention. The Commission shall report its findings and any recommendations to the 2009 General Assembly.

COMMISSION PROCEEDINGS

The Joint Legislative Commission on Dropout Prevention and High School Graduation met 5 times between December 10, 2009 and April 15, 2010.

December 10, 2009

Review of Legislation and Prior Commission Recommendations

Sara Kamprath – Legislative Analyst, Research Division, NCGA

North Carolina Committee on Dropout Prevention: Update on Activities, 2009 Evaluation Report, and Review of Previous and New Recommendations

Dr. Dave Strahan, Co-chair, NC Committee on Dropout Prevention

Dr. Zoe Locklear, Co-chair, NC Committee on Dropout Prevention

Janet Johnson, President/CEO, EDSTAR, Inc.

January 14, 2010

Review of 2009 Dropout Prevention Grants Process

Dr. Zoe Locklear, Co-Chair, NC Committee on Dropout Prevention

Debora Williams, Special Assistant, Graduation and Dropout Prevention

Department of Public Instruction

Four-Year Cohort Graduation Rate, Improving Graduation Rates and Raising Student Achievement

Dr. Lou Fabrizio, Director, Accountability Policy and Communications

Department of Public Instruction

Dr. Pat Ashley, Director, District and School Transformation

Department of Public Instruction

February 18, 2010

Dropout Prevention Programs in Other States

Ann B. Brewster, Ph.D., MSW, Research Scientist, Center for Child and Family Policy

Duke University

March 11, 2010

Raising Graduation Rates and Student Achievement in Lexington City Schools

Rick Kriesky, Superintendent, Lexington City Schools

Greg Newlin, Principal, Lexington Senior High

Christina Howell, Executive Director, Communities in Schools, of Lexington/Davidson County

Linda Harrill, President, CEO, Communities in Schools North Carolina

Review and Discussion of Proposed Draft Report to the 2010 Session

April 15, 2010

Tarheel Challenge

Colonel Jim Cohn, Director J9

North Carolina National Guard

Dropout Prevention and Intervention Resources at DPI

Debra Williams, Special Assistant, Graduation and Dropout Prevention

Department of Public Instruction

Discussion and Vote on Report to the 2010 Session

SUMMARY OF STUDY COMMISSION PROCEEDINGS

(In addition to these summaries, the Commission Assistant maintains a notebook containing complete minutes for each meeting and all information presented to the Commission. The Commission proceedings will be archived in the Legislative Library.)

December 10, 2009

Sara Kamprath gave a review of the six recommendations that the Commission made to the 2009 General Assembly and the status of those recommendations. She also provided a review of the 2009 legislative changes to the dropout prevention grant program, funding, criteria for grant selection, evaluation criteria, and other changes.

Next, Dr. Dave Strahan and Dr. Zoe Locklear, Co-chairs of the Committee on Dropout Prevention, and Dr. Janet Johnson, President/CEO, EDSTAR, Incorporated, presented an update on activities of the Committee, the 2009 evaluation report, and previous and new recommendations.

Dr. Strahan addressed the structure of the Committee, timeline of activities, evaluation processes and executive summary of the 2009 evaluation report, promising programs, agenda items for 2010, and issues for discussion.

Dr. Locklear, who had very recently been appointed co-chair of the Committee, reviewed the Committee appointments and the powers and duties of the Committee. She also gave the historical perspective from 2007 and 2008.

Dr. Johnson stated that EDSTAR, Inc., came into the program midstream after the grants had been awarded and the programs were up and running. She indicated that EDSTAR provided technical assistance to help all grantees to write a logic model to answer specific questions such as, what did they do with the money, who did they serve, and what were the intended effects. Next, EDSTAR helped the grantees to write Smart Outcomes, which stands for specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, and time bound. This helped the grantees to more clearly articulate in a measurable way what it was they were trying to do. Dr. Johnson mentioned that they were able to put a lot of structure in place that would allow them to identify programs that they think are promising.

January 14, 2010

Debora Williams, Special Assistant for Graduation and Dropout Prevention Initiatives, Department of Public Instruction, provided a review of the Dropout Prevention Grants process. She talked about the continuation grant awards, the non-funded applications, the grant programs and graduation rates of those schools being served. She also discussed the impact of those grants and the timeline associated with awarding funds.

Dr. Lou Fabrizio, Director of Accountability Policy and Communications, Department of Public Instruction, spoke next about the 4-year cohort graduation rate, improving graduation rates and raising student achievement.

Dr. Pat Ashley, Director of District and School Transformation, Department of Public Instruction, also spoke about the cohort graduation rate, improving graduation rates and raising student achievement. She provided the Commission with state level data, district level data (focusing on Lexington City Schools), and school level data (focusing on Lexington Senior High School) as a way to show the Commission members the data that is available for every district and every high school in the state. Dr. Ashley stated that she selected Lexington City Schools because it has been a part of the high school turnaround initiative and also because Lexington Senior High School has received a dropout prevention grant, is working with Communities in Schools, and has made progress.

February 18, 2010

Dr. Ann Brewster, Research Scientist, Center for Child and Family Policy, Duke University, presented on dropout prevention programs in other states. She mentioned that there are many risk factors for dropping out of school such as demographic factors, academic factors, social processes, and family, peer, school, neighborhood, and cultural factors. Dr. Brewster talked about obstacles that prevent practices, programs, and policies from being effective such as not being appropriate for the target population, target problem, or context, not having program fidelity, not choosing model programs, not developing programs based on research evidence, not evaluating programs enough or well, and not disseminating quality programs. She also mentioned some steps in developing and/or implementing effective practices, programs, and policies. They include: determining the problem first, not program first, targeting population and goals, identifying limitations to work with (such as budget), determining whether to modify, adopt, or create, piloting, and evaluating.

March 11, 2010

The following four presenters presented on raising graduation rates and student achievement in Lexington City Schools.

Rick Kriesky, Superintendent, Lexington City Schools, and Greg Newlin, Principal, Lexington Senior High School, presented data and talked about the increase in graduation rates and student achievement from 2004 to 2008. They mentioned that the path to student success includes reconfiguration of schools, reading initiative, administrative alignment, community connection, building strong grade teams, growing academies, personalizing student connections, comprehensive staff development, high expectations, and accountability.

Christina Howell, Executive Director, Communities In Schools of Lexington/Davidson County, spoke next about the Communities In Schools' services that are offered to students in Lexington/Davidson County. She talked about one particular program, The Achieve More Program (AMP) that is offered at Lexington/Davidson County Schools. She also provided data on the students enrolled in the AMP program.

Linda Harrill, President and CEO, Communities in Schools of North Carolina, emphasized that Communities In Schools is not a separate program, but that it is intertwined with the school system. She highlighted the pass-thru support and program costs of Communities In Schools.

She also provided recent statistics on local affiliates, local sites, children receiving services, and the promotion, graduation, and improved attendance percentages.

Sara Kamprath, Commission staff, reviewed the findings and recommendations in the Commission's draft report to the 2010 Session of the 2009 General Assembly. The Commission discussed and then made some amendments to the findings and recommendations for the April 15, 2010 meeting.

April 15, 2010

Colonel Jim Cohn, Director J9, North Carolina National Guard presented information about the mission, core components, eligibility requirements, benefits and costs to the State for Tarheel ChalleNGe. Tar Heel ChalleNGe is a joint federal and State program that focuses on reclaiming the lives of high school dropouts 16-18 years old and gives them the values, skills, and education to succeed as adults.

Debra Williams, Special Assistant for Graduation and Dropout Prevention Initiatives, Department of Public Instruction, provided a review of the information available on the Department of Public Instruction website related to dropout prevention and intervention. The website has information about best practices, effective policies and model programs that are research-based methods for reducing the dropout rate and the number of suspended students.

Sara Kamprath, Commission staff, reviewed the Commission's draft report to the 2010 Session of the 2009 General Assembly. The Commission discussed and then voted to approve the draft report as amended.

FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Findings:

Based upon the various presentations and Commission discussion, the Joint Legislative Commission on Dropout Prevention and High School Graduation makes the following findings:

1. The Committee on Dropout Prevention reports that 90 counties in North Carolina have been served by grants awarded in 2007, 2008, and 2009, and that 10 counties have not been served by any grants awarded in those years.
2. The Department of Public Instruction, as part of the federal Race to the Top application, has developed new criteria to more effectively identify low-performing schools in need of turnaround assistance. This criteria uses two measures to identify schools by including any high school in North Carolina with a graduation rate below sixty percent (60%) in the most recent school year and one of two prior school years, as well as any school in North Carolina with a performance composite under fifty percent (50%).
3. The Committee on Dropout Prevention has begun evaluation of the 2007 and 2008 grant recipients and identification of successful programmatic elements to provide targeted, effective services for students.
4. The Committee on Dropout Prevention reported that data collection and evaluation has been an impediment for some grant recipients. The Education Value-Added Assessment System (EVAAS), which all North Carolina local school administrative units have access to, can be used to identify students who are at-risk and need additional assistance with academics.
5. The Committee on Dropout Prevention reports that some previous grantees have not received continuation funding for additional grants because the programs, while effective, had other sources for sustainability. The Commission currently lacks authority to assess and evaluate prior grantees who no longer receive continuation funding or to assess other successful dropout prevention programs in the State for potential best practices.
6. The Commission finds that the planned statewide longitudinal data system (NC P-20+) will provide a more complete and richer data set for identification and assessment of student educational progress from pre-school through post-secondary education.
7. At-risk students are less likely to drop out if they form an on-going relationship with a designated adult in the schools who consistently shows concern and provides personal attention in helping at-risk students address their academic or personal problems and assists them in staying on track for graduation.

8. In its 2009 report to the General Assembly, the Commission found that current law requires children to attend school between the ages of seven and 16, and that students aged 17 were the most frequent dropouts. The Commission continues to find that additional research on raising the compulsory attendance age is needed.
9. In its 2009 report to the General Assembly, the Commission found that graduation rates should be a key factor used in accountability systems that measure and reward a school's efforts to improve student academic performance and close the achievement gap. The Commission continues to believe that aggressive goals which demonstrate continuous and substantial improvement from the prior year should be set to improve the current four-year cohort graduation rate.

Recommendations:

Therefore, the Commission makes the following recommendations to the 2010 session of the 2009 General Assembly:

1. The General Assembly shall amend the criteria used by the Committee on Dropout Prevention for awarding the dropout prevention grants to give priority, when applications are otherwise of equal quality and merit, to those applications from counties with no current grant recipients.
(See **LEGISLATIVE PROPOSAL I**)
2. The General Assembly shall amend the criteria used by the Committee on Dropout Prevention for awarding the dropout prevention grants to give priority to programs that would serve students in local schools that have either: 1) a four-year cohort graduation rate of less than sixty percent (60%) in the most recent school year and one of two prior school years, or 2) a performance composite under fifty percent (50%).
(See **LEGISLATIVE PROPOSAL I**)
3. The Committee on Dropout Prevention shall use the evaluations of programs from prior grant cycles to identify evidence-based programmatic elements that have been shown to be effective and replicable. The General Assembly shall direct the Committee on Dropout Prevention to give priority to grant applications that use multiple successful programmatic elements.
(See **LEGISLATIVE PROPOSAL I**)
4. The Commission recommends that a study of successful programs be commissioned to provide a foundation for a systematic validation of programs to begin in 2011, under the direction of the Committee for Dropout Prevention. The study should include the following:
 - Analysis of longitudinal data by district to determine which characteristics identify students most likely to drop out of school.
 - Creation of a data file that includes academic, behavioral, and other student data to determine which variables best predict students at-risk of dropping out of school.
 - Identification of "beating the odds" combinations of high schools and middle schools, those schools which serve at-risk populations in ways that have significantly reduced dropout rates.

- Identification of programs that have been successful at encouraging subgroups of at-risk students to complete high school, including programs in counties that have not received dropout prevention grants.
- Continued assessment of the progress of programs that received dropout prevention grants in previous years but are no longer receiving funding.
- Development of procedures for collecting data to identify factors key to success.
- Identification of critical benchmarks for evaluation.

The General Assembly shall direct that up to one hundred thousand dollars (\$100,000) of the funds appropriated for the dropout prevention grants be used for this study.

(See **LEGISLATIVE PROPOSAL I**)

5. The Commission strongly supports the development and implementation of the NC P-20+ statewide longitudinal data system and encourages that data on all students, including students educated by the Department of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, be collected and included within the NC P-20+ system.
6. The Commission strongly encourages local school administrative units and the Committee on Dropout Prevention to encourage the use of data available from the Education Value-Added Assessment System (EVAAS) to provide an early warning for students that are at-risk of falling behind and dropping out of school.
7. The General Assembly shall direct the State Board of Education to establish a Blue Ribbon Task Force to study raising the compulsory attendance age for public school attendance prior to completion of a high school diploma from sixteen to seventeen or eighteen. At a minimum, the study shall examine other states that have raised the compulsory attendance age to determine all impacts, including the effect on the dropout rate and the fiscal impact.
(See **LEGISLATIVE PROPOSAL II**)
8. The General Assembly shall appropriate funds for Communities in Schools of North Carolina, Inc., to place no fewer than 100 graduation coaches in either middle or high schools and give priority to schools that have either: 1) a four-year cohort graduation rate of less than sixty percent (60%) in the most recent school year and one of two prior school years, or 2) a performance composite under fifty percent (50%).
(See **LEGISLATIVE PROPOSAL III**)
9. The General Assembly shall direct the State Board of Education as follows:
 1. Prior to the 2010-2011 school year, the State Board of Education shall develop a growth model establishing annual goals for continuous and substantial improvement in the four-year cohort graduation rate by local school administrative units.
 2. The State Board shall establish as a short-term goal that local school administrative units meet the annual growth model goals for improvement in the four-year cohort graduation rate beginning with the graduating class of 2011 and continuing annually thereafter.
 3. The State Board shall establish as a long-term goal a statewide four-year cohort graduation rate of ninety percent (90%) by 2016.

(See **LEGISLATIVE PROPOSAL IV**)

10. The State Board of Education shall consider implementation of a program to provide local school administrative units with assistance and professional development to effectively identify students who are at risk for academic failure and who are not successfully progressing towards grade promotion and graduation, and to provide focused intervention and accelerated activities through personal education plans that will assist students to stay on course for graduation. The State Board of Education shall give special priority to elementary and middle grades.

The General Assembly shall amend the statutory requirement for identification of students at risk of academic failure to include identification of students who are not successfully progressing towards grade promotion and graduation, to consider reading on grade level in identification of those students, to require such identification no later than fourth grade, and to require local school administrative units to report to the State Board of Education on the progress of identified students and strategies employed to assist them.

(See **LEGISLATIVE PROPOSAL V**)

LEGISLATIVE PROPOSAL I

**GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA
SESSION 2009**

U

D

BILL DRAFT 2009-RJz-8 [v.8] (03/30)

**(THIS IS A DRAFT AND IS NOT READY FOR INTRODUCTION)
4/15/2010 1:32:38 PM**

Short Title: Amend Dropout Prevention Grants.

(Public)

Sponsors: Unknown.

Referred to:

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

1 AN ACT TO AMEND THE CRITERIA USED BY THE COMMITTEE ON
2 DROPOUT PREVENTION TO AWARD THE DROPOUT PREVENTION
3 GRANTS, TO DIRECT THE COMMITTEE ON DROPOUT PREVENTION TO
4 USE EVALUATIONS FROM PRIOR GRANT CYCLES TO IDENTIFY
5 EVIDENCE-BASED PROGRAMMATIC ELEMENTS THAT ARE EFFECTIVE
6 AND REPLICABLE, AND TO ALLOCATE FUNDS TO STUDY HIGH
7 SCHOOLS THAT HAVE SIGNIFICANTLY REDUCED THEIR DROPOUT
8 RATE TO IDENTIFY PROGRAMS THAT MERIT REPLICATION AND
9 ASSESS THE PROGRESS OF PROGRAMS THAT ARE NO LONGER
10 RECEIVING DROPOUT PREVENTION GRANTS, AS RECOMMENDED BY
11 THE JOINT LEGISLATIVE COMMISSION ON DROPOUT PREVENTION AND
12 HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION.
13

14 The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

15 **SECTION 1.** Section 7.13.(b)(3) of S.L. 2009-451 reads as rewritten:

16 "(3) Grants shall be distributed geographically throughout the State and
17 throughout the eight educational districts as defined in G.S. 115C-65.
18 No more than three grants shall be awarded in any one county under
19 this section in a single fiscal year. When grant applications are of
20 equal quality and merit, grants shall be given to applications from
21 counties with no current grant recipients."

22 **SECTION 2.** Section 7.13.(b)(10) of S.L. 2009-451 reads as rewritten:

23 "(10) Priority for grants shall be given to programs that would serve students
24 in local schools that have ~~a four-year cohort graduation rate of less
25 than sixty-five percent (65%).~~ either: (i) a four-year cohort graduation
26 rate of less than sixty percent (60%) in the most recent school year and
27 one of two prior school years, or (ii) a performance composite under
28 fifty percent (50%). The Committee shall establish a grant rating cutoff
29 score at such a level as to allow for consideration of all viable grants in

LEGISLATIVE PROPOSAL I

1 this priority category. The Committee may require grantees to provide
2 supplemental information in response to any prior reviewer
3 comments."

4 **SECTION 3.** Section 7.13.(b)(11) of S.L. 2009-451 reads as rewritten:

5 "(11) Priority for grants shall be given to proposals demonstrating the
6 potential for success-success and that contain multiple evidence-based
7 programmatic elements that have been shown to be effective and
8 replicable. The Committee on Dropout Prevention shall use the
9 evaluations from prior grant cycles to identify the evidence-based
10 programmatic elements."

11 **SECTION 4.** Section 7.13.(f) of S.L. 2009-451 is amended by adding a new
12 subdivision to read:

13 "(5) Up to one hundred thousand dollars (\$100,000) for the 2010-2011
14 fiscal year shall be used by the Committee on Dropout Prevention to
15 conduct a systematic study of high schools that have reduced their
16 dropout rate significantly over the past three years to identify programs
17 that merit replication. This study shall be designed and conducted
18 under the direction of the Dropout Prevention Committee, and shall
19 include assessment of successful programs in counties that have not
20 received dropout prevention grants and programs that received grants
21 in previous years but are no longer receiving dropout prevention
22 grants. Such assessments shall be used for comparison purposes with
23 funded grants."

24 **SECTION 5.** This act becomes effective July 1, 2010.
25

LEGISLATIVE PROPOSAL II

**GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA
SESSION 2009**

U

D

BILL DRAFT 2009-RJz-9 [v.3] (04/04)

**(THIS IS A DRAFT AND IS NOT READY FOR INTRODUCTION)
4/5/2010 2:34:17 PM**

Short Title: Study Raising Compulsory Attendance Age.

(Public)

Sponsors: Unknown.

Referred to:

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT TO DIRECT THE STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION TO ESTABLISH A BLUE RIBBON TASK FORCE TO STUDY THE IMPACTS OF RAISING THE COMPULSORY ATTENDANCE AGE FOR PUBLIC SCHOOL ATTENDANCE PRIOR TO COMPLETION OF A HIGH SCHOOL DIPLOMA FROM SIXTEEN TO SEVENTEEN OR EIGHTEEN, AS RECOMMENDED BY THE JOINT LEGISLATIVE COMMISSION ON DROPOUT PREVENTION AND HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION.

The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

SECTION 1. The State Board of Education shall establish a Blue Ribbon Task Force to study the impacts of raising the compulsory public school attendance age prior to completion of a high school diploma from 16 to 17 or 18. In its study, the Task Force shall consider all of the following:

- (1) What impacts, including fiscal impacts, has raising the compulsory school attendance age had in states which have raised the compulsory school attendance age in the last 15 years.
- (2) What conclusions can be drawn as to the impact the compulsory school attendance age has made in the dropout and high school completion rates for states who require compulsory school attendance to ages 16, 17, and 18, respectively.
- (3) What best practices for working with at-risk populations of students who remain in school have been employed in states that have raised the compulsory attendance age in the last 15 years.
- (4) What would be the fiscal impact in raising the compulsory school attendance age from 16 to 17 and 16 to 18, respectively, for each local administrative school unit in North Carolina.

SECTION 2. No later than November 15, 2010 the State Board of Education shall submit a report of its study to the Joint Legislative Commission on Dropout

LEGISLATIVE PROPOSAL II

- 1 Prevention and High School Graduation and the Joint Legislative Education Oversight
- 2 Committee, including its findings and recommendations.
- 3 **SECTION 3.** This act is effective when it becomes law.

LEGISLATIVE PROPOSAL III

**GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA
SESSION 2009**

U

D

BILL DRAFT 2009-RJz-10 [v.3] (04/05)

**(THIS IS A DRAFT AND IS NOT READY FOR INTRODUCTION)
4/5/2010 2:33:22 PM**

Short Title: Communities in Schools Funds. (Public)

Sponsors: Unknown.

Referred to:

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

1 AN ACT TO APPROPRIATE FUNDS FOR COMMUNITIES IN SCHOOLS OF
2 NORTH CAROLINA, INC., PROGRAMS AND SERVICES AND TO PLACE NO
3 FEWER THAN ONE HUNDRED GRADUATION COACHES IN EITHER
4 MIDDLE OR HIGH SCHOOLS, AS RECOMMENDED BY THE JOINT
5 LEGISLATIVE COMMISSION ON DROPOUT PREVENTION AND HIGH
6 SCHOOL GRADUATION.
7

8 The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

9 **SECTION 1.** There is appropriated from the General Fund to the
10 Department of Public Instruction the sum of six million twenty-four thousand
11 ninety-one dollars (\$6,024,091) for the 2010-2011 fiscal year in recurring funds to
12 support and expand the programs and services of Communities in Schools of North
13 Carolina, Inc., a public and private partnership that addresses the multiple needs of
14 students at the greatest risk of dropping out of schools. Communities in Schools of
15 North Carolina, Inc., shall use the funds to leverage federal and private grants to support
16 local Communities in Schools programs throughout the State and to place no fewer than
17 100 graduation coaches in either middle or high schools. When placing graduation
18 coaches, Communities in Schools of North Carolina, Inc., shall give priority to schools
19 that have either: (i) a four-year cohort graduation rate of less than sixty percent (60%) in
20 the most recent school year and one of two prior school years, or (ii) a performance
21 composite under fifty percent (50%).

22 The graduation coaches shall:

- 23 (1) Identify and coordinate appropriate academic assistance and support
24 for students at risk of dropping out of school;
25 (2) Refer at-risk students to other school personnel such as counselors,
26 social workers, and nurses who can address problems that might
27 prevent a student from graduating;

LEGISLATIVE PROPOSAL III

- 1 (3) Recruit mentors and tutors from the local community to work with
- 2 at-risk students to help keep them on track to graduate;
- 3 (4) Initiate contact with parents and guardians of at-risk students, provide
- 4 regular updates of the student's academic progress, and encourage
- 5 parental involvement in student academic endeavors;
- 6 (5) Provide information to at-risk students and their parents or guardians
- 7 about graduation requirements, support services to help students not
- 8 performing at grade level, advanced and honors courses, opportunities
- 9 for higher education, and worker training after graduation; and
- 10 (6) Refer students requiring services relating to substance abuse, domestic
- 11 violence, family planning, or mental health to appropriate providers
- 12 where medically accurate information will be provided and appropriate
- 13 services are available.

14 **SECTION 2.** Communities in Schools of North Carolina, Inc., shall report

15 on the activities of the graduation coaches to the Joint Legislative Commission on

16 Dropout Prevention and High School Graduation and the Joint Legislative Education

17 Oversight Committee by October 15, 2011, and annually thereafter.

18 **SECTION 3.** This act becomes effective July 1, 2010.

LEGISLATIVE PROPOSAL IV

GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA
SESSION 2009

U

D

BILL DRAFT 2009-RJz-11 [v.3] (04/05)

(THIS IS A DRAFT AND IS NOT READY FOR INTRODUCTION)
4/5/2010 2:35:39 PM

Short Title: Four-Year Cohort Graduation Rate.

(Public)

Sponsors: Unknown.

Referred to:

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

1
2 AN ACT TO DIRECT THE STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION TO DEVELOP A
3 GROWTH MODEL FOR ESTABLISHING SHORT-TERM ANNUAL GOALS
4 FOR IMPROVING THE FOUR-YEAR COHORT GRADUATION RATE, AND
5 TO ESTABLISH A LONG-TERM GOAL OF INCREASING THE STATEWIDE
6 FOUR-YEAR COHORT GRADUATION RATE.

7 The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

8 **SECTION 1.** Prior to the 2010-2011 school year, the State Board of
9 Education shall:

- 10 (1) Develop a growth model establishing annual goals for continuous and
11 substantial improvement in the four-year cohort graduation rate by
12 local school administrative units.
13 (2) Establish as a short-term goal that local school administrative units
14 meet the annual growth model goals for improvement in the four-year
15 cohort graduation rate beginning with the graduating class of 2011 and
16 continuing annually thereafter.
17 (3) Establish as a long-term goal a statewide four-year cohort graduation
18 rate of ninety percent by 2016.

19 **SECTION 2.** This act is effective when it becomes law.

LEGISLATIVE PROPOSAL V

**GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA
SESSION 2009**

U

D

BILL DRAFT 2009-TCz-17 [v.3] (04/14)

**(THIS IS A DRAFT AND IS NOT READY FOR INTRODUCTION)
4/15/2010 1:14:01 PM**

Short Title: Early Identif. & Interv. for At-Risk Students.

(Public)

Sponsors: .

Referred to:

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

1 AN ACT TO REQUIRE LOCAL SCHOOL ADMINISTRATIVE UNITS TO
2 IDENTIFY STUDENTS AT RISK OF ACADEMIC FAILURE AND NOT
3 SUCCESSFULLY PROGRESSING TOWARDS GRADUATION NO LATER
4 THAN THE FOURTH GRADE AND TO PROVIDE PERSONAL EDUCATION
5 PLANS FOR THOSE STUDENTS, AND TO REQUIRE LOCAL SCHOOL
6 ADMINISTRATIVE UNITS TO ANNUALLY REPORT TO THE STATE
7 BOARD OF EDUCATION ON THE STRATEGIES AND SUCCESS OF
8 FOCUSED INTERVENTION FOR THOSE STUDENTS, AS RECOMMENDED
9 BY THE JOINT LEGISLATIVE COMMISSION ON DROPOUT PREVENTION
10 AND HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION.
11

12 The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

13 **SECTION 1.** G.S. 115C-105.41 reads as rewritten:

14 **"§ 115C-105.41. Students who have been placed at risk of academic failure;
15 personal education plans.**

16 Local school administrative units shall identify students who are at risk for academic
17 ~~failure~~failure and who are not successfully progressing towards grade promotion and
18 graduation, beginning no later than the fourth grade. Identification shall occur as early
19 as can reasonably be done and can be based on grades, observations, State assessments,
20 and other factors, including reading on grade level, that impact student performance that
21 teachers and administrators consider appropriate, without having to await the results of
22 end-of-grade or end-of-course tests. No later than the end of the first quarter, or after a
23 teacher has had up to nine weeks of instructional time with a student, a personal
24 education plan for academic improvement with focused intervention and performance
25 benchmarks shall be developed or updated for any student at risk of academic failure
26 who is not performing at least at grade level, as identified by the State end-of-grade test
27 and other factors noted above. Focused intervention and accelerated activities should
28 include research-based best practices that meet the needs of students and may include

LEGISLATIVE PROPOSAL V

1 coaching, mentoring, tutoring, summer school, Saturday school, and extended days.
2 Local school administrative units shall provide these activities free of charge to
3 students. Local school administrative units shall also provide transportation free of
4 charge to all students for whom transportation is necessary for participation in these
5 activities.

6 Local school administrative units shall give notice of the personal education plan
7 and a copy of the personal education plan to the student's parent or guardian. Parents
8 should be included in the implementation and ongoing review of personal education
9 plans.

10 Local school administrative units shall report annually to the State Board of
11 Education on the progress of identified students, including data on success or failure of
12 students to meet performance benchmarks, and types of focused intervention employed
13 by the local school administrative unit to implement personal education plans.

14 No cause of action for monetary damages shall arise from the failure to provide or
15 implement a personal education plan under this section."

16 **SECTION 2.** This act is effective when it becomes law.

APPENDIX A

DROPOUT PREVENTION GRANT LEGISLATION 2007-2009

S.L. 2007-323, Sec. 7.32

DROPOUT PREVENTION GRANTS

SECTION 7.32.(a) Findings. – The General Assembly finds that:

- (1) North Carolina's schools recorded 22,180 dropout events in grades 9-12 for 2005-2006, a nine and nine-tenths percent (9.9%) increase from the count reported in 2004-2005. It is the highest count of dropouts since 1999-2000.
- (2) A disproportionate share of the increase in dropout rates occurred in large local school administrative units.
- (3) Black males accounted for a disproportionate amount of the increase in dropout count, and the dropout rate for black males increased to seven and one-hundredths percent (7.01%), an eight and four-tenths percent (8.4%) increase over the 2004-2005 rate.
- (4) Students drop out of school for a variety of reasons, including academic issues, family and other personal reasons, discipline issues, drug abuse, the need to work, school size, and school climate.
- (5) Students who drop out of school without graduating are more likely to be unemployed, receive public assistance, and have a higher incarceration rate than those who graduate.
- (6) In order for our citizens and State to thrive in a global, knowledge-based economy, it is imperative that more of our students graduate from high school with the knowledge and skills needed for postsecondary education or high-skilled employment.
- (7) Differing local needs and local resources necessitate the development of locally generated programs and initiatives that target dropouts and high school retention.

SECTION 7.32.(b) Purpose. – Recognizing that having an unacceptable dropout rate is not a new development in North Carolina, or in the rest of the country, and that over the years there have been, and continue to be, many programs and initiatives that have strived to address this issue, the purpose of this section is to focus attention and resources on innovative programs and initiatives that succeed in keeping students in school when other conflicting factors are pushing them to drop out before they are prepared to further their postsecondary education or enter the workforce.

SECTION 7.32.(c) Committee. – There is established the Committee on Dropout Prevention. The Committee shall be located administratively in the Department of Public Instruction but shall exercise its powers and duties independently of the Department of Public Instruction. The Department of Public Instruction shall provide for the administrative costs of the Committee and shall provide staff to the Committee.

The Committee shall determine which local school administrative units, schools, agencies, and nonprofits shall receive dropout prevention grants under subsection (d) of this section, the amount of each grant, and eligible uses of the grant funding. The Committee shall consist of the following 15 members:

- (1) The Governor shall appoint five members, of whom one is a superintendent of schools, one is a representative of a nonprofit, and one is a school social worker;
- (2) The President Pro Tempore of the Senate shall appoint five members, of whom one is a principal, one is a representative of a school of education, and one is a school counselor; and
- (3) The Speaker of the House of Representatives shall appoint five members, of whom one is a teacher, one is a member of the business community, and one is a representative of the juvenile justice system.

APPENDIX A

The President Pro Tempore of the Senate and the Speaker of the House of Representatives shall each designate a cochair of the Committee. The members of the Committee shall assure they are in compliance with laws and rules governing conflicts of interest.

SECTION 7.32.(d) Dropout Prevention Grants. – The following criteria apply to dropout prevention grants approved by the Committee established under subsection (c) of this section.

- (1) Grants shall be issued in varying amounts up to a maximum of one hundred fifty thousand dollars (\$150,000).
- (2) These grants shall be provided to innovative programs and initiatives that target students at risk of dropping out of school and that demonstrate the potential to (i) be developed into effective, sustainable, and coordinated dropout prevention and reentry programs in middle schools and high schools and (ii) serve as effective models for other programs.
- (3) Priority shall be given to new programs and initiatives or to those that have begun within the last five school years.
- (4) Grants shall be distributed geographically throughout the State.
- (5) Grants may be made to local school administrative units, schools, local agencies, or nonprofit organizations.
- (6) Grants shall be to programs and initiatives that hold all students to high academic and personal standards.
- (7) Grant applications shall state (i) how grant funds will be used, (ii) what, if any, other resources will be used in conjunction with the grant funds, (iii) how the program or initiative will be coordinated to enhance the effectiveness of existing programs, initiatives, or services in the community, and (iv) a process for evaluating the success of the program or initiative.
- (8) Programs and initiatives that receive grants under this subsection shall be based on best practices for preventing students from dropping out of school or for increasing the high school completion rate for those students who already have dropped out of school.
- (9) Priority for grants shall be given to proposals that demonstrate input from the local community and coordination with other available programs or resources.
- (10) Grantees shall assure their compliance with applicable laws and rules regulating conflicts of interest.
- (12) Grants shall be made no later than November 1, 2007.

SECTION 7.32.(e) Report. – The Committee shall report to the Joint Legislative Commission on Dropout Prevention and High School Graduation created in subsection (f) of this section by December 1, 2007, on the grants awarded under subsection (d) of this section, after which time the Committee shall terminate.

SECTION 7.32.(f) Joint Legislative Commission on Dropout Prevention and High School Graduation. –

- (1) There is created the Joint Legislative Commission on Dropout Prevention and High School Graduation (Commission) to be composed of 16 members, eight appointed by the President Pro Tempore of the Senate and eight appointed by the Speaker of the House of Representatives. The President Pro Tempore and the Speaker shall each designate a cochair from their appointees. Vacancies shall be filled in the same manner as the original appointments were made.
- (2) The cochairs shall jointly call the first meeting of the Commission. A quorum of the Commission is a majority of its members.
- (3) The Commission shall:
 - a. Evaluate initiatives and programs designed to reduce the dropout rate and increase the number of students who graduate from high school

APPENDIX A

- prepared to further their postsecondary education or enter the workforce.
- b. Review the research on factors related to students' success in school.
 - c. Evaluate the grants awarded under subsection (d) of this section and recommend whether any of the programs and initiatives that received one of these grants has potential for success and should be expanded or replicated.
 - d. Study the emergence of major middle school and high school reform efforts, including Learn and Earn Programs, the New Schools Initiative, and 21st Century Schools, and the impact they may have on the dropout rate.
 - e. Examine strategies, programs, and support services that should be provided if the compulsory school attendance age is raised to enable students to graduate from high school and time lines for implementing those strategies, programs, and support services.
 - f. Following a review of the courses required for graduation and the current system of awarding credit for those courses, determine whether changes should be made that better recognize the different learning rates and other needs of students.
 - g. Determine which interventions and other strategies, such as accelerated learning, tutoring, mentoring, or small class sizes, when employed as a substitute to grade retention or as a subsequent measure to grade retention, are the most effective at enabling these students to remain in school and graduate.
 - h. Study any other issue that the Commission considers relevant and appropriate.
- (4) The Legislative Services Commission, through the Legislative Services Officer, shall assign professional and clerical staff to assist in the work of the Joint Legislative Commission on Dropout Prevention and High School Graduation. The expenses of employment of the clerical staff shall be borne by the Joint Legislative Commission on Dropout Prevention and High School Graduation.
 - (5) The Commission may meet at various locations around the State in order to promote greater public participation in its deliberations. The Legislative Services Commission, through the Legislative Services Officer, shall grant to the Joint Legislative Commission on Dropout Prevention and High School Graduation adequate meeting space in the State Legislative Building or the Legislative Office Building.
 - (6) Members of the Commission shall be paid per diem, subsistence, and travel allowances as follows:
 - a. Members who are also members of the General Assembly, at the rate established in G.S. 120-3.1;
 - b. Members who are officials or employees of the State or local government agencies, at the rate established in G.S. 138-6; and
 - c. All other members, at the rate established in G.S. 138-5.
 - (7) The Commission, while in the discharge of its official duties, may exercise all powers provided for under G.S. 120-19 and Article 5A of Chapter 120 of the General Statutes. The Commission may contract for professional, clerical, or consultant services as provided by G.S. 120-32.02.
 - (8) The Commission may submit an interim report, including any recommendations and proposed legislation, to the Joint Legislative Education Oversight Committee and the General Assembly by May 1, 2008, and shall submit a final written report of its findings and recommendations on or before the convening of the 2009 Session of the General Assembly. All reports shall be filed with the President Pro Tempore of the Senate, the

APPENDIX A

Speaker of the House of Representatives, and the Legislative Librarian.
Upon filing its final report, the Commission shall terminate.

S.L. 2008-107, Sec. 7.14

REESTABLISH COMMITTEE ON DROPOUT PREVENTION

SECTION 7.14.(a) Section 7.32(e) of S.L. 2007-323 reads as rewritten:

"SECTION 7.32.(e) Report. – The Committee shall report to the Joint Legislative Commission on Dropout Prevention and High School Graduation created in subsection (f) of this section by December 1, 2007, on the grants awarded under subsection (d) of this ~~section~~, after which time the Committee shall terminate section. The Committee shall terminate on December 31, 2010."

SECTION 7.14.(b) Committee. – The Committee on Dropout Prevention, as created in Section 7.32 of S.L. 2007-323, is reestablished to determine which local school administrative units, schools, agencies, and nonprofits shall receive dropout prevention grants under this section, the amount of each grant, and eligible uses of the grant funding. When utilizing outside grant reviewers and raters, the Committee is encouraged to utilize individuals who represent public schools, universities, and community-based organizations.

The Committee shall continue to be located administratively in the Department of Public Instruction but shall exercise its powers and duties independently of the Department of Public Instruction. The Department of Public Instruction shall provide for the administrative costs of the Committee. The Department of Public Instruction shall contract with an independent consultant to serve as staff to the Committee, to provide technical assistance to the grant recipients for the length of the grant, and to assist the Committee in evaluating the impact of the grants awarded.

The members of the Committee shall assure they are in compliance with laws and rules governing conflicts of interest. The Committee shall meet on the call of the cochairs provided that the Committee shall meet at least once every three months.

In the event of a vacancy on the Committee, the appointing authorities are encouraged to provide representation on the Committee from each of the eight educational districts as defined in G.S. 115C-65.

SECTION 7.14.(c) Dropout Prevention Grants. – The Committee shall select grant recipients as follows:

- (1) From applications received in the process outlined in Section 7.32(d) of S.L. 2007-323 and using the process for the review of grant applications in 2007, the Committee shall establish a new cutoff score and award grants to applicants that both meet the new cutoff score and did not previously receive funding under S.L. 2007-323. Priority for additional funding of grants awarded under S.L. 2007-323 shall be given to programs that would serve students in local schools that have a four-year cohort graduation rate of less than sixty-five percent (65%).
- (2) From the recipients of grants awarded under S.L. 2007-323, the Committee shall establish a process to award additional funds to those grantees.
- (3) Using the process outlined in Section 7.32(d) of S.L. 2007-323 consistent with subsection (d) of this section, the Committee may award grants to new applicants that did not apply for funding under that act.

SECTION 7.14.(d) Criteria for Dropout Prevention Grants. – The following criteria apply to all types of dropout prevention grants approved by the Committee:

- (1) Grants shall be issued in varying amounts up to a maximum of one hundred fifty thousand dollars (\$150,000).
- (2) These grants shall be provided to innovative programs and initiatives that target students at risk of dropping out of school and that demonstrate the potential to (i) be developed into effective, sustainable, and coordinated

APPENDIX A

- dropout prevention and reentry programs in middle schools and high schools and (ii) serve as effective models for other programs.
- (3) Priority shall be given to new programs and initiatives or to those that have begun within the last five school years.
 - (4) Grants shall be distributed geographically throughout the State and throughout the eight educational districts as defined in G.S. 115C-65. No more than three grants shall be awarded in any one county under this section in a single fiscal year.
 - (5) Grants may be made to local school administrative units, schools, local agencies, or nonprofit organizations.
 - (6) Grants shall be to programs and initiatives that hold all students to high academic and personal standards.
 - (7) Grant applications shall state (i) how grant funds will be used, (ii) what, if any, other resources will be used in conjunction with the grant funds, (iii) how the program or initiative will be coordinated to enhance the effectiveness of existing programs, initiatives, or services in the community, and (iv) a process for evaluating the success of the program or initiative.
 - (8) Programs and initiatives that receive grants under this section shall be based on best practices for helping at-risk students achieve successful academic progress, preventing students from dropping out of school, or for increasing the high school completion rate for those students who already have dropped out of school.
 - (9) Priority for grants shall be given to proposals that demonstrate input from the local community and coordination with other available programs or resources.
 - (10) Grantees shall assure their compliance with applicable laws and rules regulating conflicts of interest.
 - (11) Priority for grants shall be given to programs that would serve students in local schools that have a four-year cohort graduation rate of less than sixty-five percent (65%) and that are from counties that did not receive funding under S.L. 2007-323. The Committee shall establish a grant rating cutoff score at such a level as to allow for consideration of all viable grants in this priority category. The Committee may require grantees to provide supplemental information in response to any prior reviewer comments.
 - (12) The demonstrated need for a grant, level of collaboration, ability to increase attendance, persistence, academic success, ability to increase parental involvement, and graduation shall be given more weight than the quality of the written grant.
 - (13) Grants shall be made no later than November 1, 2008.

The Committee shall report to the Joint Legislative Commission on Dropout Prevention and High School Graduation and the Joint Legislative Education Oversight Committee on the grants awarded under this section by March 1, 2009.

SECTION 7.14.(e) Evaluation. – The Committee shall evaluate the impact of the dropout prevention grants awarded under S.L. 2007-323 and under this section. In evaluating the impact of the grants, the Committee shall consider:

- (1) How grant funds were used, including the services provided for teen pregnancy prevention and for pregnant and parenting teens;
- (2) The success of the program or initiative, as indicated by the evaluation process stated in its grant application;
- (3) The extent to which the program or initiative has improved students' attendance, test scores, persistence, and graduation rates;
- (4) How the program or initiative was coordinated to enhance the effectiveness of existing programs, initiatives, or services in the community;
- (5) What, if any, other resources were used in conjunction with the grant funds;
- (6) The sustainability of the program;

APPENDIX A

- (7) The number, gender, ethnicity, and grade level of students being served as well as whether the student left school due to pregnancy or parenting responsibilities;
- (8) The potential for the program to serve as a model for achieving successful academic progress for at-risk students; and
- (9) Other indicators of the impact of the grant on dropout prevention.

The recipients of the dropout prevention grants awarded under S.L. 2007-323 shall report to the Committee on Dropout Prevention by January 31, 2009, and by September 30, 2009. The reports shall provide information to assist the Committee in conducting its evaluation. The reports shall include a statement that the recipients used grant funds for the purposes appropriated by the General Assembly and complied with applicable laws, regulations, and terms and conditions of the grant documents. The Committee shall make an interim report of the results of its evaluation of the grants awarded under S.L. 2007-323 by March 31, 2009, to the Joint Legislative Commission on Dropout Prevention and High School Graduation and to the Joint Legislative Education Oversight Committee. The Committee shall make a final report of the results of its evaluation of the grants awarded under S.L. 2007-323 by November 15, 2009, to the Joint Legislative Commission on Dropout Prevention and High School Graduation and to the Joint Legislative Education Oversight Committee.

The recipients of the dropout prevention grants awarded under this section shall report to the Committee on Dropout Prevention by January 31, 2010, and by September 30, 2010. The reports shall provide information to assist the Committee in conducting its evaluation. The reports shall include a statement that the recipients used grant funds for the purposes appropriated by the General Assembly and complied with applicable laws, regulations, and terms and conditions of the grant documents. The Committee shall make an interim report of the results of its evaluation of the grants awarded under this section by March 31, 2010, to the Joint Legislative Commission on Dropout Prevention and High School Graduation and to the Joint Legislative Education Oversight Committee. The Committee shall make a final report of the results of its evaluation of the grants awarded under subsection (c) of this section by November 15, 2010, to the Joint Legislative Commission on Dropout Prevention and High School Graduation and to the Joint Legislative Education Oversight Committee.

SECTION 7.14.(f) Dropout Prevention Network. – In addition to its other duties, the Joint Legislative Commission on Dropout Prevention and High School Graduation, established under Section 7.32 of S.L. 2007-323, shall study the development of an effective network for the purpose of sharing best practices among the grant recipients, the public schools, and other interested organizations. The Commission shall consider interactive Web sites, electronic information sharing, professional development opportunities, conferences, and other means that it believes would be effective. The Commission may consult with the Department of Public Instruction and the Committee on Dropout Prevention. The Commission shall report its findings and any recommendations to the 2009 General Assembly.

SECTION 7.14.(g) Of the funds appropriated in this act for the Committee on Dropout Prevention, the sum of five million five hundred thousand dollars (\$5,500,000) for the 2008-2009 fiscal year shall be used to award grants to applicants that did not previously receive funding under S.L. 2007-323. The remainder shall be used to award new grants, as well as additional grants to previous grant recipients, in accordance with subsection (b) of this section.

SECTION 7.14.(h) Funds appropriated for the dropout prevention grants for the 2007-2008 fiscal year shall not revert but shall remain available for expenditure until August 31, 2009. Funds appropriated for the 2008-2009 fiscal year shall not revert but shall remain available for expenditure until August 31, 2010.

SECTION 7.14.(i) Of the funds appropriated for the dropout prevention grants, the sum of one hundred thousand dollars (\$100,000) for the 2008-2009 fiscal year may be used to issue a request for proposals from qualified vendors on a competitive basis to contract as a consultant to assist with the evaluation. The factors to be considered in awarding the contract shall be identified in the request for proposals.

APPENDIX A

SECTION 7.14.(j) Of the funds appropriated for the dropout prevention grants, the Department of Public Instruction may use up to fifty thousand dollars (\$50,000) for its administrative assistance to the Committee and provide technical assistance under this section.

SECTION 7.14.(k) Subsection (h) of this section becomes effective June 30, 2008.

S.L. 2008-107, Sec. 7.14A

DROPOUT PREVENTION TECHNICAL CORRECTION

SECTION 7.14A. Section 7.32(c) of S.L. 2007-323 reads as rewritten:

"SECTION 7.32.(c) Committee. – There is established the Committee on Dropout Prevention. The Committee shall be located administratively in the Department of Public Instruction but shall exercise its powers and duties independently of the Department of Public Instruction. The Department of Public Instruction shall provide for the administrative costs of the Committee and shall provide staff to the Committee.

The Committee shall determine which local school administrative units, schools, agencies, and nonprofits shall receive dropout prevention grants under subsection (d) of this section, the amount of each grant, and eligible uses of the grant funding. The Committee shall consist of the following 15 members:

- (1) The Governor shall appoint five members, of whom one is a superintendent of schools, one is a representative of a nonprofit, and one is a school social worker;
- (2) The General Assembly upon the recommendation of the President Pro Tempore of the Senate shall appoint five members, of whom one is a principal, one is a representative of a school of education, and one is a school counselor; and
- (3) The General Assembly upon the recommendation of the Speaker of the House of Representatives shall appoint five members, of whom one is a teacher, one is a member of the business community, and one is a representative of the juvenile justice system.

The President Pro Tempore of the Senate and the Speaker of the House of Representatives shall each designate a cochair of the Committee. The members of the Committee shall assure they are in compliance with laws and rules governing conflicts of interest."

S.L. 2008-181, Part XXXV

PART XXXV. CHANGE REPORTING REQUIREMENTS OF THE JOINT LEGISLATIVE COMMISSION ON DROPOUT PREVENTION AND HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION (S.B. 1806 – Malone)

SECTION 35.1. Section 7.32 (f)(8) of S.L. 2007-323 reads as rewritten:

- "(8) The Commission ~~may submit an interim report, including any recommendations and proposed legislation, to the Joint Legislative Education Oversight Committee and the General Assembly by May 1, 2008,~~ and shall submit ~~a final~~ an interim written report of its findings and recommendations on or before the convening of the 2009 Session of the General Assembly. The Commission may submit an interim report, including any recommendations and proposed legislation, to the Joint Legislative Education Oversight Committee and the General Assembly by May 1, 2010, and shall submit a final written report of its findings and recommendations on or before the convening of the 2011 Session of the General Assembly. All reports shall be filed with the President Pro Tempore of the Senate, the Speaker of the House of Representatives, and the

APPENDIX A

Legislative Librarian. Upon filing its final report, the Commission shall terminate."

S.L. 2009-451, Sec. 7.13

DROPOUT PREVENTION GRANTS

SECTION 7.13.(a) Dropout Prevention Grants. – The Committee on Dropout Prevention, as reestablished in Section 7.14 of S.L. 2008-107, may use the funds appropriated in this act to provide grants to new recipients and to extend additional funding to organizations that received funding previously.

SECTION 7.13.(b) Criteria for Dropout Prevention Grants. – The following criteria apply to all types of dropout prevention grants approved by the Committee:

- (1) Grants shall be issued in varying amounts up to a maximum of one hundred seventy-five thousand dollars (\$175,000).
- (2) These grants shall be provided to innovative programs and initiatives that target students at risk of dropping out of school and that demonstrate the potential to (i) be developed into effective, sustainable, and coordinated dropout prevention and reentry programs in middle schools and high schools and (ii) serve as effective models for other programs.
- (3) Grants shall be distributed geographically throughout the State and throughout the eight educational districts as defined in G.S. 115C-65. No more than three grants shall be awarded in any one county under this section in a single fiscal year.
- (4) Grants may be made to local school administrative units, schools, local agencies, or nonprofit organizations. Applications from nonprofits shall be subject to the additional fiscal accountability controls described in subsection (e) of this section.
- (5) Grants shall be to programs and initiatives that hold all students to high academic and personal standards.
- (6) Grant applications shall state (i) how grant funds will be used, (ii) what, if any, other resources will be used in conjunction with the grant funds, (iii) how the program or initiative will be coordinated to enhance the effectiveness of existing programs, initiatives, or services in the community, and (iv) a process for evaluating the success of the program or initiative.
- (7) Programs and initiatives that receive grants under this section shall be based on best practices for helping at-risk students achieve successful academic progress, preventing students from dropping out of school, or for increasing the high school completion rate for those students who already have dropped out of school.
- (8) Priority for grants shall be given to proposals that (i) demonstrate input from the local community and coordination with other available programs or resources and (ii) provide clear plans for sustaining the program in future years when State funding will no longer be provided.
- (9) Grantees shall assure their compliance with applicable laws and rules regulating conflicts of interest.
- (10) Priority for grants shall be given to programs that would serve students in local schools that have a four-year cohort graduation rate of less than sixty-five percent (65%). The Committee shall establish a grant rating cutoff score at such a level as to allow for consideration of all viable grants in this priority category. The Committee may require grantees to provide supplemental information in response to any prior reviewer comments.
- (11) Priority for grants shall be given to proposals demonstrating the potential for success.

APPENDIX A

- (12) The demonstrated need for a grant, level of collaboration, ability to increase attendance, persistence, academic success, ability to increase parental involvement, and graduation shall be given more weight than the quality of the written grant.

- (13) Grants shall be made no later than November 1, 2009.

The Committee shall report to the Joint Legislative Commission on Dropout Prevention and High School Graduation and the Joint Legislative Education Oversight Committee on the grants awarded under this section by March 1, 2010.

SECTION 7.13.(c) Evaluation. – The Committee shall evaluate the impact of the dropout prevention grants awarded under this section. In evaluating the impact of the grants, the Committee shall consider:

- (1) How grant funds were used, including the services provided for teen pregnancy prevention and for pregnant and parenting teens;
- (2) The success of the program or initiative, as indicated by the evaluation process stated in its grant application;
- (3) The extent to which the program or initiative has improved students' attendance, test scores, persistence, and graduation rates;
- (4) How the program or initiative was coordinated to enhance the effectiveness of existing programs, initiatives, or services in the community;
- (5) What, if any, other resources were used in conjunction with the grant funds;
- (6) The sustainability of the program;
- (7) The number, gender, ethnicity, and grade level of students being served as well as whether the students left school due to pregnancy or parenting responsibilities;
- (8) The potential for the program to serve as a model for achieving successful academic progress for at-risk students; and
- (9) Other indicators of the impact of the grant on dropout prevention.

The recipients of the dropout prevention grants awarded under this section shall report to the Committee on Dropout Prevention by January 31, 2011, and by September 30, 2011. The reports shall provide information to assist the Committee in conducting its evaluation. The reports shall include a statement that the recipients used grant funds for the purposes appropriated by the General Assembly and complied with applicable laws, regulations, and terms and conditions of the grant documents. The Committee shall make an interim report of the results of its evaluation of the grants awarded under this section by March 31, 2011, to the Joint Legislative Commission on Dropout Prevention and High School Graduation and to the Joint Legislative Education Oversight Committee. The Committee shall make a final report of the results of its evaluation of the grants awarded under subsection (c) of this section by November 15, 2011, to the Joint Legislative Commission on Dropout Prevention and High School Graduation and to the Joint Legislative Education Oversight Committee.

SECTION 7.13.(d) Program Modification. – The Committee shall develop a formal process for allowing grant recipients to modify their programs which includes, at a minimum, a formal review by the Committee prior to the allowance of any changes to the program that will result in activities not included in the grant application.

SECTION 7.13.(e) Additional Requirements for Nonprofit Organizations Receiving Dropout Prevention Grants. – As a condition for release of grant funds to a grantee, the Committee shall require each grantee to enter into a contract that requires the grantee to be (i) subject to monitoring by the Committee, (ii) fidelity bonded unless the grant is for less than one hundred thousand dollars (\$100,000), (iii) subject to audit oversight by the State Auditor, and (iv) subject to the requirements of Article 6, Part 3 of Chapter 143C of the General Statutes.

SECTION 7.13.(f) Of the funds appropriated in this act for dropout prevention, the sum of:

- (1) One hundred thousand dollars (\$100,000) for the 2009-2010 and 2010-2011 fiscal years may be used to extend a current contract or to issue a request for proposals from qualified vendors on a competitive basis to contract as a

APPENDIX A

- consultant to assist with the evaluation. The factors to be considered in awarding the contract shall be identified in the request for proposals;
- (2) Up to one hundred seventy-five thousand dollars (\$175,000) for the 2009-2010 and 2010-2011 fiscal years may be used by the Department of Public Instruction for its administrative assistance to the Committee and to provide technical assistance under this section;
 - (3) Three hundred thousand dollars (\$300,000) in nonrecurring funds shall be used by the North Carolina Congress of Parents and Teachers, Incorporated, a nonprofit organization, to continue the North Carolina PTA Parent Involvement/Dropout Prevention Initiative; and
 - (4) Fifty percent (50%) of the remainder shall be used by the Committee on Dropout Prevention to award grants to new recipients, and fifty percent (50%) shall be used to award successive grants to previous grant recipients. All grants shall be awarded in accordance with subsection (b) of this section.

SECTION 7.13.(g) Grant funds shall be expended by June 30 of the first full fiscal year following the issuance of the grants.

S.L. 2009-575, Sec. 3L

SECTION 3L. If Senate Bill 202, 2009 Regular Session, becomes law, then Section 7.13(f) of that act reads as rewritten:

"**SECTION 7.13.(f)** Of the funds appropriated in this act for dropout prevention, the sum of:

- (1) One hundred thousand dollars (\$100,000) for the 2009-2010 fiscal year and one hundred thousand dollars (\$100,000) for the 2010-2011 fiscal years-year may be used to extend a current contract or to issue a request for proposals from qualified vendors on a competitive basis to contract as a consultant to assist with the evaluation. The factors to be considered in awarding the contract shall be identified in the request for proposals;
- (2) Up to one hundred seventy-five thousand dollars (\$175,000) for the 2009-2010 fiscal year and up to one hundred seventy-five thousand dollars (\$175,000) for the 2010-2011 fiscal years-year may be used by the Department of Public Instruction for its administrative assistance to the Committee and to provide technical assistance under this section;
- (3) Three hundred thousand dollars (\$300,000) in nonrecurring funds shall be used by the North Carolina Congress of Parents and Teachers, Incorporated, a nonprofit organization, to continue the North Carolina PTA Parent Involvement/Dropout Prevention Initiative; and
- (4) Fifty percent (50%) of the remainder shall be used by the Committee on Dropout Prevention to award grants to new recipients, and fifty percent (50%) shall be used to award successive grants to previous grant recipients. All grants shall be awarded in accordance with subsection (b) of this section."

APPENDIX B

2009 Legislative Proposals of the Joint Legislative Commission on Dropout Prevention and High School Graduation		
<i>Recommendation</i>	<i>Brief Summary</i>	<i>Outcome</i>
Recommendation 1 HB 184/SB 323 (Funding for Learn and Earn)	Recommended appropriation of funds for 11 additional Learn and Earn high schools opening in 2009-2010.	Funding recommendation was included in the final budget, with funding provided for 12 schools.
Recommendation 2 HB 185/SB 322 (Communities in Schools Funds)	Recommended appropriation of funds for Communities in Schools to place 100 graduation coaches in middle and high schools.	Both bills were referred to Appropriations, but the legislation was not included in the final budget.
Recommendation 3 HB 188/SB 320 (Study Raising Compulsory Attendance Age)	Recommended The UNC Board of Governors direct the appropriate entity to study the impacts of raising the compulsory attendance age from sixteen to seventeen or eighteen.	Both bills were incorporated as Part XXIV of the 2009 Studies Act (HB 945, SL 2009-574), but made the study discretionary.
Recommendation 4 HB 187/SB 321 (Encourage Policies to Facilitate Graduation)	Recommended the following changes in legislation to direct local boards of education to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Encourage local businesses to adopt personnel policies to permit parents to attend student conferences. o Be encouraged to adopt policies to implement programs to assist successful middle school/ high school transitions. o Be encouraged to adopt policies to increase parental involvement in student achievement. o Be encouraged to adopt policies to reduce suspension and expulsion rates and encourage academic progress during suspensions. o Modify policies on pregnant and parenting students to provide assistance and support to encourage pregnant and parenting students to graduate. 	HB 187 was enacted as S.L. 2009-330.
Recommendation 5	Recommended that the General Assembly appropriate sufficient funds for Dropout Prevention Grants in the 2009 Session to continue some successful initiatives and provide the opportunity for a new round of proposals to be funded.	\$13 million in recurring funds was provided in the 2009 budget (SL 2009-451) to provide for grants to new recipients and successive grants for prior recipients.
Recommendation 6	Strongly recommended that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Prior to the 2009-2010 school year, the State Board of Education develop a growth model establishing annual goals for continuous and substantial improvement in the 4-year cohort graduation rate by local school administrative units. o The State Board establish as a short term goal that local school administrative units meet the annual growth model goals for improvement in the 4-year cohort graduation rate beginning with the graduating class of 2010 and continuing annually thereafter. o The State Board establish as a long-term goal a statewide 4-year cohort graduation rate of ninety percent by 2015. 	The State Board has not yet taken these actions, but will be setting benchmarks related to high school graduation rates as part of the Race to the Top proposal.