

GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA  
SESSION 2007

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HOUSE DRH30299-LD-83B\* (02/26)

Short Title: Green School Construction Loan Fund/Program. (Public)

Sponsors: Representative Harrison.

Referred to:

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT TO CREATE THE GREEN SCHOOL CONSTRUCTION REVOLVING  
LOAN FUND TO BE USED FOR NO-INTEREST LOANS TO LOCAL BOARDS  
OF EDUCATION FOR CERTAIN ENERGY-RELATED CONSTRUCTION,  
COMMISSIONING, AND INSTALLATION PROJECTS AND TO ESTABLISH  
THE GREEN SCHOOL CONSTRUCTION PROGRAM, A VOLUNTARY  
PROGRAM FOR THE CONSTRUCTION OR MAJOR RENOVATION OF  
HIGH-PERFORMANCE SCHOOL BUILDINGS.

The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

**SECTION 1.** Article 37 of Chapter 115C is amended by adding two new sections to read:

**§ 115C-521.1. Green School Construction Loan Fund.**

(a) The Green School Construction Loan Fund is created under the control and direction of the Department of Public Instruction. This Loan Fund shall be a nonreverting revolving loan fund consisting of any moneys appropriated to it by the General Assembly, other moneys paid to it as gifts or grants, or any moneys repaid or recovered on behalf of the Loan Fund. The Loan Fund shall be credited with interest on the Loan Fund by the State Treasurer pursuant to G.S. 147-69.2 and G.S. 147-69.3.

(b) The Loan Fund shall be used to provide no-interest loans to local boards of education for any of the following purposes, with priority given to projects that will have the greatest impact on reducing the use of energy and water:

- (1) For all or part of the incremental cost of designing, constructing, and certifying a new school facility or a major renovation of an existing school to at least the LEED silver standard under G.S. 115C-521.2, to be calculated by comparing the total cost of the project to the cost of substantially the same project using conventional design and construction.

- 1           (2)   For all or part of the incremental cost of designing and constructing a  
2           new school facility or a major renovation of an existing school in  
3           accordance with the North Carolina sustainable school design protocol  
4           standards under G.S. 115C-521.2, to be calculated by comparing the  
5           total cost of the project to the cost of substantially the same project  
6           using conventional design and construction.
- 7           (3)   For all or part of the cost of commissioning a school building for the  
8           purpose of reducing the building's use of energy or water, including  
9           installing an alternative energy system, when the commissioning under  
10          this subdivision is not suitable for a guaranteed energy savings  
11          contract under Part 2 of Article 3B of Chapter 143 of the General  
12          Statutes.
- 13          (4)   For all or part of the cost of installing in a school building one or more  
14          energy conservation measures, as defined in G.S. 143-64.17, when  
15          these energy conservation measures are not suitable for a guaranteed  
16          energy savings contract under Part 2 of Article 3B of Chapter 143 of  
17          the General Statutes.
- 18          (5)   For all or part of the cost of installing in a school building an  
19          alternative energy system to replace a conventional energy system  
20          when the installation of the alternative energy system is not suitable  
21          for a guaranteed energy savings contract under Part 2 of Article 3B of  
22          Chapter 143 of the General Statutes.

23          (b)   After consulting with the State Energy Office of the Department of  
24          Administration, the Department of Public Instruction shall adopt rules to administer the  
25          Loan Fund and to establish prioritization for loans, maximum loans, application, and  
26          award criteria and schedules, and to otherwise implement this section.

27          "**§ 115C-521.2. Green School Construction Program to construct**  
28          **high-performance school buildings.**

29          (a)   The General Assembly finds that high-performance school buildings are  
30          proven to increase student test scores, reduce absenteeism, and cut energy and other  
31          utility costs. It is the intent of the General Assembly to encourage local boards of  
32          education to use recognized standards for the construction of high-performance public  
33          school buildings that provide flexible methods and choices in how to achieve those  
34          standards. It is the intent and an established goal of the Leadership in Energy and  
35          Environmental Design (LEED) program as authored by the United States Green  
36          Building Council to increase demand for building materials and products that are  
37          extracted and manufactured locally, thereby reducing the environmental impacts and to  
38          support the local economy. Accordingly, it is the intent of the General Assembly to  
39          encourage local boards of education to participate in achieving this goal and voluntarily  
40          establish a priority to use North Carolina-based resources, building materials, products,  
41          industries, manufacturers, and other businesses to provide economic development to  
42          North Carolina and to meet the objectives of this section.

43          (b)   The Green School Construction Program under this section shall be  
44          administered by the Department of Administration. Any major school facility project

1 may, as determined by the local board of education, be designed and constructed to at  
2 least the LEED silver standard or in accordance with the North Carolina sustainable  
3 school design protocol standards to the extent appropriate LEED silver or North  
4 Carolina sustainable school design protocol standards exist for the type of building or  
5 facility.

6 (c) Any local board of education that uses the high-performance standard under  
7 this section is encouraged to:

8 (1) Monitor and document appropriate operating benefits and savings  
9 resulting from major facility projects designed and constructed under  
10 this section for a minimum of five years following local board  
11 acceptance of the project; and

12 (2) Report annually to the Department of Administration and to the  
13 Superintendent of Public Instruction on a form developed by the  
14 Department of Administration.

15 (d) Any major school facility project designed to meet standards identified for  
16 high-performance school buildings in this section shall include building commissioning  
17 as a critical cost-saving part of the construction process. This process shall include input  
18 from the project design and construction teams, representatives of the local board of  
19 education, and the State Energy Office of the Department of Administration.

20 (e) In order to be able to monitor and document ongoing operating benefits and  
21 savings under subsection (c) of this section, a local board of education is encouraged to  
22 require all utilities going into any school building that is the subject of a major facility  
23 project under this section to be metered.

24 (f) A member of the design or construction teams shall not be held liable for the  
25 failure of a major facility project to meet the high-performance building standard under  
26 this section that is established for the project as long as a good faith attempt was made  
27 to achieve this standard.

28 (g) No later than September 1 of each year, the Department of Administration  
29 shall consolidate the reports required in subsection (c) of this section into one report and  
30 submit this report, along with input from the Department of Public Instruction, to the  
31 Chairs of the Senate and House Appropriations Committees and the Joint Legislative  
32 Commission on Governmental Operations. The Department of Public Instruction and  
33 the Department of Administration may make recommendations regarding the ongoing  
34 implementation of the Green School Construction Program, may include a discussion of  
35 current incentives and disincentives related to implementing this section, and may  
36 comment on the performance of the Program, including any changes that may be needed  
37 to adapt the Program to any new or modified standards for high-performance buildings  
38 that are consistent with the intent of this section.

39 (h) The Department of Administration, in consultation with the Superintendent of  
40 Public Instruction, shall develop and issue guidelines to implement this section. The  
41 guidelines shall define a procedure and method for employing and verifying activities  
42 necessary for certification to at least the LEED silver standard for major school facility  
43 projects. The Department of Administration and the Department of Public Instruction  
44 shall amend their fee schedules for architectural and engineering services to

1 accommodate the requirements in the design of major school facility projects that are  
2 subject to this section.

3 (i) The Department of Administration and the State Board of Education may  
4 adopt rules needed to implement this section.

5 (j) As used in this Article, the following definitions apply:

6 (1) "High-performance school building" means a school building  
7 designed, constructed, and certified to a standard as identified in this  
8 section.

9 (2) "LEED silver standard" means the U.S. Green Building Council  
10 Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) green  
11 building rating standard referred to as the LEED Silver Standard, as  
12 amended.

13 (3) "Major facility project" means a construction project larger than 5,000  
14 gross square feet of occupied or conditioned space as defined in the  
15 North Carolina State Building Code or a building renovation project  
16 when the cost is greater than fifty percent (50%) of the assessed value  
17 and the project is larger than 5,000 gross square feet of occupied or  
18 conditioned space as defined in the North Carolina State Building  
19 Code. "Major facility project" does not include any of the following:  
20 research facilities primarily used for sponsored laboratory  
21 experimentation, laboratory research, or laboratory training in research  
22 methods, or other similar building types as determined by the  
23 Department of Administration.

24 (4) "North Carolina sustainable school design protocol standards" means  
25 the school design protocol and related information developed by the  
26 Department of Public Instruction under G.S. 115C-521."

27 **SECTION 2.** Article 31 of Chapter 115C of the General Statutes is amended  
28 by adding a new section to read:

29 **§ 115C-426.3. Monitor and report utility consumption by local administrative**  
30 **units.**

31 (a) Each local school administrative unit that participates in the Green School  
32 Construction Program under G.S. 115C-521.2 shall monitor and report utility  
33 consumption for purposes of reporting to the Superintendent of Public Instruction as  
34 provided in G.S. 143-135.38."

35 **SECTION 3.** In recognition that the North Carolina Energy Guidelines for  
36 School Design and Construction that were developed and maintained by the Department  
37 of Public Construction under G.S. 115C-521 are no longer sufficient in regard to a  
38 comprehensive approach to energy efficiency in school design, school construction, and  
39 school operation and maintenance, the State Energy Office within the Department of  
40 Administration shall develop and maintain the North Carolina sustainable school design  
41 protocol standards to be used for the construction of all new school buildings and the  
42 repairing of all old school buildings under the control and direction of, and by contract  
43 with, the board of education. The North Carolina sustainable school design protocol  
44 standards shall be used in lieu of the North Carolina Energy Guidelines for School

1 Design and Construction. The North Carolina sustainable school design protocol  
2 standards shall be at least as stringent as the sustainable school design protocol  
3 standards developed in the State of Washington, as mandated by their legislature. The  
4 North Carolina sustainable school design protocol standards shall include a voluntary  
5 pass/fail rating system to evaluate a school's progress toward sustainability. This rating  
6 system shall be comprised of a number of prerequisites and optional sustainability  
7 measures developed by the State Energy Office. Each board of education participating  
8 in this protocol may choose from among the list of optional measures to chart a path  
9 toward sustainability specific to the site of the school and the goals of the board of  
10 education.

11 **SECTION 4.** G.S. 115C-521 reads as rewritten:

12 **"§ 115C-521. Erection of school buildings.**

13 (a) It shall be the duty of local boards of education to provide classroom facilities  
14 adequate to meet the requirements of G.S. 115C-47(10) and 115C-301. Local boards of  
15 education shall submit their long-range plans for meeting school facility needs to the  
16 State Board of Education by January 1, 1988, and every five years thereafter. In  
17 developing these plans, local boards of education shall consider the costs and feasibility  
18 of renovating old school buildings instead of replacing ~~them~~them and, employing  
19 life-cycle cost analysis as defined in G.S. 143-64.11, shall consider the feasibility and  
20 costs of commissioning the old school buildings that are renovated for the purpose of  
21 reducing energy and water use.

22 (b) It shall be the duty of the boards of education of the several local school  
23 administrative school units of the State to make provisions for the public school term by  
24 providing adequate school buildings equipped with suitable school furniture and  
25 apparatus. The needs and the cost of those buildings, equipment, and apparatus, shall be  
26 presented each year when the school budget is submitted to the respective tax-levying  
27 authorities. The boards of commissioners shall be given a reasonable time to provide the  
28 funds which they, upon investigation, shall find to be necessary for providing their  
29 respective units with buildings suitably equipped, and it shall be the duty of the several  
30 boards of county commissioners to provide funds for the same.

31 Upon determination by a local board of education that the existing permanent school  
32 building does not have sufficient classrooms to house the pupil enrollment anticipated  
33 for the school, the local board of education may acquire and use as temporary  
34 classrooms for the operation of the school, relocatable or mobile classroom units,  
35 whether built on the lot or not, which units and method of use shall meet the approval of  
36 the School Planning Division of the State Board of Education, and which units shall  
37 comply with all applicable requirements of the North Carolina State Building Code and  
38 of the local building and electrical codes applicable to the area in which the school is  
39 located. These units shall also be anchored in a manner required to assure their  
40 structural safety in severe weather. The acquisition and installation of these units shall  
41 be subject in all respects to the provisions of Chapter 143 of the General  
42 ~~Statutes~~Statutes, including the provisions of Part 1 of Article 3B of that Chapter,  
43 Energy Policy and Life-Cycle Cost Analysis. The provisions of Chapter 87, Article 1, of  
44 the General Statutes, shall not apply to persons, firms or corporations engaged in the

1 sale or furnishing to local boards of education and the delivery and installation upon  
2 school sites of classroom trailers as a single building unit or of relocatable or mobile  
3 classrooms delivered in less than four units or sections.

4 (c) The building of all new school buildings and the repairing of all old school  
5 buildings shall be under the control and direction of, and by contract with, the board of  
6 education for which the building and repairing is done. If a board of education is  
7 considering building a new school building to replace an existing school building, the  
8 board shall not invest any construction money in the new building unless it submits to  
9 the State Superintendent and the State Superintendent submits to the North Carolina  
10 Historical Commission an analysis that compares the costs and feasibility of building  
11 the new building and of renovating the existing building and that clearly indicates the  
12 desirability of building the new building. No board of education shall invest any money  
13 in any new building until it has (i) developed plans based upon a consideration of the  
14 State Board's facilities ~~guidelines, guidelines and consideration of ways to minimize the~~  
15 new building's use of energy and water, (ii) submitted these plans to the State Board for  
16 its review and comments, and (iii) reviewed the plans based upon a consideration of the  
17 comments it receives from the State Board. No local board of education shall contract  
18 for more money than is made available for the erection of a new ~~building-building;~~  
19 however, any money obtained as no-interest loans under G.S. 115C-521.1 shall be  
20 included as available money. However, this subsection shall not be construed so as to  
21 prevent boards of education from investing any money in buildings that are being  
22 constructed pursuant to a continuing contract of construction as provided for in  
23 G.S. 115C-441(c). All contracts for buildings shall be in writing and all buildings shall  
24 be inspected, received, and approved by the local superintendent and the architect  
25 before full payment is made therefor. Nothing in this subsection shall prohibit boards of  
26 education from repairing and altering buildings with the help of janitors and other  
27 regular employees of the board.

28 In the design and construction of new school buildings and in the renovation of  
29 existing school buildings that are required to be designed by an architect or engineer  
30 under G.S. 133-1.1, the local board of education shall participate in the planning and  
31 review process of the ~~Energy Guidelines for School Design and Construction that are~~  
32 ~~developed and maintained by the Department of Public Instruction~~North Carolina  
33 sustainable school design protocol standards that are developed and maintained by the  
34 State Energy Office of the Department of Administration, for use by the Department of  
35 Public Instruction and shall adopt ~~local~~-energy-use goals for building design and  
36 operation that take into account local conditions in an effort to reduce the impact of  
37 operation costs on local and State budgets. In the design and construction of new school  
38 facilities and in the repair and renovation of existing school facilities, the local board of  
39 education shall consider the placement and design of windows and other building  
40 features to use the climate of North Carolina for both light and ventilation in case of  
41 ~~power~~-energy shortages. A local board shall also consider the installation of solar  
42 energy systems or other alternative energy systems in the school facilities whenever  
43 practicable. A local board is encouraged to participate in the Green School Construction

1 Program for the construction or major renovation of high-performance school buildings  
2 under G.S. 115C-521.2.

3 In the case of any school buildings erected, repaired, or equipped with any money  
4 loaned or granted by the State to any local school administrative unit, no board of  
5 education shall invest any money until it has (i) developed plans based upon a  
6 consideration of the State Board's facilities guidelines, (ii) submitted these plans to the  
7 State Board for its review and comments, and (iii) reviewed the plans based upon a  
8 consideration of the comments it receives from the State Board.

9 (d) Local boards of education shall make no contract for the erection of any  
10 school building unless the site upon which it is located is owned in fee simple by the  
11 board: Provided, that the board of education of a local school administrative unit, with  
12 the approval of the board of county commissioners, may appropriate funds to aid in the  
13 establishment of a school facility and the operation thereof in an adjoining local school  
14 administrative unit when a written agreement between the boards of education of the  
15 administrative units involved has been reached and the same recorded in the minutes of  
16 the boards, whereby children from the administrative unit making the appropriations  
17 shall be entitled to attend the school so established.

18 In all cases where title to property has been vested in the trustees of a special charter  
19 district which has been abolished and has not been reorganized, title to the property  
20 shall be vested in the local board of education of the county embracing the former  
21 special charter district.

22 (e) The State Board of Education shall establish within the Department of Public  
23 Instruction a central clearinghouse for access by local boards of education that may  
24 want to use a prototype design in the construction of school facilities. The State Board  
25 shall compile necessary publications and a computer database to distribute information  
26 on prototype designs to local school administrative units. A prototype design of a new  
27 school facility that is designed to at least the LEED silver standard, as defined in  
28 G.S. 115C-521.1, shall be included in this computer database. All architects and  
29 engineers registered in North Carolina may submit plans for inclusion in the computer  
30 database and these plans may be accessed by any person. The original architect of  
31 record or engineer of record shall retain ownership and liability for a prototype design.  
32 The State Board may adopt rules it considers necessary to implement this subsection."

33 **SECTION 5.** There is appropriated from the General Fund to the Green  
34 School Construction Loan Fund, as created in G.S. 115C-521.1, as enacted by Section 1  
35 of this act, the sum of one million dollars (\$1,000,000) for the 2007-2008 fiscal year and  
36 the sum of one million dollars (\$1,000,000) for the 2008-2009 fiscal year to be used for  
37 loans to local boards of education in accordance with G.S. 115C-521.1, as enacted by  
38 Section 1 of this act.

39 **SECTION 6.** G.S. 115C-521.1, as enacted in Section 1 of this act, and  
40 Section 6 of this act become effective July 1, 2007. The remainder of this act becomes  
41 effective January 1, 2008, and applies to contracts for major facility projects that have  
42 not received project approval from the Superintendent of Public Instruction prior to July  
43 1, 2008.