

GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA  
SESSION 2013

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SENATE BILL 597

Short Title: Dropout Prevention and Recovery Pilot. (Public)

Sponsors: Senators Tarte, Ford (Primary Sponsors); Bryant, Cook, and Parmon.

Referred to: Education/Higher Education.

April 4, 2013

1 A BILL TO BE ENTITLED  
2 AN ACT TO PROVIDE FOR A DROPOUT PREVENTION AND RECOVERY PILOT  
3 PROGRAM FOR LOCAL BOARDS OF EDUCATION AND CHARTER SCHOOLS.

4 The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

5 **SECTION 1.** S.L. 2011-259 reads as rewritten:

6 "**SECTION 1.** The State Board of Education shall implement a ~~three-year~~ Dropout  
7 Prevention and Recovery Pilot Program in New Hanover County Schools, Schools,  
8 Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools, and ~~three~~two other local school administrative units selected  
9 by the State Board of Education. The State Board shall also select four charter schools  
10 approved by the State Board under G.S. 115C-238.29D, at least one of which shall be located  
11 in Mecklenburg County, to establish a Dropout Prevention and Recovery Pilot Program. The  
12 purpose of the pilot program is to reengage students and increase the graduation rates in North  
13 Carolina through an educational program that provides flexible scheduling and a blended  
14 learning environment with individualized and self-paced learning options.

15 "**SECTION 2.** Under the pilot program, the educational services and programming shall be  
16 provided by an education partner that is a nonprofit or for-profit entity approved by the State  
17 Board of Education. The local school administrative ~~unit~~units and charter schools shall be  
18 responsible for reporting enrollment to the Department of Public Instruction, working with the  
19 education partner to align graduation requirements, and issuing diplomas to those students in  
20 the program who complete the necessary graduation requirements. The participating schools  
21 shall be accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools as an indicator of  
22 quality instructional programming.

23 "**SECTION 3.** The pilot program shall provide at least the following:

- 24 (1) Facilities that are easily accessible to the students being served.  
25 (2) Flexible scheduling, including at least two different program schedules.  
26 (3) Differentiated instruction that shall include individualized, group, and online  
27 instructional components.  
28 (4) The capacity for assessing, recording, and responding to the students' academic  
29 progress on a daily basis using assessments that are aligned with State and local standards and  
30 requirements.  
31 (5) A focus on serving a defined population of at-risk students who have dropped out or  
32 are likely to drop out of school in the foreseeable future without some type of intervention.  
33 (6) Support services, including social workers and crisis intervention professionals who  
34 are trained to assist students in removing barriers to attending school and graduating.  
35 (7) Instructional models that are self-paced and mastery-based.



1       (8)    Individualized graduation plans to guide students to graduation with a standard high  
2 school diploma.

3       **"SECTION 4.** Before the State Board of Education approves an applicant as an education  
4 partner, the applicant must demonstrate the following:

- 5           (1)    A history providing dropout recovery services to high school students in  
6                   charter or noncharter public schools.
- 7           (2)    At least two years of relevant experience operating and providing services to  
8                   brick-and-mortar public schools.
- 9           (3)    At least two years of relevant experience providing comprehensive online  
10                  learning programs.
- 11          (4)    Relevant experience serving diverse student populations, including  
12                  socioeconomically disadvantaged students.
- 13          (5)    An explanation of the steps taken by the applicant to ensure that its proposed  
14                  instructional content is aligned with State standards.
- 15          (6)    A plan for the recruitment and hiring of State-certified teachers, including  
16                  hiring criteria.
- 17          (7)    A plan for the recruitment and hiring of qualified administrators, including  
18                  hiring criteria.
- 19          (8)    A detailed description of the applicant's plan to work with the participating  
20                  local school administrative ~~units~~units, charter schools, and the State Board of  
21                  Education to identify students who need to be served, to reengage those  
22                  students, and to provide alternative education options for students at risk of  
23                  dropping out. Students at risk of dropping out from their current schools may  
24                  be transferred into the pilot program.
- 25          (9)    An operational plan that includes the following:
  - 26                  a.       The number and physical location of proposed sites and a list of the  
27                          equipment required.
  - 28                  b.       A proposed program calendar and daily schedule and an explanation  
29                          of how the calendar and schedule meet the needs of prospective  
30                          students. The schedule must include at least four hours per school  
31                          day of on-site learning at a physical location.
  - 32                  c.       The student-to-teacher ratio.
  - 33                  d.       A description of each of the instructional methods to be used and  
34                          number of hours per day for each method.
  - 35                  e.       A plan for differentiated instruction that must include individualized,  
36                          group, and online instructional components.
  - 37                  f.       Capacity for assessing, recording, and responding to students'  
38                          academic progress on a daily basis using standards-aligned  
39                          assessments.
  - 40                  g.       A detailed one-year budget.
  - 41                  h.       A system of competency-based credit.
  - 42                  i.       A plan for aggregation and reporting of student performance data and  
43                          reporting of financial activity.

44       ~~**"SECTION 5.** Data and student performance results shall be collected and compiled from  
45 the pilot program and the participating local school administrative units. By implementing a  
46 uniform statewide pilot program, the success of the pilot program as a whole can be measured  
47 by the State Board of Education. In an effort to provide services to students for the 2011-2012  
48 school year, if a request for proposals is necessary, the process shall be completed within 60  
49 days of the effective date of the legislation.~~

50       **"SECTION 5A.(a)** The State Board of Education shall develop and implement an  
51 alternative student performance accountability method to evaluate the performance and

1 effectiveness of pilot program schools that solely provide dropout prevention services and  
2 dropout recovery programs to at-risk students who have dropped out of or are likely to drop out  
3 of their base high school. Data and student results collected and compiled from the pilot  
4 program schools shall inform the State Board in developing an alternative accountability  
5 method to apply statewide and in evaluating the success of the pilot program as a whole. The  
6 alternative accountability method developed by the State Board shall include at least the  
7 following requirements regarding application of the method to eligible schools:

- 8 (1) For local administrative units, the local board of education shall report to the  
9 State Board that the school is designated as solely serving the at-risk student  
10 population.
- 11 (2) For charter schools, the board of directors shall include in its application to  
12 establish or renew a charter that it is designated as solely serving at-risk  
13 students. The charter school shall also include in its application that it  
14 qualifies for evaluation under the alternative accountability method.
- 15 (3) The alternative accountability method shall only measure academic growth  
16 of students who have been continuously enrolled for a period of 120 days.  
17 Students shall be assessed by pre-testing and post-testing at the beginning  
18 and end of the 120-day enrollment period to measure student growth.
- 19 (4) A determination of a school's performance scores and school grade as  
20 required by G.S. 115C-12(9)c1. or G.S. 115C-238.29F(1) shall only reflect  
21 assessment of students enrolled for a 120-day continuous enrollment period.

22 **"SECTION 5A.(b)** The alternative method of accountability required to be developed and  
23 implemented by the State Board to assess pilot program schools under subsection (a) of this  
24 section shall apply beginning with the 2014-2015 school year.

25 **"SECTION 6.** A student attending the pilot program shall be enrolled as a student of the  
26 resident local school administrative unit. The student shall be included in the ADM of that unit.  
27 The resident local school administrative unit shall retain five percent (5%) of the total per pupil  
28 funding for the student to cover administrative costs and shall remit payment to the education  
29 partner of the remaining ninety-five percent (95%) within 15 days of receiving payment from  
30 the Department of Public Instruction.

31 The State Board may provide, if available, an additional per pupil funding allotment to local  
32 school administrative units to transfer to schools participating in the pilot program that  
33 demonstrate that the average daily membership is at least thirty percent (30%) higher than the  
34 average daily membership of the first month of the school year. Any additional allotments shall  
35 be made prior to the end of the first semester of the school year and shall be based on  
36 December average daily membership.

37 **"SECTION 7.** Notwithstanding any other provision of law, the State Board of Education  
38 shall authorize participating local school administrative units to implement flexible attendance  
39 requirements for students participating in the pilot program due to the flexible scheduling and  
40 online portions of the pilot program.

41 **"SECTION 8.** The pilot program shall be operated through the State Board of  
42 Education Education, a charter school authorized by the State Board, or as a program of the  
43 contracting local school administrative unit. The pilot program may be an alternative  
44 school-school within the local school administrative unit.

45 **"SECTION 9.** This act becomes effective ~~July 1, 2011~~ July 1, 2013."

46 **SECTION 2.** The State Board of Education shall report to the Joint Legislative  
47 Education Oversight Committee on the implementation of the pilot program and the alternative  
48 student performance accountability method required by Section 5A(a) of S.L. 2011-259, as  
49 amended by this act, on or before March 15, 2014.

50 **SECTION 3.** This act is effective when it becomes law and applies to schools  
51 selected by the State Board of Education on or after July 1, 2013.