Short Title: Academic Transparency.  

Sponsors:

Referred to:

May 3, 2021

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT TO ENSURE ACADEMIC TRANSPARENCY.

The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

SECTION 1. Article 8 of Chapter 115C of the General Statutes is amended by adding a new section to read:

"§ 115C-102.1. Inform the public about instructional materials.

(a) The following definitions apply in this section:

(1) Instructional material. – Any material used for instruction, including, but not limited to, all textbooks, other reading materials, videos, digital materials, websites, and other online applications.

(2) Lesson plan. – An outline of all of the following:

a. The instruction provided by a teacher for a course that includes a list of (i) all instructional materials assigned, distributed, or otherwise presented in the course and (ii) when students must select instructional materials from a defined list, all instructional materials on that list.

b. Each grade- or school-wide presentation, assembly, lecture, or other activity or event facilitated by the school during instructional hours outside of an individual teacher’s classroom, excluding student presentations. The outline shall include a list of (i) each presenter by name and organization and (ii) any instructional material used or presented.

(b) The governing body of a public school unit shall ensure that the following information for each school it governs is prominently displayed on the school website, organized, at a minimum, by subject area and grade level:

(1) The lesson plans that were used at the school during the prior school year. Lesson plans shall identify, at a minimum, (i) all instructional materials by the title and the author, organization, or website associated with each material and activity, (ii) a brief descriptor of the instructional material, and (iii) a link to the instructional material, if publicly available on the internet, or information on how to request review of a copy of the instructional material in person. If individual components of instructional materials used throughout the lesson plan are produced as a single volume, that volume may be listed only once in the lesson plan. If the instructional material was created by the teacher, the lesson plan shall identify the teacher as the author. Nothing in this section
shall be construed to require the digital reproduction or posting of copies of
the instructional materials themselves.

(2) Any procedures for the documentation, review, or approval of the lesson
plans, including instructional materials identified in those plans, by the
principal, curriculum administrators, or other teachers.

(3) The procedure established by the governing board for requesting an in-person
review of an instructional material not publicly available on the internet.

(c) The governing body shall provide access from the website of the public school unit
to the information required by subsection (b) of this section by June 30 of each year either through
a website maintained by the public school unit or by a link to another website where the
information is publicly accessible. Public access to the information for the school year ending
June 30 shall be maintained by the public school unit until June 30 of the following year. The
Department of Public Instruction shall make available to public school units one or more
templates for providing information as required by this section. A public school unit may exercise
flexibility in determining the most effective means of compliance with the requirements of this
section, including, but not limited to, utilizing any of the following in its discretion:

(1) Providing a template created by the Department of Public Instruction to
teachers to facilitate reporting of lesson plans.

(2) Creating one or more templates to provide to teachers to facilitate reporting of
lesson plans. The public school unit may customize templates for grades or
courses and may autopopulate any instructional materials required by the
public school unit as part of the curriculum for a particular grade or course.

(3) Allowing utilization of online collaborative software, documents, or
spreadsheets to allow multiple authorized users to update content.

(4) Authorizing updating lesson plans throughout the school year, if all updates
are completed by June 30.

(d) A governing body that is responsible for the operation of schools with fewer than 400
students cumulatively is not required to comply with the requirements of this section.

SECTION 2. G.S. 115C-12 is amended by adding a new subdivision to read:

"(9e) Duty to Inform the Public About Instructional Materials. – The Board shall
ensure that information about instructional materials for any school operated
under Article 7A and Article 9C of this Chapter is prominently displayed on
the website of the school, as required by G.S. 115C-102.1."

SECTION 3. G.S. 115C-47 is amended by adding a new subdivision to read:

"(58a) To Inform the Public About Instructional Materials. – Local boards of
education shall ensure that information about instructional materials for each
school in the local school administrative unit is prominently displayed on the
website of the school, as required by G.S. 115C-102.1."

SECTION 4. G.S. 115C-238.66 is amended by adding a new subdivision to read:

"(11a) Instructional materials. – The board of directors shall ensure that information
about instructional materials is prominently displayed on the website of the
regional school, in accordance with G.S. 115C-102.1."

SECTION 5 G.S. 115C-218.85 is amended by adding a new subsection to read:

"(c) Instructional Materials. – A charter school shall ensure that information about
instructional materials is prominently displayed on the website of the charter school, in
accordance with G.S. 115C-102.1."

SECTION 6. Article 4 of Chapter 116 of the General Statutes is amended by adding
a new section to read:

"§ 116-69.2. Inform the public about instructional materials.
The Board of Trustees shall ensure that information about instructional materials is prominently displayed on the website of the North Carolina School of the Arts for all elementary, middle, and high school programs, in accordance with G.S. 115C-102.1."

SECTION 7. G.S. 116-235 is amended by adding a new subsection to read:
(j) Instructional Materials. – The Board of Trustees shall ensure that information about instructional materials is prominently displayed on the website of the School, in accordance with G.S. 115C-102.1.

SECTION 8. G.S. 116-239.8(b) reads as rewritten:
(b) The chancellor shall be the administrative head of a laboratory school approved by the Subcommittee and shall provide general direction for the establishment and operation of a laboratory school. The chancellor, with advice and input from the advisory board established in subdivision (1) of this subsection, shall adopt policies, operating procedures, and the courses of study to govern the operation of the laboratory school. The chancellor may designate the duties required by this Article to other personnel as necessary. The chancellor shall also have the following powers and duties:

(2a) Instructional materials. – The chancellor shall ensure that information about instructional materials is prominently displayed on the website of the laboratory school, in accordance with G.S. 115C-102.1.

SECTION 9. Section 6(d) of S.L. 2018-32 is amended by adding a new subdivision to read:
(5a) G.S. 115C-102.1, Inform the public about instructional materials.”

SECTION 10. Except as otherwise provided, this act is effective when it becomes law and applies beginning with the display of instructional materials used during the 2021-2022 school year no later than June 30, 2022.