

GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA
SESSION 2015

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HOUSE BILL 660
PROPOSED COMMITTEE SUBSTITUTE H660-PCS40430-TC-29

Short Title: Transition to Personalized Digital Learning.

(Public)

Sponsors:

Referred to:

April 14, 2015

1 A BILL TO BE ENTITLED
2 AN ACT TO FURTHER THE TRANSITION TO PERSONALIZED DIGITAL LEARNING
3 IN ALL NORTH CAROLINA K-12 PUBLIC SCHOOLS; TO TRANSITION FROM
4 TEXTBOOKS TO DIGITAL MATERIALS FOR ALL LEARNERS; AND TO REQUIRE
5 THE STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION TO DEVELOP AND IMPLEMENT DIGITAL
6 TEACHING AND LEARNING STANDARDS FOR TEACHERS AND SCHOOL
7 ADMINISTRATORS.

8 Whereas, the State of North Carolina has contracted with the Friday Institute for
9 Educational Innovation to develop a statewide K-12 Digital Learning Plan; and

10 Whereas, the analyses of relevant data, input from many stakeholders, and
11 information obtained through visits to selected local school administrative units have led to the
12 findings that contribute to this act; and

13 Whereas, digital learning innovations are driven at the local school administrative
14 unit level and will take different forms and proceed at different speeds across units so that
15 different units will need varying levels of guidance and support from the State and regional
16 organizations; and

17 Whereas, the roles of the State include, but are not limited to, (i) providing
18 statewide infrastructure and resources; (ii) leveraging federal E-Rate funding and economies of
19 scale through statewide procurement; and (iii) providing models, guidance, and
20 capacity-building programs to local school administrative units and regional organizations; and

21 Whereas, digital learning requires that all teachers and students have ready access to
22 digital devices and reliable wireless connectivity; and

23 Whereas, the State's role is critical in putting into place the networking
24 infrastructure required to provide equitable connectivity to all K-12 public schools; and

25 Whereas, North Carolina educators require tools to expand the use of digital
26 education resources, to further collaboration and sharing of curriculum resources across schools
27 and local school administrative units, and to allow for statewide coordination of teacher
28 preparation and professional development programs; and

29 Whereas, the transition to digital learning requires that the State's K-12 education
30 workforce update their knowledge and skills to lead, plan, manage, teach, evaluate, and
31 communicate with digital awareness; and

32 Whereas, less than 30% of teachers in most local school administrative units report
33 that they are sufficiently trained to fully utilize instructional technology; and

34 Whereas, investments in infrastructure, digital content, and educator capacity
35 development will be required and will yield long-term returns on investments in terms of



1 educational outcomes, increased graduation rates, and college and career readiness; Now,
2 therefore,

3 The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

4 **SECTION 1.** Intent. – The intent of this act is to create programs that advance and
5 accelerate the statewide transition to and effective implementation of digital learning by
6 supporting statewide technology infrastructure, exemplary implementation models, ancillary
7 services and programs, and leadership capacity in all K-12 public schools in the State. The
8 transition to using digital tools in the education system to fully harness the power of modern
9 technology will impact all aspects of education, including course content, teaching methods,
10 where and when learning takes place, what resources are required, and how success is defined
11 and measured.

12 **SECTION 2.** Expand School Connectivity Initiative. – The State Board of
13 Education shall expand the School Connectivity Initiative to support internal wired and
14 wireless infrastructure and ancillary services and programs in all K-12 public school buildings.

15 **SECTION 3.** Establish Collaborative Procurement. – The State Board of Education
16 shall establish a collaborative procurement service. This service shall function to coordinate
17 acquisition of technology infrastructure, devices, content, and professional services in order to
18 capitalize on economies of scale and reduce burdens on individual local school administrative
19 units while complying with E-Rate regulations of the Federal Communications Commission.

20 **SECTION 4.** Expand Access to Digital Learning Resources. – The State Board of
21 Education shall provide access to digital learning resources for all K-12 public schools to
22 enable them to meet the requirements set forth in S.L. 2013-12 regarding the use of digital
23 resources as primary curriculum materials by 2017. This access shall include open education
24 resources developed in North Carolina and elsewhere, the provision of banks of formative and
25 benchmarked test items aligned to State curriculum standards, and other resources to meet the
26 needs of students and teachers.

27 **SECTION 5.** Provide Professional Development for Education Leaders. – The
28 State Board of Education shall support professional learning for education leaders in each local
29 school administrative unit, including superintendents, principals, and others responsible for
30 leading digital learning initiatives and providing coaching and support for teachers as they
31 transition to digital learning practices in the classroom.

32 **SECTION 6.** Support Model Digital Learning Innovations. – The State Board of
33 Education shall establish a grant program to support the development and dissemination of
34 innovative local school administrative unit digital learning models. This program shall provide
35 grants to local school administrative units for the development of innovative initiatives that
36 incorporate technological elements into the learning model, including competency-based
37 learning, personalized learning, anytime and anywhere learning opportunities, and assessments
38 integrated into learning activities, along with innovative models of professional development,
39 strategic staffing, equity of access, and other approaches to digital learning. Each grant
40 agreement shall have a provision encouraging recipients to collaborate across local school
41 administrative units and collaborate with charter schools, community colleges, universities, and
42 other partners. The State Board shall provide for flexibility waivers for grant recipients to
43 address potential barriers to planned innovations. Each grant agreement shall have a provision
44 requiring recipients to do each of the following:

- 45 (1) To evaluate, document, and disseminate chosen approaches and results.
- 46 (2) To host visits by teams from other local school administrative units.
- 47 (3) To support partner local school administrative units in planning and
48 implementing digital learning.
- 49 (4) To share what they have learned during regional or State summits on digital
50 learning.

1 **SECTION 7.(a)** Establish the North Carolina Digital Learning Initiative. – The
2 State Board of Education shall contract with the Friday Institute for Educational Innovation, as
3 part of North Carolina State University, to establish the North Carolina Digital Learning
4 Initiative (NCDLI) to support the implementation of the activities required by this act and other
5 activities related to furthering the use of digital learning in K-12 public schools and public
6 charter schools in the State. NCDLI shall have a director, appropriate staff, and an advisory
7 board comprised of representatives of organizations and stakeholders involved in K-12 digital
8 learning. NCDLI shall be responsible for, and shall be charged with, engaging selected
9 organizations and educators from throughout North Carolina to contribute to fulfilling all of the
10 following functions:

- 11 (1) Leveraging the capacities and expertise of the North Carolina Center for the
12 Advancement of Teaching, MCNC, North Carolina New Schools, State
13 agencies, local school administrative units, public charter schools, colleges,
14 universities, regional education service agencies, professional organizations,
15 nonprofit organizations, private sector organizations, and other appropriate
16 entities to further the effective use of digital learning in K-12 public schools
17 and public charter schools in all regions of the State.
- 18 (2) Working with relevant State agencies to implement the collaborative
19 procurement system required by Section 3 of this act.
- 20 (3) Coordinating teams of educators and other stakeholders to establish
21 standards and review procedures and to conduct the review, evaluation,
22 development, and organization processes for the selection of digital
23 education content.
- 24 (4) Developing the request for proposals, defining the criteria, selecting the
25 reviewers, organizing the review process, and monitoring recipients'
26 progress for the grant initiatives.
- 27 (5) Providing professional development programs for school and local school
28 administrative unit leaders, instructional technology facilitators, library
29 media specialists, lead teachers, information technology staff, and others
30 involved in planning and implementing K-12 digital learning initiatives.
- 31 (6) Furthering the development of capacities and providing resources to support
32 K-12 digital learning in all regions of the State.
- 33 (7) Directing the Department of Public Instruction in management and
34 disbursement of funds made available to NCDLI, including State funds or
35 funds from other sources, for supporting the purposes set forth in this act.

36 **SECTION 7.(b)** Reporting. – By January 1, 2016, and annually thereafter, NCDLI
37 shall report to the State Board of Education, including the Special Committee on Digital
38 Learning, on the activities set forth in subsection (a) of this section.

39 **SECTION 8.** The provisions of this act are subject to the availability of funds for
40 these purposes.

41 **SECTION 9.** This act is effective when it becomes law.