

GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA
SESSION 2017

H.B. 730
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HOUSE PRINCIPAL CLERK

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HOUSE BILL DRH10219-MKa-129A (03/16)

Short Title: Ninth Grade Academy Pilot/Funds. (Public)

Sponsors: Representatives Quick and Hardister (Primary Sponsors).

Referred to:

1 A BILL TO BE ENTITLED
2 AN ACT TO APPROPRIATE FUNDS TO ESTABLISH A NINTH GRADE ACADEMY
3 PILOT PROGRAM.

4 The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

5 **SECTION 1.** Establish; Purpose. – The Department of Public Instruction shall
6 establish a Ninth Grade Academy Pilot Program for up to 10 local school administrative units
7 to establish ninth grade academy programs. The purpose of the pilot program is to provide
8 comprehensive support for ninth grade students transitioning from middle school to high
9 school. The pilot program shall be for five years, beginning with the 2018-2019 school year
10 and ending with the 2022-2023 school year.

11 **SECTION 2.** Applications. – By September 15, 2017, the Department of Public
12 Instruction shall develop criteria and procedures for a local school administrative unit to apply
13 to participate in the pilot program. A local school administrative unit shall submit an
14 application that includes at least the following information:

- 15 (1) Model design for the ninth grade academy, including enhanced instructional
16 and support strategies.
17 (2) Estimated cost of establishing the ninth grade academy, including additional
18 staff, facilities, and support services.

19 **SECTION 3.** Selection. – By December 15, 2017, the Department of Public
20 Instruction shall select up to 10 local school administrative units to participate in the pilot
21 program that represent the geographic diversity of North Carolina, including both urban and
22 rural areas, to the extent possible from the pool of applicants.

23 **SECTION 4.** Pilot Evaluation; Reports. – The Department of Public Instruction
24 shall contract with an independent research organization for the duration of the pilot program to
25 evaluate the implementation and success of the ninth grade academy programs, including at
26 least the following:

- 27 (1) The use of funds by local school administrative units participating in the
28 pilot program.
29 (2) Student outcome data, including student proficiency data, change in dropout
30 rates or promotion rates, and attendance.
31 (3) A comparison among the program models used by participating local school
32 administrative units and ninth grade academy models operated in North
33 Carolina that are not operated as part of the pilot program.
34 (4) Other information the Department deems necessary.

35 The independent research organization shall report by August 15 of each year,
36 beginning with the initial report by August 15, 2019, and ending with a final report by August



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1 15, 2023, to the State Board of Education and the Department of Public Instruction on all
2 aspects of the evaluation of the pilot program. By October 15 of each year, beginning with the
3 initial report by October 15, 2019, and ending with a final report by October 15, 2023, the
4 Department of Public Instruction shall report on the evaluation of the pilot program, and any
5 legislative recommendations, to the Joint Legislative Education Oversight Committee.

6 **SECTION 5.** State Funds. – There is appropriated from the General Fund to the
7 Department of Public Instruction the sum of one million four hundred forty-two thousand five
8 hundred sixty dollars (\$1,442,560) in recurring funds for the 2017-2018 fiscal year to support
9 implementation of the Ninth Grade Academy Pilot Program established by this act. The
10 Department may use up to two hundred thousand dollars (\$200,000) of the funds appropriated
11 in this section to contract with an independent research organization for the pilot evaluations.
12 Any remaining funds may be used to award funds to selected local school administrative units
13 for the implementation of the pilot programs in accordance with this act.

14 **SECTION 6.** This act becomes effective July 1, 2017.