GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA
SESSION 2017

H **D**

HOUSE BILL 135
PROPOSED SENATE COMMITTEE SUBSTITUTE H135-PCS40601-TC-45

Short Title: Technical Changes to Courses of Study Statute. (Public)

Sponsors:

Referred to:

February 20, 2017

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT TO MAKE ORGANIZATIONAL AND TECHNICAL CHANGES TO THE COURSES OF STUDY STATUTES.

The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

SECTION 1. G.S. 115C-81 is repealed.

SECTION 2. G.S. 115C-81.1 is repealed.

SECTION 3. G.S. 115C-81.3 is repealed.

SECTION 4. G.S. 115C-81.4 is repealed.

SECTION 5. Part 1 of Article 8 of Chapter 115C of the General Statutes is amended by adding new sections to read:

"**§ 115C-81.5. Standard course of study.**

(a) All children can learn. It is the intent of the General Assembly that the mission of the public school community is to challenge with high expectations each child to learn, to achieve, and to fulfill his or her potential. With that mission as its guide, the State Board of Education shall adopt a plan of education and a standard course of study as provided in G.S. 115C-12(9c) for the public schools of the State. It is the intent of the General Assembly that the focus of State educational funding shall be to ensure that each student receives a sound basic education. It is further a goal of the General Assembly to provide supplemental funds to low-wealth counties to allow those counties to enhance the instructional program and student achievement. Instruction shall be offered in the areas of arts, communication skills, physical education and personal health and safety, mathematics, media and computer skills, science, second languages, social studies, and career and technical education. In addition, instruction shall be offered in all of the areas provided in this Part.

(b) The standard course of study shall provide all of the following:

(1) A core curriculum for all students that takes into account the special needs of children.

(2) A set of competencies, by grade level, for each curriculum area.

(3) A list of textbooks for use in providing the curriculum.

(4) Standards for student performance and promotion based on the mastery of competencies, including standards for graduation, that take into account children with disabilities and, in particular, include appropriate modifications.

(5) A program of remedial education.

(6) Required support programs.

(7) A definition of the instructional day.

(8) Class size recommendations and requirements.

(9) Prescribed staffing allotment ratios.
(10) Material and equipment allotment ratios.
(11) Facilities guidelines that reflect educational program appropriateness, long-term cost efficiency, and safety considerations.
(12) Any other information the Board considers appropriate and necessary.

"**§ 115C-81.10. Career and technical education.**

(a) Instruction in career and technical education shall include the following:
(1) The integration of academic and career and technical education.
(2) A sequential course of study leading to career and college readiness.
(3) Increased student work skill attainment and job placement.
(4) Increased linkages, where geographically feasible, between public schools and community colleges, so the public schools can emphasize academic preparation and the community colleges can emphasize specific job training.
(5) Instruction and experience, to the extent practicable, in all aspects of the industry the students are prepared to enter.

"**§ 115C-81.15. Conflict resolution and mediation models.**

The State Board of Education shall develop a list of recommended conflict resolution and mediation materials, models, and curricula that address responsible decision making, the causes and effects of school violence and harassment, cultural diversity, and nonviolent methods for resolving conflict, including peer mediation, and shall make the list available to local school administrative units and school buildings. In developing this list, the Board shall emphasize materials, models, and curricula that currently are being used in North Carolina and that the Board determines to be effective. The Board shall include at least one model that includes instruction and guidance for the voluntary implementation of peer mediation programs and one model that provides instruction and guidance for teachers concerning the integration of conflict resolution and mediation lessons into the existing classroom curriculum.

"**§ 115C-81.20. Alcohol and drug use prevention education.**

(a) Instruction shall be provided in alcohol and drug use prevention education from kindergarten through high school.

(b) The State Board of Education shall develop and maintain a recommended list of alcohol and drug use prevention education materials that include components for teacher training and ongoing assessment and evaluation to verify success and ensure the use of up-to-date information and strategies.

(c) The Department of Public Instruction shall do the following:
(1) Work to strengthen instructional offerings in the content and skill areas in which alcohol and drug use prevention education is addressed.
(2) Develop curricular materials and resources that meet, extend, and supplement drug and alcohol education as outlined in the standard course of study and the teacher handbook for the competency-based curriculum.
(3) Recommend to the State Board of Education any drug use prevention education support materials that should be removed from or added to the recommended list of curricular resources developed and maintained by the State Board of Education.

(d) Local boards of education may select supplemental alcohol and drug use prevention education materials from the list maintained by the State Board of Education or develop their own supplemental materials to be approved by the State Board of Education.

(e) Local boards of education shall do the following:
(1) Implement an approved alcohol and drug use prevention education as a primary part of their comprehensive health education program.

(2) Provide for ongoing evaluation of drug use prevention education resources, to include participation in ongoing evaluations with the Department of Public Instruction.

(f) The Department of Public Instruction, in conjunction with local school administrative units, shall provide for professional development to train educators and support personnel to implement a comprehensive alcohol and drug use prevention education program.

(g) Sequential, age-appropriate instruction shall be provided that includes all of the following:

(1) Reaches all students in all grades.

(2) Presents a clear and consistent message that the use of alcohol and unlawful drugs and the misuse of other drugs are unhealthy and harmful.

(3) Reflects current research and theory.

(4) Includes all abusable substances.

(5) Utilizes information that is current and accurate.

(6) Involves students in active "hands-on" learning experiences.

(7) Integrates substance abuse education with other health and social issues and other subject and skill areas of the standard course of study.

(8) Promotes understanding and respect for the law and values of society.

(9) Encourages healthy, safe, and responsible attitudes and behaviors.

(10) Includes strategies to involve parents, family members, and the community.

(11) Includes information on intervention and treatment services.

(12) Is continually open to revision, expansion, and improvement.

"**§ 115C-81.25. Health education.**

(a) Comprehensive health education instruction shall be developed and taught to students from kindergarten through ninth grade.

(b) The State Board of Education shall do all of the following:

(1) Supervise the development and operation of the statewide comprehensive school health education program, including curriculum development, teacher professional development, promotion of training in teacher preparation programs, learning material review, and assessment and evaluation of local programs in the same manner as for other programs.

(2) Adopt objectives for the instruction of the subject areas listed in this section that are appropriate for each grade level.

(3) Approve textbooks and other materials incorporating these objectives that local school administrative units may purchase with State funds.

(c) The State Board of Education, through the Department of Public Instruction, shall, on a regular basis, review materials related to these objectives and distribute these reviews to local school administrative units for their information. This program includes age-appropriate instruction in the following subject areas, regardless of whether this instruction is described as, or incorporated into a description of, "family life education," "family health education," "health education," "family living," "health," "healthful living curriculum," or "self-esteem":

(1) Mental and emotional health.

(2) Drug and alcohol abuse prevention.

(3) Nutrition.

(4) Dental health.

(5) Environmental health.

(6) Family living.

(7) Consumer health.

(8) Disease control.

(9) Growth and development.

(10) First aid and emergency care, including the teaching of cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) and the Heimlich maneuver by using hands-on training with mannequins so that students pass a test approved by the American Heart Association or American Red Cross. For the purposes of this subdivision, schools shall do all of the following:

a. Use an instructional program developed by the American Heart Association, the American Red Cross, or other nationally recognized programs that is based on the most current national evidence-based emergency cardiovascular care guidelines for CPR.

b. Maintain documentation in an electronic database that students have successfully completed CPR instruction to meet healthful living essential standards.

c. Require successful completion of instruction in CPR to be a requirement for high school graduation by the 2014-2015 school year.

(11) Preventing sexually transmitted diseases, including HIV/AIDS, and other communicable diseases. As used in this section, "HIV/AIDS" means Human Immunodeficiency Virus/Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome.

(12) Reproductive health and safety education.

(13) Bicycle safety.

(d) Parental Review. – The State Board of Education shall make available to all local school administrative units for review by the parents and legal guardians of students enrolled at those units any State-developed objectives for instruction, any approved textbooks, the list of reviewed materials, and any other State-developed or approved materials that pertain to or are intended to impart information or promote discussion or understanding in regard to the prevention of sexually transmitted diseases, including HIV/AIDS, to the avoidance of out-of-wedlock pregnancy, or to the reproductive health and safety education curriculum. The review period shall extend for at least 60 days before use.

(e) Duty of Local School Administrative Units. – Each local school administrative unit shall provide a comprehensive school health education program that meets all the requirements of this section and all the objectives established by the State Board. Each local board of education may expand on the subject areas to be included in the program and on the instructional objectives to be met.

"**§ 115C-81.30. Reproductive health and safety education provided by local school administrative units.**

(a) Each local school administrative unit shall provide a reproductive health and safety education program commencing in the seventh grade. Materials used in this instruction shall be age-appropriate for use with students. Law enforcement agencies, criminal justice agencies, and nongovernmental organizations with experience in sex-trafficking prevention and awareness may provide materials and information. Information conveyed during the instruction shall be objective and based upon scientific research that is peer reviewed and accepted by professionals and credentialed experts in any of the following fields: sexual health education, adolescent psychology, behavioral counseling, medicine, human anatomy, biology, ethics, or health education. Reproductive health and safety instruction provided by the local school administrative units shall do the following:

(1) Teach that abstinence from sexual activity outside of marriage is the expected standard for all school-age children.

(2) Present techniques and strategies to deal with peer pressure and offering positive reinforcement.

(3) Present reasons, skills, and strategies for remaining or becoming abstinent from sexual activity.

(4) Teach that abstinence from sexual activity is the only certain means of avoiding out-of-wedlock pregnancy, sexually transmitted diseases when transmitted through sexual contact, including HIV/AIDS, and other associated health and emotional problems. As used in this section, "HIV/AIDS" means Human Immunodeficiency Virus/Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome.

(5) Teach that a mutually faithful monogamous heterosexual relationship in the context of marriage is the best lifelong means of avoiding sexually transmitted diseases, including HIV/AIDS.

(6) Teach the positive benefits of abstinence until marriage and the risks of premarital sexual activity.

(7) Provide opportunities that allow for interaction between the parent or legal guardian and the student.

(8) Provide factually accurate biological or pathological information that is related to the human reproductive system.

(9) Teach about the preventable risks for preterm birth in subsequent pregnancies, including induced abortion, smoking, alcohol consumption, the use of illegal drugs, and inadequate prenatal care.

(10) Teach about sexually transmitted diseases. Instruction shall include how sexually transmitted diseases are and are not transmitted, the effectiveness and safety of all federal Food and Drug Administration (FDA)-approved methods of reducing the risk of contracting sexually transmitted diseases, and information on local resources for testing and medical care for sexually transmitted diseases. Instruction shall include the rates of infection among pre-teen and teens of each known sexually transmitted disease and the effects of contracting each sexually transmitted disease. In particular, the instruction shall include information about the effects of contracting the Human Papilloma Virus, including sterility and cervical cancer.

(11) Teach about the effectiveness and safety of all FDA-approved contraceptive methods in preventing pregnancy.

(12) Teach awareness of sexual assault, sexual abuse, and risk reduction. The instruction and materials shall:

a. Focus on healthy relationships.

b. Teach students what constitutes sexual assault and sexual abuse, the causes of those behaviors, and risk reduction.

c. Inform students about resources and reporting procedures if they experience sexual assault or sexual abuse.

d. Examine common misconceptions and stereotypes about sexual assault and sexual abuse.

(13) Teach about sex trafficking prevention and awareness. Each local school administrative unit shall:

a. Collaborate with a diverse group of outside consultants where practical, including law enforcement with expertise in sex-trafficking prevention education, to address the threats of sex trafficking.

b. Collaborate with a diverse group of outside consultants, including law enforcement with expertise in sex trafficking, on a referral protocol for high-risk pupils and minors.

(b) Each local board of education shall adopt a policy and provide a mechanism to allow a parent or a legal guardian to withdraw his or her child from instruction required under subdivisions (10) through (13) of subsection (a) of this section.

(c) Parental Review and Consent. – Each school year, before students may participate in any portion of (i) a program that pertains to or is intended to impart information or promote discussion or understanding in regard to the prevention of sexually transmitted diseases, including HIV/AIDS, or to the avoidance of out-of-wedlock pregnancy or (ii) a reproductive health and safety education program, whether developed by the State or by the local board of education, the parents and legal guardians of those students shall be given an opportunity to review the objectives and materials as provided in G.S. 115C-81.25(d). Local boards of education shall adopt policies to provide opportunities either for parents and legal guardians to consent or for parents and legal guardians to withhold their consent to the students' participation in any or all of these programs.

(d) Information on Contraceptives and Abortion Referral Services. – Students may receive information about where to obtain contraceptives and abortion referral services only in accordance with a local board's policy regarding parental consent. Any instruction concerning the use of contraceptives or prophylactics shall provide accurate statistical information on their effectiveness and failure rates for preventing pregnancy and sexually transmitted diseases, including HIV/AIDS, in actual use among adolescent populations and shall explain clearly the difference between risk reduction and risk elimination through abstinence. The Department of Health and Human Services shall provide the most current available information at the beginning of each school year.

(e) Prohibition on Distribution of Contraceptives. – Contraceptives, including condoms and other devices, shall not be made available or distributed on school property.

(f) School Health Coordinators. – School health coordinators may be employed to assist in the instruction of any portion of the comprehensive school health education program. Where feasible, a school health coordinator should serve more than one local school administrative unit. Each person initially employed as a State-funded school health coordinator after June 30, 1987, shall have a degree in health education.

(g) Duty of Local School Administrative Units. – Each local school administrative unit shall provide a comprehensive school health education program that meets all the requirements of this section and all the objectives established by the State Board. Each local board of education may expand on the subject areas to be included in the program and on the instructional objectives to be met.

"**§ 115C-81.35. Honors-level courses in healthful living education.**

The State Board of Education shall develop or identify academically rigorous honors-level courses in healthful living education that can be offered at the high school level. These honors-level courses shall be more rigorous than standard-level courses, include advanced content, provide multiple opportunities for students to take greater responsibility for their learning, and require higher quality work from the students than standard courses.

"**§ 115C-81.40. North Carolina history and geography.**

The standard course of study shall include the requirement that the public schools provide to all students one yearlong course of instruction on North Carolina history and geography in elementary school and one yearlong course of instruction in middle school on North Carolina history with United States history integrated into this instruction. The course of instruction shall include contributions to the history and geography of the State and the nation by the racial and ethnic groups that have contributed to the development and diversity of the State and nation. Each course of instruction may include up to two weeks of instruction relating to the local area in which the students reside.

"**§ 115C-81.45. Classes conducted in English; citizenship; and civic literacy.**

(a) Except when a board authorizes teaching in a foreign language in order to comply with federal law, local boards of education shall require all teachers and principals to conduct classes except foreign language classes in English. Any teacher or principal who refuses to do so may be dismissed.

(b) Local boards of education shall provide for the efficient teaching at appropriate grade levels of all materials set forth in the standard course of study, including integrated instruction in the areas of citizenship in the United States of America, government of the State of North Carolina, government of the United States, fire prevention, the free enterprise system, and the dangers of harmful or illegal drugs, including alcohol.

(c) Democratic Process and Citizenship Education. –

(1) The State Board of Education shall include instruction in civic and citizenship education in the standard course of study for high school social studies. The State Board of Education is strongly encouraged to include, at a minimum, the following components in the high school civic and citizenship education standard course of study:

a. That students write to a local, State, or federal elected official about an issue that is important to them.

b. Instruction on the importance of voting and otherwise participating in the democratic process, including instruction on voter registration.

c. Information about current events and governmental structure.

d. Information about the democratic process and how laws are made.

(2) The State Board of Education shall include instruction in civic and citizenship education in the standard course of study for middle school social studies. The State Board of Education is strongly encouraged to include, at a minimum, the following components in the middle school civic and citizenship education standard course of study:

a. A tour of representative local government facilities, such as the local jail, the courthouse, or a town hall, to help students understand the way their community is governed.

b. Allowing students to choose and analyze a community problem and offer public policy recommendations on the problem to local officials.

c. Information about getting involved in community groups.

(d) Civic Literacy. –

(1) The State Board of Education shall require during the high school years the teaching of a semester course on the Founding Principles of the United States of America and the State of North Carolina. A passing grade in the course shall be required for graduation from high school, and the course shall include at least the following subjects:

a. The Creator-endowed inalienable rights of the people.

b. Structure of government, separation of powers with checks and balances.

c. Frequent and free elections in a representative government.

d. Rule of law.

e. Equal justice under the law.

f. Private property rights.

g. Federalism.

h. Due process.

i. Individual rights as set forth in the Bill of Rights.

j. Individual responsibility.

k. Constitutional limitations on government power to tax and spend, and prompt payment of public debt.

l. Strong defense and supremacy of civil authority over military.

m. Peace, commerce, and honest friendship with all nations, entangling alliances with none.

(2) The State Board of Education shall require that any high school level curriculum-based tests for the course required in subdivision (1) of this subsection developed and administered statewide beginning with the 2016-2017 academic year include questions related to the philosophical foundations of our form of government and the principles underlying the Declaration of Independence, the United States Constitution and its amendments, and the most important of the Federalist Papers.

(3) The Department of Public Instruction and the local boards of education, as appropriate, shall provide or cause to be provided curriculum content for the semester course required in subdivision (1) of this subsection and professional development to ensure that the intent and provisions of this subsection are carried out. The curriculum content established shall include a review of the contributions made by Americans of all races.

(4) The Department of Public Instruction shall submit a biennial report by October 15 of each odd-numbered year to the Joint Legislative Education Oversight Committee covering the implementation of this subsection.

"**§ 115C-81.50. Student councils.**

All high schools and middle schools shall be encouraged to have elected student councils through which students have input into policies and decisions that affect them. All other schools are encouraged to have student councils.

The purpose of these student councils is to build civic skills and attitudes such as participation in elections, discussion and debate of issues, and collaborative decision making. Schools shall encourage active, broad-based participation in these student councils.

"**§ 115C-81.55. Current events.**

Schools should encourage discussions of current events in a wide range of classes, especially social studies and language arts classes. All high schools and middle schools are encouraged to have at least two classes per grade level to offer interactive current events discussions at least every four weeks.

"**§ 115C-81.60. Character education.**

(a) Each local board of education shall develop and implement character education instruction with input from the local community. The instruction shall be incorporated into the standard curriculum and should address the following traits:

(1) Courage. – Having the determination to do the right thing even when others don't and the strength to follow your conscience rather than the crowd; and attempting difficult things that are worthwhile.

(2) Good judgment. – Choosing worthy goals and setting proper priorities; thinking through the consequences of your actions; and basing decisions on practical wisdom and good sense.

(3) Integrity. – Having the inner strength to be truthful, trustworthy, and honest in all things; acting justly and honorably.

(4) Kindness. – Being considerate, courteous, helpful, and understanding of others; showing care, compassion, friendship, and generosity; and treating others as you would like to be treated.

(5) Perseverance. – Being persistent in the pursuit of worthy objectives in spite of difficulty, opposition, or discouragement; and exhibiting patience and having the fortitude to try again when confronted with delays, mistakes, or failures.

(6) Respect. – Showing high regard for authority, for other people, for self, for property, and for country; and understanding that all people have value as human beings.

(7) Responsibility. – Being dependable in carrying out obligations and duties; showing reliability and consistency in words and conduct; being accountable for your own actions; and being committed to active involvement in your community.

(8) Self-discipline. – Demonstrating hard work and commitment to purpose; regulating yourself for improvement and restraining from inappropriate behaviors; being in proper control of your words, actions, impulses, and desires; choosing abstinence from premarital sex, drugs, alcohol, and other harmful substances and behaviors; and doing your best in all situations.

(b) In addition to the instruction under subsection (a) of this section, local boards of education are encouraged to include instruction on the following responsibilities:

(1) Respect for school personnel. – In the school environment, respect includes holding teachers, school administrators, and all school personnel in high esteem and demonstrating in words and deeds that all school personnel deserve to be treated with courtesy and proper deference.

(2) Responsibility for school safety. – Helping to create a harmonious school atmosphere that is free from threats, weapons, and violent or disruptive behavior; cultivating an orderly learning environment in which students and school personnel feel safe and secure; and encouraging the resolution of conflicts and disagreements through peaceful means, including peer mediation. Instruction in this responsibility should include a consistent and age-appropriate antiviolence message and a conflict resolution component for students in kindergarten through grade 12. These messages should include media-awareness education to help children recognize stereotypes and messages portraying violence.

(3) Service to others. – Engaging in meaningful service to their schools and their communities. Schools may teach service-learning by (i) incorporating it into their standard curriculum or (ii) involving a classroom of students or some other group of students in one or more hands-on community service projects. All schools are encouraged to provide opportunities for student involvement in community service or service-learning projects.

(4) Good citizenship. – Obeying the laws of the nation and this State; abiding by school rules; and understanding the rights and responsibilities of a member of a republic.

"**§ 115C-81.65. Financial literacy.**

(a) Instruction shall be provided in personal financial literacy for all students. In addition to the requirements in subsection (b) of this section, the State Board of Education shall determine the other components of personal financial literacy that will be covered in the curriculum. The State Board shall also review the high school standard course of study to determine into which courses and grade levels personal financial literacy shall be integrated.

(b) Each student shall receive personal financial literacy instruction that shall include:

(1) The true cost of credit.

(2) Choosing and managing a credit card.

(3) Borrowing money for an automobile or other large purchase.

(4) Home mortgages.

(5) Credit scoring and credit reports.

(6) Other relevant financial literacy issues.

"**§ 115C-81.70. Disability history and awareness.**

(a) Each local board of education shall provide instruction on disability, people with disabilities, and the disability rights movement in conjunction with Disability History and Awareness Month, established pursuant to G.S. 103-11.

(b) This instruction shall be incorporated through measures that include any of the following:

(1) Supplementing existing lesson plans.

(2) Holding school assemblies.

(3) Hosting disability-focused film festivals.

(4) Organizing other school activities.

Local boards of education are encouraged to incorporate individuals with disabilities or knowledgeable guest speakers from the disability community into the delivery of this instruction.

"**§ 115C-81.75. Cursive writing.**

The standard course of study shall include the requirement that the public schools provide instruction in cursive writing so that students create readable documents through legible cursive handwriting by the end of fifth grade.

"**§ 115C-81.80. Multiplication tables.**

The standard course of study shall include the requirement that students enrolled in public schools memorize multiplication tables to demonstrate competency in efficiently multiplying numbers.

"**§ 115C-81.85. Instruction in American Sign Language.**

(a) The State Board of Education shall encourage schools to offer American Sign Language classes in high schools as a modern foreign language.

(b) The State Board of Education shall adopt and implement standards for the certification of teachers of American Sign Language and shall set standards for teacher preparation programs that prepare students for certification as American Sign Language teachers."

SECTION 6. G.S. 115C-47 is amended by adding a new subdivision to read:

"(1a) To Establish and Maintain Kindergartens. –

a. Local boards of education shall provide for their respective local school administrative unit kindergartens as a part of the public school system for all children living in the local school administrative unit who are eligible for admission pursuant to sub-subdivision c. of this subdivision provided that funds are available from State, local, federal, or other sources to operate a kindergarten program as provided in this subdivision.

b. All kindergarten programs so established shall be subject to the supervision of the Department of Public Instruction and shall be operated in accordance with the standards adopted by the State Board of Education, upon recommendation of the Superintendent of Public Instruction. Among the standards to be adopted by the State Board of Education shall be a provision that the Board will allocate funds for the purpose of operating and administering kindergartens to each school administrative unit in the State based on the average daily membership for the best continuous three out of the first four school months of pupils in the kindergarten program during the last school year in that respective school administrative unit. Such allocations are to be made from funds appropriated to the State Board of Education for the kindergarten program.

c. Any child who meets the requirements of G.S. 115C-364 shall be eligible for enrollment in kindergarten. Any child who is enrolled in kindergarten and not withdrawn by the child's parent or legal guardian shall attend kindergarten.

d. Notwithstanding any other provision of law to the contrary, subject to the approval of the State Board of Education, any local board of education may elect not to establish and maintain a kindergarten program. Any funds allocated to a local board of education which does not operate a kindergarten program may be reallocated by the State Board of Education, within the discretion of the Board, to a county or city board of education which will operate such a program."

SECTION 7. G.S. 115C-47 is amended by adding a new subdivision to read:

"(29c) To Allow and Encourage the Reading and Posting of Documents on the History of the United States and With Historical Significance for the United States. –

a. Local boards of education shall allow and may encourage any public school teacher or administrator to read or post in a public school building, classroom, or event excerpts or portions of writings, documents, and records that reflect the history of the United States, including, but not limited to:

1. The preamble to the North Carolina Constitution.
2. The Declaration of Independence.
3. The United States Constitution.
4. The Mayflower Compact.
5. The national motto.
6. The National Anthem.
7. The Pledge of Allegiance.
8. The writings, speeches, documents, and proclamations of the founding fathers and Presidents of the United States.
9. Decisions of the Supreme Court of the United States.
10. Acts of the Congress of the United States, including the published text of the Congressional Record.

b. Local boards, superintendents, principals, and supervisors shall not allow content-based censorship of American history in the public schools of this State, including religious references in these writings, documents, and records. Local boards and professional school personnel may develop curricula and use materials that are limited to specified topics, provided the curricula and materials are aligned with the standard course of study or are grade level appropriate.

c. A local school administrative unit may display on real property controlled by that local school administrative unit documents and objects of historical significance that have formed and influenced the United States legal or governmental system and that exemplify the development of the rule of law, such as the Magna Carta, the Mecklenburg Declaration, the Ten Commandments, the Justinian Code, and documents set out in sub-subdivision a. of this subdivision. Such displays are subject to the following requirements:

1. The display may include, but shall not be limited to, documents that contain words associated with a religion; provided, however, no display shall seek to establish or promote religion or to persuade any person to embrace a particular religion, denomination of a religion, or other philosophy.

2. The display of a document containing words associated with a religion shall be in the same manner and appearance generally as other documents and objects displayed and shall not be presented or displayed in any fashion that results in calling attention to it apart from the other displayed documents and objects. The display also shall be accompanied by a prominent sign quoting the First Amendment of the United States Constitution as follows: "Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the government for a redress of grievances.""

SECTION 8. G.S. 115C-47 is amended by adding a new subdivision to read:

"(49a) To Address Science Safety Requirements. –

a. Each local board of education shall certify annually to the State Board of Education that its high school and middle school science laboratories are equipped with appropriate personal protective equipment for students and teachers.

b. Each local board of education shall ensure that its high schools and middle schools comply with all State Board of Education policies related to science laboratory safety."

SECTION 9. G.S. 115C-12(9c) reads as rewritten:

"(9c) Power to Develop Content ~~Standards and Exit~~ Standards. –

a. The Board shall develop a comprehensive plan to revise content standards and the standard course of study in the core academic areas of reading, writing, mathematics, science, history, geography, and civics. The Board shall involve and survey a representative sample of parents, teachers, and the public to help determine academic content standard priorities and usefulness of the content standards. A full review of available and relevant academic content standards that are rigorous, specific, sequenced, clear, focused, and measurable, whenever possible, shall be a part of the process of the development of content standards. The revised content standards developed in the core academic areas shall (i) reflect high expectations for students and an in-depth mastery of the content; (ii) be clearly grounded in the content of each academic area; (iii) be defined grade-by-grade and course-by-course; (iv) be understandable to parents and teachers; (v) be developed in full recognition of the time available to teach the core academic areas at each grade level; and (vi) be measurable, whenever possible, in a reliable, valid, and efficient manner for accountability purposes.

b. High school course content standards shall include the knowledge and skills necessary to pursue further postsecondary education or to attain employment in the 21st century economy. The high school course content standards also shall be aligned with the minimum undergraduate course requirements for admission to the constituent institutions of The University of North Carolina. ~~The Board may develop exit standards that will be required for high school graduation.~~

c. The Board also shall develop and implement an ongoing process to align State programs and support materials with the revised academic content standards for each core academic area on a regular basis. Alignment shall include revising textbook criteria, support materials, State tests, teacher and school administrator preparation, and ongoing professional development programs to be compatible with content standards. The Board shall develop and make available to teachers and parents support materials, including teacher and parent guides, for academic content standards. The State Board of Education shall work in collaboration with the Board of Governors of The University of North Carolina to ensure that teacher and school administrator degree programs, ongoing professional development, and other university activity in the State's public schools align with the State Board's priorities."

SECTION 10. G.S. 115C-12 is amended by adding a new subdivision to read:

"(9d) Power to Develop Exit Standards and Graduation Requirements. –

a. The Board may develop exit standards that shall be required for high school graduation. The Board shall require the following for high school graduation:

1. Successful completion of instruction in cardiopulmonary resuscitation as provided in G.S. 115C-81.25(c)(10).

2. A passing grade in the semester course on the Founding Principles of the United States of America and the State of North Carolina described in G.S. 115C-81.45(d)(1).

b. The following restrictions apply to the Board regarding Algebra I and high school graduation projects:

1. The Board shall not adopt or enforce any rule that requires Algebra I as a graduation standard or as a requirement for a high school diploma for any student whose individualized education program (i) identifies the student as learning disabled in the area of mathematics and (ii) states that this learning disability will prevent the student from mastering Algebra I.

2. The Board shall not require any student to prepare a high school graduation project as a condition of graduation from high school; local boards of education may, however, require their students to complete a high school graduation project."

SECTION 11. G.S. 115C-12(9)c. is repealed.

SECTION 12. G.S. 115C-47(12) is repealed.

SECTION 13. G.S. 115C-105.32 reads as rewritten:

"**§ 115C-105.32. Parent involvement programs and conflict resolution programs as part of school improvement plans.**

A school is encouraged to include a comprehensive parent involvement program as part of its school improvement plan under G.S. 115C-105.27. The State Board of Education shall develop a list of recommended strategies that it determines to be effective, which building level committees may use to establish parent involvement programs designed to meet the specific needs of their schools. The Board shall make the list available to local school administrative units and school buildings by the beginning of the 1994-95 school year.

A school is encouraged to review its need for a comprehensive conflict resolution program as part of the development of its school improvement plan under G.S. 115C-105.27. If a school determines that this program is needed, it may select from the list developed by the State Board

of Education under ~~G.S. 115C-81(a4)~~G.S. 115C-81.15 or may develop its own materials and curricula to be approved by the local board of education."

SECTION 14. G.S. 115C-174.11(a) reads as rewritten:

"(a) Assessment Instruments for Kindergarten, First, Second, and Third Grades. – The State Board of Education shall develop, adopt, and provide to the local school administrative units developmentally appropriate individualized assessment instruments ~~consistent with the Basic Education Program~~ aligned with the standard course of study and Part 1A of Article 8 of this Chapter for the kindergarten, first, second, and third grades. Local school administrative units shall use these assessment instruments provided to them by the State Board for kindergarten, first, second, and third grade students to assess progress, diagnose difficulties, and inform instruction and remediation needs. Local school administrative units shall not use standardized tests for summative assessment of kindergarten, first, and second grade students except as required as a condition of receiving federal grants."

SECTION 15. G.S. 115C-174.11(c)(4) reads as rewritten:

"(4) To the extent funds are made available, the State Board of Education shall plan for and require the administration of the ACT test for all students in the eleventh grade unless the student has already taken a comparable test and scored at or above a level set by the State Board. The State Board of Education shall require the administration of an alternate to the ACT or an alternate to the PLAN precursor test to the ACT to a student who (i) exhibits severe and pervasive delays in all areas of conceptual, linguistic, and academic development and in adaptive behaviors, including communication, daily living skills, and self-care, (ii) is following the extended content standards of the Standard Course of Study as provided in ~~G.S. 115C-81,~~G.S. 115C-81.5, or is following a course of study that, upon completing high school, may not lead to admission into a college-level course of study resulting in a college degree, and (iii) has a written parental request for an alternate assessment.

The State Board of Education shall ensure that parents of students enrolled in all public schools, including charter and regional schools, have the necessary information to make informed decisions regarding participation in the ACT and the PLAN precursor test to the ACT.

Alternate assessment and ACT assessment results of students with disabilities shall be included in school accountability reports, including charter and regional schools, provided by the State Board of Education."

SECTION 16. G.S. 120-70.81(a)(2) is repealed.

SECTION 17. This act is effective when it becomes law.