

GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA
SESSION 2019

H.B. 711
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HOUSE PRINCIPAL CLERK

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HOUSE BILL DRH10411-MV-148

Short Title: Excellent Educational Standards. (Public)

Sponsors: Representatives Pittman and Kidwell (Primary Sponsors).

Referred to:

1 A BILL TO BE ENTITLED
2 AN ACT TO ESTABLISH EXCELLENT EDUCATIONAL STANDARDS.
3 The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

4 SECTION 1. This act shall be known as the "North Carolina Education Standards
5 and Curricula Act."

6 SECTION 2. The purpose of this act is to modify the teaching of English language
7 arts (ELA) and mathematics for kindergarten through grade 12 in local school administrative
8 units.

9 SECTION 3. G.S. 115C-12(9c) reads as rewritten:

10 "(9c) Power to Develop Content Standards. –

11 a. The Board shall develop a comprehensive plan to revise content
12 standards and the standard course of study in the core academic areas
13 of reading, writing, mathematics, science, history, geography, and
14 civics. The Board shall consult with the Superintendent of Public
15 Instruction in developing the standards and shall involve and survey a
16 representative sample of parents, teachers, and the public to help
17 determine academic content standard priorities and usefulness of the
18 content standards. A full review of available and relevant academic
19 content standards that are ~~rigorous, challenging~~, specific, sequenced,
20 clear, focused, and measurable, whenever possible, shall be a part of
21 the process of the development of content standards. The revised
22 content standards developed in the core academic areas shall (i) reflect
23 high expectations for students and an in-depth mastery of the content;
24 (ii) be clearly grounded in the content of each academic area; (iii) be
25 defined grade-by-grade and course-by-course; (iv) be understandable
26 to parents and teachers; (v) be developed in full recognition of the time
27 available to teach the core academic areas at each grade level; and (vi)
28 be measurable, whenever possible, in a reliable, valid, and efficient
29 manner for accountability purposes. The Board shall ensure that
30 standards developed surpass the Common Core Standards adopted by
31 the Board in 2010.

32"

33 SECTION 4. G.S. 115C-47 is amended by adding a new subdivision to read:

34 "(11a) To Develop Curricula for State Board Approval. – Local boards of education
35 shall develop high-quality English language arts (ELA) and mathematics
36 curricula based on the standards adopted by the State Board of Education



1 pursuant to G.S. 115C-12(9c). Local boards shall give careful attention to the
2 need for age-appropriate curricula and instruction. The standards-based
3 curricula shall be submitted to the State Board of Education for approval every
4 three years. Scope and sequence documentation shall be included in the
5 curricula submitted to the State Board. Curricula shall include the following:

- 6 a. Mastery learning objectives.
- 7 b. Guiding principles of instruction for all content areas.
- 8 c. The incorporation of sufficient direct teaching and reinforcement of
9 content and skills in order to make deep understanding and application
10 possible.
- 11 d. Methods whereby teachers will be knowledgeable of pedagogy
12 specific to the developmental readiness of the students they teach.
- 13 e. For ELA curriculum, (i) the incorporation of developmentally
14 appropriate practice in phonemic awareness and (ii) methods whereby
15 teachers will be knowledgeable of phonics theory in order to
16 emphasize phonetic principles as the basis of the American English
17 language.

18 (11b) To Disseminate Content Standards to Parents. – Local boards of education
19 shall disseminate to parents easily understood information on the content
20 standards no later than four weeks from the starting date of each new school
21 year. The information shall explain ELA and mathematics standards,
22 providing examples, and shall explain all topics and skills that will be studied
23 during the school year."

24 **SECTION 5.** The Department of Public Instruction shall collaborate with the
25 educational agencies of other states that have rejected Common Core, such as Virginia,
26 Minnesota, or Massachusetts for ideas on strengthening North Carolina ELA and mathematics
27 standards and shall consider forming an interstate excellence in educational standards partnership
28 with any combination of these or other similarly-focused states. In the event that the Department
29 determines that a partnership would be in the best interests of the public school students of North
30 Carolina, it shall present its recommendation to the Joint Legislative Education Oversight
31 Committee by May 15, 2020.

32 **SECTION 6.** G.S. 115C-105.39A is amended by adding a new subsection to read:

33 "(d) Continually Low-Performing Local School Administrative Units. – A continually
34 low-performing local school administrative unit is a unit that has been designated by the State
35 Board as low-performing under subsection (a) of this section for at least two of three consecutive
36 years. If the State Board identified a local school administrative unit as continually
37 low-performing, high schools in that unit must offer a math curriculum that follows a traditional
38 course sequence as follows: Algebra I, Geometry, Algebra II, Calculus. The State Board shall
39 take steps to eliminate Integrated Mathematics in continually low-performing local school
40 administrative units. Exemption from the traditional course sequence described in this subsection
41 may be permitted only when a continually low-performing local school administrative unit
42 presents to the Board substantial, disaggregated achievement data, justifying why an integrated
43 approach supports high student achievement."

44 **SECTION 7.(a)** Professional Development for Teachers in Writing Instruction. –
45 The Department of Public Instruction shall develop standards and companion documents for
46 teaching and assessing writing for kindergarten through twelfth grade. The Department of Public
47 Instruction shall make available to each local board of education annual professional
48 development specific to writing standards to be provided to teachers. Whenever feasible, the
49 Department shall partner with an Educator Preparation Program (EPP) in developing and making
50 available the professional development. Any partnering EPP must provide professional
51 development that aligns with State Board of Education content standards in writing instruction.

1 No later than June 15, 2019, the Department of Public Instruction shall recommend to the State
2 Board of Education a plan for administering biannual assessments for teachers who have
3 completed the professional development described in this subsection. One assessment shall be
4 provided for teachers of grades four through eight, and a separate assessment shall be provided
5 for teachers of grades nine through 12.

6 **SECTION 7.(b)** Enhance K-3 Reading Instruction Methods. – In continuing the
7 administration of Part 1A of Article 8 of Chapter 115C of the General Statutes (Read to Achieve),
8 the Department of Public Instruction shall ensure that explicit phonics instruction is provided
9 daily in each local school administrative unit. The State Board of Education shall ensure that
10 principles of high-quality reading instruction are clearly defined and shall develop a uniform
11 model that reflects that definition. The definition shall explicitly include teacher-directed,
12 child-centered instruction and personalized learning. The Department of Public Instruction shall
13 develop evidence-based reading instruction methods and shall implement a professional
14 development initiative for building teachers' knowledge and skills.

15 **SECTION 7.(c)** Spelling Instruction. – Phonics-based spelling instruction shall be
16 provided daily in kindergarten through eighth grade. Spelling curriculum shall incorporate word
17 lists for use in conversation, class assignments, and formal and informal writing in order to
18 promote each student's literacy progress. The State Board of Education shall ensure that every
19 public school student receives instruction in a teacher-directed, student-centered study of words
20 from kindergarten through high school. Instruction shall include English orthography, alphabet,
21 pattern, and meaning. Students shall be assessed at least weekly on spelling performance and
22 parents shall be notified of students' progress. No later than May 15 annually, the Department of
23 Public Instruction shall report to the Joint Legislative Education Oversight Committee on the
24 status of spelling instruction and student performance in spelling.

25 **SECTION 7.(d)** Vocabulary Development. – The State Board of Education shall
26 ensure that students in kindergarten through twelfth grade receive challenging instruction to
27 promote vocabulary development. Instruction shall expose students to a wide variety of
28 word-study resources, including dictionaries, thesauri, research manuals, and style manuals.

29 **SECTION 7.(e)** No later than October annually, the Department of Public
30 Instruction shall submit a report to the State Board of Education on the teaching of print and
31 cursive writing in kindergarten through fifth grade. The State Board will discuss and vote on the
32 approval of the report. At a minimum, the report shall include the following:

- 33 (1) Statewide trends in the writing styles among local school administrative units.
- 34 (2) Best teaching practices related to print and cursive writing.
- 35 (3) General findings on student performance in print and cursive writing.

36 **SECTION 8.** Local boards of education shall establish specific mastery goals by
37 grade and by standards and shall implement a systematic way to measure student progress. The
38 Department of Public Instruction may advise local boards in decisions pertaining to mastery goal
39 setting. In the case of low-performing local school administrative units, the superintendent shall
40 ensure that progression toward mastery is explained in each school's annual improvement plan.

41 **SECTION 9.** This act is effective when it becomes law and applies beginning with
42 the 2020-2021 school year.