

GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA  
SESSION 2019

**H.B. 93**  
**Feb 18, 2019**  
**HOUSE PRINCIPAL CLERK**

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**HOUSE BILL DRH30049-MV-79**

Short Title: School Calendar Flex/Martin County. (Local)

Sponsors: Representative Willingham.

Referred to:

1 A BILL TO BE ENTITLED  
2 AN ACT TO PROVIDE ADDITIONAL FLEXIBILITY TO MARTIN COUNTY SCHOOLS  
3 IN ADOPTING THE SCHOOL CALENDAR.

4 Whereas, State law has usurped local control of school calendars by imposing a  
5 one-size-fits-all mandate on when the year can begin and end for traditional public schools; and

6 Whereas, the State-mandated, late-August start date combined with the instructional  
7 time requirement means that high schools cannot complete the first semester until mid-January;  
8 and

9 Whereas, completing the first semester in mid-January results in high school students  
10 having to take first semester exams after winter break, which can negatively impact their  
11 preparation and performance; and

12 Whereas, the State-mandated, late-August start date puts high school calendars out of  
13 alignment with community colleges and four-year universities, which typically begin the first  
14 semester in early August and the second semester weeks before high school students complete  
15 the fall semester; and

16 Whereas, superintendents have reported that the calendar misalignment creates  
17 barriers for high school students who want to take community college courses and creates  
18 challenges for high school students who graduate early; and

19 Whereas, the late-August start date and mid-June end date squeeze local school  
20 administrative units, particularly those in mountain counties, that need to schedule makeup days  
21 for inclement weather closings, leaving them no recourse but to schedule makeup days on  
22 unpopular days like holidays, Saturdays, or spring break days; and

23 Whereas, practices and tryouts for interscholastic sports can start as early as August  
24 1, and many student-athletes are required to be available, while some sports, such as football,  
25 have already played games before the school year has started, negatively impacting ticket and  
26 booster club revenues; and

27 Whereas, the late-August start date and other requirements of the calendar law make  
28 it more difficult for school districts to schedule professional development days during the school  
29 year, when it is most beneficial to teachers; and

30 Whereas, the North Carolina General Statutes give the powers of supervision and  
31 control of local school systems to local boards of education; and

32 Whereas, allowing local boards of education to have additional flexibility with setting  
33 a start date for their school calendar will help alleviate the issues delineated above while giving  
34 more authority to the locally elected bodies statutorily empowered to govern their school  
35 systems; Now, therefore,

36 The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:



1           **SECTION 1.** G.S. 115C-84.2(d) reads as rewritten:

2           "(d)   Opening and Closing Dates. – Local boards of education shall determine the dates of  
3 opening and closing the public schools under subdivision (a)(1) of this section. Except for  
4 year-round schools, the opening date for students shall be no earlier than the Monday closest to  
5 August ~~26, 10,~~ and the closing date for students shall be no later than the Friday closest to June  
6 11. ~~On a showing of good cause, the State Board of Education may waive the requirement that~~  
7 ~~the opening date for students be no earlier than the Monday closest to August 26 and may allow~~  
8 ~~the local board of education to set an opening date no earlier than the Monday closest to August~~  
9 ~~19, to the extent that school calendars are able to provide sufficient days to accommodate~~  
10 ~~anticipated makeup days due to school closings. A local board may revise the scheduled closing~~  
11 ~~date if necessary in order to comply with the minimum requirements for instructional days or~~  
12 ~~instructional time. For purposes of this subsection, the term "good cause" means that schools in~~  
13 ~~any local school administrative unit in a county have been closed eight days per year during any~~  
14 ~~four of the last 10 years because of severe weather conditions, energy shortages, power failures,~~  
15 ~~or other emergency situations. Regardless of the opening date selected for students, all first~~  
16 ~~semester examinations may be given before winter break.~~

17           The required opening and closing dates under this subsection shall not apply to any school  
18 that a local board designated as having a modified calendar for the 2003-2004 school year or to  
19 any school that was part of a planned program in the 2003-2004 school year for a system of  
20 modified calendar schools, so long as the school operates under a modified calendar."

21           **SECTION 2.** This act applies only to Martin County Schools.

22           **SECTION 3.** This act is effective when it becomes law and applies beginning with  
23 the 2019-2020 school year.