

GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA
SESSION 2021

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SENATE BILL 346
Judiciary Committee Substitute Adopted 4/21/21
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PROPOSED HOUSE COMMITTEE SUBSTITUTE S346-PCS35417-BE-45

Short Title: Extended Learning for Elective Courses.

(Public)

Sponsors:

Referred to:

March 25, 2021

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT TO EXTEND LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES TO INCLUDE ALTERNATIVE
EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES FOR ELECTIVE COURSE CREDIT.

Whereas, students are involved in many programs outside of the traditional classroom and these programs have educational value; and

Whereas, many businesses and trade associations may have an interest in offering programs outside of the traditional classroom that are attractive to students and contain educational value; and

Whereas, learning opportunities that are designed to address the interests and aptitudes of each student have the potential to allow every student to discover, develop, and apply their talents to realize their full potential; and

Whereas, there exist policies that multiply educational opportunities outside of the traditional classroom in other states; and

Whereas, providing credit for alternative educational opportunities will enrich the learning environment of students and develop well-rounded individuals ready for a life of learning, productive work, and community involvement; Now, therefore,
The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

SECTION 1. G.S. 115C-47 is amended by adding a new subdivision to read:

"(34b) Power to Approve Alternative Educational Opportunities for Elective Course Credit. – Each local board of education may adopt a policy establishing requirements for approval of alternative educational opportunities for elective course credit as provided in G.S. 115C-104.10(a)."

SECTION 2. Article 8 of Chapter 115C of the General Statutes is amended by adding a new Part to read:

"Part 6. Expanded Learning Opportunities.

"§ 115C-104.10. Elective course credit for alternative educational opportunities.

(a) Each local board of education may adopt a policy authorizing students to earn elective course credit for alternative educational opportunities that take place outside of the required instructional day. If adopted, the policy shall meet the following requirements:

(1) Establish a process for approving alternative educational opportunities.

(2) Establish criteria for approving alternative educational opportunities, including any requirements for individuals providing instruction during the opportunities. The local board shall have the authority to approve or deny an alternative educational opportunity. If the opportunity is denied, the local



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1 board shall provide a detailed explanation of the reasons for its denial and
2 suggest ways to meet the criteria for approval by the local board.

3 (3) Require each approved alternative educational opportunity to align with
4 Career and Technical Education content standards.

5 (4) Require approved alternative educational opportunities to be considered local
6 option electives rather than Career and Technical Education electives.

7 (5) Limit approval of alternative educational opportunities to those sponsored by
8 businesses or trade associations located in the State.

9 (6) Authorize the local board of education to audit approved alternative
10 educational opportunities at any time. If the audit results in findings that an
11 approved opportunity is not meeting the requirements of the policy created
12 pursuant to this subsection, then the local board may disqualify the program
13 immediately.

14 (b) The Department of Public Instruction shall provide guidance to local boards of
15 education on carrying out the provisions of this section, including, at a minimum, examples of
16 the following:

17 (1) A process for approving alternative educational opportunities.

18 (2) Criteria for evaluating alternative educational opportunities.

19 (3) Requirements for an approved entity to follow when providing an alternative
20 educational opportunity, including any requirements for individuals providing
21 instruction during the opportunity.

22 (c) Each local board of education with a policy adopted pursuant to subsection (a) of this
23 section shall report annually in writing to the Department of Public Instruction by November 15
24 each year, for the prior school year, on the following:

25 (1) The policy adopted by the local board of education.

26 (2) The total number and percentage of students who earned at least one credit
27 pursuant to the policy, including a disaggregation by the number of credits
28 earned.

29 (3) For each business or trade association sponsoring an alternative educational
30 opportunity for that year, the following information:

31 a. The Career and Technical Education course to which the opportunity
32 was aligned.

33 b. The number of students who earned credit by participating in the
34 opportunity.

35 (4) For graduating seniors, the total number and percentage of students whose
36 transcript reflects at least one credit earned pursuant to the policy, including a
37 disaggregation by the number of credits earned.

38 (d) The Department of Public Instruction shall compile the information submitted by
39 local boards of education pursuant to subsection (c) of this section and annually report on the
40 information at the State level and by local school administrative unit to the Joint Legislative
41 Education Oversight Committee by December 15."

42 **SECTION 3.** This act is effective when it becomes law and applies beginning with
43 the 2022-2023 school year. The first reports required by G.S. 115C-104.10(c) and (d), as enacted
44 by this act, shall be due by November 15, 2023, and December 15, 2023, respectively.