

GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA
SESSION 2023

H.B. 206
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HOUSE PRINCIPAL CLERK

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HOUSE BILL DRH40071-NH-49

Short Title: Increase Dropout Age/Completion Indicator. (Public)

Sponsors: Representative Elmore.

Referred to:

1 A BILL TO BE ENTITLED
2 AN ACT TO RAISE THE COMPULSORY SCHOOL ATTENDANCE AGE TO EIGHTEEN
3 YEARS OLD OVER A FIVE-YEAR PERIOD AND TO ESTABLISH A COMPLETION
4 RATE INDICATOR FOR SCHOOL PERFORMANCE GRADES.

5 The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

6
7 **PART I. RAISE DROPOUT AGE TO 16 YEARS AND SIX MONTHS FOR THE**
8 **2024-2025 SCHOOL YEAR**

9 **SECTION 1.(a)** G.S. 115C-378(a) reads as rewritten:

10 "(a) Every parent, ~~guardian-guardian~~, or custodian in this State having charge or control
11 of a child between the ages of (i) seven years and (ii) 16 years and six months shall cause the
12 child to attend school continuously for a period equal to the time which the public school to
13 which the child is assigned shall be in ~~session-session~~, unless the child graduates from high
14 school. Every parent, guardian, or custodian in this State having charge or control of a child under
15 age seven who is enrolled in a public school in grades kindergarten through two shall also cause
16 the child to attend school continuously for a period equal to the time which the public school to
17 which the child is assigned shall be in session unless the child has withdrawn from school."

18 **SECTION 1.(b)** G.S. 115C-238.66(3) reads as rewritten:

19 "(3) School attendance. – Every parent, guardian, or other person in this State
20 having charge or control of a child who is enrolled in the regional school and
21 who is less than 16 years and six months of age shall cause such child to attend
22 school continuously for a period equal to the time that the regional school shall
23 be in ~~session-session~~, unless the child graduates from high school. No person
24 shall encourage, entice, or counsel any child to be unlawfully absent from the
25 regional school. Any person who aids or abets a student's unlawful absence
26 from the regional school shall, upon conviction, be guilty of a Class 1
27 misdemeanor. The principal shall be responsible for implementing such
28 additional policies concerning compulsory attendance as shall be adopted by
29 the board of directors, including regulations concerning lawful and unlawful
30 absences, permissible excuses for temporary absences, maintenance of
31 attendance records, and attendance counseling."

32 **SECTION 1.(c)** G.S. 116-235(b)(2) reads as rewritten:

33 "(2) School Attendance. – Every parent, guardian, or other person in this State
34 having charge or control of a child who is enrolled in the School and who is
35 less than 16 years and six months of age shall cause such child to attend school
36 continuously for a period equal to the time which the School shall be in



~~session.~~ session, unless the child graduates from high school. No person shall encourage, entice, or counsel any child to be unlawfully absent from the School. Any person who aids or abets a student's unlawful absence from the School shall, upon conviction, be guilty of a Class 1 misdemeanor. The Chancellor of the School shall be responsible for implementing such additional policies concerning compulsory attendance as shall be adopted by the Board of Trustees, including regulations concerning lawful and unlawful absences, permissible excuses for temporary absences, maintenance of attendance records, and attendance counseling."

SECTION 1.(d) G.S. 116-239.8(b)(5) reads as rewritten:

"(5) School attendance. – Every parent, guardian, or other person in this State having charge or control of a child who is enrolled in the laboratory school and who is less than 16 years and six months of age shall cause such child to attend school continuously for a period equal to the time that the laboratory school shall be in ~~session.~~ session, unless the child graduates from high school. No person shall encourage, entice, or counsel any child to be unlawfully absent from the laboratory school. Any person who aids or abets a student's unlawful absence from the laboratory school shall, upon conviction, be guilty of a Class 1 misdemeanor. The principal shall be responsible for implementing such additional policies concerning compulsory attendance as shall be adopted by the chancellor, including regulations concerning lawful and unlawful absences, permissible excuses for temporary absences, maintenance of attendance records, and attendance counseling."

SECTION 1.(e) G.S. 7B-1501(27) reads as rewritten:

"(27) Undisciplined juvenile. –

a. A juvenile who, while less than 16 years and six months of age but at least 10 years of age, is unlawfully absent from school; or is regularly disobedient to and beyond the disciplinary control of the juvenile's parent, guardian, or custodian; or is regularly found in places where it is unlawful for a juvenile to be; or has run away from home for a period of more than 24 hours; or

b. A juvenile who is between (i) 16 or 17 years and six months of age and (ii) 18 years of age and who is regularly disobedient to and beyond the disciplinary control of the juvenile's parent, guardian, or custodian; or is regularly found in places where it is unlawful for a juvenile to be; or has run away from home for a period of more than 24 hours."

SECTION 1.(f) G.S. 143B-805(20) reads as rewritten:

"(20) Undisciplined juvenile. –

a. A juvenile who, while less than 16 years and six months of age but at least 10 years of age, is unlawfully absent from school; or is regularly disobedient to and beyond the disciplinary control of the juvenile's parent, guardian, or custodian; or is regularly found in places where it is unlawful for a juvenile to be; or has run away from home for a period of more than 24 hours; or

b. A juvenile who is between (i) 16 or 17 years and six months of age and (ii) 18 years of age and who is regularly disobedient to and beyond the disciplinary control of the juvenile's parent, guardian, or custodian; or is regularly found in places where it is unlawful for a juvenile to be; or has run away from home for a period of more than 24 hours."

1 **SECTION 2.(a)** G.S. 115C-378(a), as amended by Section 1(a) of this act, reads as
2 rewritten:

3 "(a) Every parent, guardian, or custodian in this State having charge or control of a child
4 between the ages of (i) seven years and (ii) ~~16-17 years and six months~~ shall cause the child to
5 attend school continuously for a period equal to the time which the public school to which the
6 child is assigned shall be in session, unless the child graduates from high school. Every parent,
7 guardian, or custodian in this State having charge or control of a child under age seven who is
8 enrolled in a public school in grades kindergarten through two shall also cause the child to attend
9 school continuously for a period equal to the time which the public school to which the child is
10 assigned shall be in session unless the child has withdrawn from school."

11 **SECTION 2.(b)** G.S. 115C-238.66(3), as amended by Section 1(b) of this act, reads
12 as rewritten:

13 "(3) School attendance. – Every parent, guardian, or other person in this State
14 having charge or control of a child who is enrolled in the regional school and
15 who is less than ~~16-17 years and six months~~ of age shall cause such child to
16 attend school continuously for a period equal to the time that the regional
17 school shall be in session, unless the child graduates from high school. No
18 person shall encourage, entice, or counsel any child to be unlawfully absent
19 from the regional school. Any person who aids or abets a student's unlawful
20 absence from the regional school shall, upon conviction, be guilty of a Class
21 1 misdemeanor. The principal shall be responsible for implementing such
22 additional policies concerning compulsory attendance as shall be adopted by
23 the board of directors, including regulations concerning lawful and unlawful
24 absences, permissible excuses for temporary absences, maintenance of
25 attendance records, and attendance counseling."

26 **SECTION 2.(c)** G.S. 116-235(b)(2), as amended by Section 1(c) of this act, reads as
27 rewritten:

28 "(2) School Attendance. – Every parent, guardian, or other person in this State
29 having charge or control of a child who is enrolled in the School and who is
30 less than ~~16-17 years and six months~~ of age shall cause such child to attend
31 school continuously for a period equal to the time which the School shall be
32 in session, unless the child graduates from high school. No person shall
33 encourage, entice, or counsel any child to be unlawfully absent from the
34 School. Any person who aids or abets a student's unlawful absence from the
35 School shall, upon conviction, be guilty of a Class 1 misdemeanor. The
36 Chancellor of the School shall be responsible for implementing such
37 additional policies concerning compulsory attendance as shall be adopted by
38 the Board of Trustees, including regulations concerning lawful and unlawful
39 absences, permissible excuses for temporary absences, maintenance of
40 attendance records, and attendance counseling."

41 **SECTION 2.(d)** G.S. 116-239.8(b)(5), as amended by Section 1(d) of this act, reads
42 as rewritten:

43 "(5) School attendance. – Every parent, guardian, or other person in this State
44 having charge or control of a child who is enrolled in the laboratory school
45 and who is less than ~~16-17 years and six months~~ of age shall cause such child
46 to attend school continuously for a period equal to the time that the laboratory
47 school shall be in session, unless the child graduates from high school. No
48 person shall encourage, entice, or counsel any child to be unlawfully absent
49 from the laboratory school. Any person who aids or abets a student's unlawful
50 absence from the laboratory school shall, upon conviction, be guilty of a Class
51 1 misdemeanor. The principal shall be responsible for implementing such

1 additional policies concerning compulsory attendance as shall be adopted by
2 the chancellor, including regulations concerning lawful and unlawful
3 absences, permissible excuses for temporary absences, maintenance of
4 attendance records, and attendance counseling."

5 **SECTION 2.(e)** G.S. 7B-1501(27), as amended by Section 1(e) of this act, reads as

6 rewritten:

7 "(27) Undisciplined juvenile. –

8 a. A juvenile who, while less than ~~16-17~~ years ~~and six months~~ of age but
9 at least 10 years of age, is unlawfully absent from school; or is
10 regularly disobedient to and beyond the disciplinary control of the
11 juvenile's parent, guardian, or custodian; or is regularly found in places
12 where it is unlawful for a juvenile to be; or has run away from home
13 for a period of more than 24 hours; or

14 b. A juvenile who is between (i) ~~16-17~~ years ~~and six months~~ of age and
15 (ii) 18 years of age and who is regularly disobedient to and beyond the
16 disciplinary control of the juvenile's parent, guardian, or custodian; or
17 is regularly found in places where it is unlawful for a juvenile to be; or
18 has run away from home for a period of more than 24 hours."

19 **SECTION 2.(f)** G.S. 143B-805(20), as amended by Section 1(f) of this act, reads as

20 rewritten:

21 "(20) Undisciplined juvenile. –

22 a. A juvenile who, while less than ~~16-17~~ years ~~and six months~~ of age but
23 at least 10 years of age, is unlawfully absent from school; or is
24 regularly disobedient to and beyond the disciplinary control of the
25 juvenile's parent, guardian, or custodian; or is regularly found in places
26 where it is unlawful for a juvenile to be; or has run away from home
27 for a period of more than 24 hours; or

28 b. A juvenile who is between (i) ~~16-17~~ years ~~and six months~~ of age and
29 (ii) 18 years of age and who is regularly disobedient to and beyond the
30 disciplinary control of the juvenile's parent, guardian, or custodian; or
31 is regularly found in places where it is unlawful for a juvenile to be; or
32 has run away from home for a period of more than 24 hours."

33
34 **PART III. RAISE DROPOUT AGE TO 17 YEARS AND SIX MONTHS FOR THE**
35 **2026-2027 SCHOOL YEAR**

36 **SECTION 3.(a)** G.S. 115C-378(a), as amended by Section 2(a) of this act, reads as

37 rewritten:

38 "(a) Every parent, guardian, or custodian in this State having charge or control of a child
39 between the ages of (i) seven years and (ii) 17 years and six months shall cause the child to attend
40 school continuously for a period equal to the time which the public school to which the child is
41 assigned shall be in session, unless the child graduates from high school. Every parent, guardian,
42 or custodian in this State having charge or control of a child under age seven who is enrolled in
43 a public school in grades kindergarten through two shall also cause the child to attend school
44 continuously for a period equal to the time which the public school to which the child is assigned
45 shall be in session unless the child has withdrawn from school."

46 **SECTION 3.(b)** G.S. 115C-238.66(3), as amended by Section 2(b) of this act, reads

47 as rewritten:

48 "(3) School attendance. – Every parent, guardian, or other person in this State
49 having charge or control of a child who is enrolled in the regional school and
50 who is less than 17 years and six months of age shall cause such child to attend
51 school continuously for a period equal to the time that the regional school shall

1 be in session, unless the child graduates from high school. No person shall
2 encourage, entice, or counsel any child to be unlawfully absent from the
3 regional school. Any person who aids or abets a student's unlawful absence
4 from the regional school shall, upon conviction, be guilty of a Class 1
5 misdemeanor. The principal shall be responsible for implementing such
6 additional policies concerning compulsory attendance as shall be adopted by
7 the board of directors, including regulations concerning lawful and unlawful
8 absences, permissible excuses for temporary absences, maintenance of
9 attendance records, and attendance counseling."

10 **SECTION 3.(c)** G.S. 116-235(b)(2), as amended by Section 2(c) of this act, reads as

11 rewritten:

12 "(2) School Attendance. – Every parent, guardian, or other person in this State
13 having charge or control of a child who is enrolled in the School and who is
14 less than 17 years and six months of age shall cause such child to attend school
15 continuously for a period equal to the time which the School shall be in
16 session, unless the child graduates from high school. No person shall
17 encourage, entice, or counsel any child to be unlawfully absent from the
18 School. Any person who aids or abets a student's unlawful absence from the
19 School shall, upon conviction, be guilty of a Class 1 misdemeanor. The
20 Chancellor of the School shall be responsible for implementing such
21 additional policies concerning compulsory attendance as shall be adopted by
22 the Board of Trustees, including regulations concerning lawful and unlawful
23 absences, permissible excuses for temporary absences, maintenance of
24 attendance records, and attendance counseling."

25 **SECTION 3.(d)** G.S. 116-239.8(b)(5), as amended by Section 2(d) of this act, reads

26 as rewritten:

27 "(5) School attendance. – Every parent, guardian, or other person in this State
28 having charge or control of a child who is enrolled in the laboratory school
29 and who is less than 17 years and six months of age shall cause such child to
30 attend school continuously for a period equal to the time that the laboratory
31 school shall be in session, unless the child graduates from high school. No
32 person shall encourage, entice, or counsel any child to be unlawfully absent
33 from the laboratory school. Any person who aids or abets a student's unlawful
34 absence from the laboratory school shall, upon conviction, be guilty of a Class
35 1 misdemeanor. The principal shall be responsible for implementing such
36 additional policies concerning compulsory attendance as shall be adopted by
37 the chancellor, including regulations concerning lawful and unlawful
38 absences, permissible excuses for temporary absences, maintenance of
39 attendance records, and attendance counseling."

40 **SECTION 3.(e)** G.S. 7B-1501(27), as amended by Section 2(e) of this act, reads as

41 rewritten:

42 "(27) Undisciplined juvenile. –
43 a. A juvenile who, while less than 17 years and six months of age but at
44 least 10 years of age, is unlawfully absent from school; or is regularly
45 disobedient to and beyond the disciplinary control of the juvenile's
46 parent, guardian, or custodian; or is regularly found in places where it
47 is unlawful for a juvenile to be; or has run away from home for a period
48 of more than 24 hours; or
49 b. A juvenile who is between (i) 17 years and six months of age and (ii)
50 18 years of age and who is regularly disobedient to and beyond the
51 disciplinary control of the juvenile's parent, guardian, or custodian; or

1 is regularly found in places where it is unlawful for a juvenile to be; or
2 has run away from home for a period of more than 24 hours."

3 **SECTION 3.(f)** G.S. 143B-805(20), as amended by Section 2(f) of this act, reads as
4 rewritten:

5 "(20) Undisciplined juvenile. –

6 a. A juvenile who, while less than 17 years and six months of age but at
7 least 10 years of age, is unlawfully absent from school; or is regularly
8 disobedient to and beyond the disciplinary control of the juvenile's
9 parent, guardian, or custodian; or is regularly found in places where it
10 is unlawful for a juvenile to be; or has run away from home for a period
11 of more than 24 hours; or

12 b. A juvenile who is between (i) 17 years and six months of age and (ii)
13 18 years of age and who is regularly disobedient to and beyond the
14 disciplinary control of the juvenile's parent, guardian, or custodian; or
15 is regularly found in places where it is unlawful for a juvenile to be; or
16 has run away from home for a period of more than 24 hours."
17

18 **PART IV. RAISE DROPOUT AGE TO 18 YEARS FOR THE 2027-2028 SCHOOL YEAR**

19 **SECTION 4.(a)** G.S. 115C-378(a), as amended by Section 3(a) of this act, reads as
20 rewritten:

21 "(a) Every parent, guardian, or custodian in this State having charge or control of a child
22 between the ages of (i) seven years and (ii) ~~17-18 years and six months~~ shall cause the child to
23 attend school continuously for a period equal to the time which the public school to which the
24 child is assigned shall be in session, unless the child graduates from high school. Every parent,
25 guardian, or custodian in this State having charge or control of a child under age seven who is
26 enrolled in a public school in grades kindergarten through two shall also cause the child to attend
27 school continuously for a period equal to the time which the public school to which the child is
28 assigned shall be in session unless the child has withdrawn from school."

29 **SECTION 4.(b)** G.S. 115C-238.66(3), as amended by Section 3(b) of this act, reads
30 as rewritten:

31 "(3) School attendance. – Every parent, guardian, or other person in this State
32 having charge or control of a child who is enrolled in the regional school and
33 who is less than ~~17-18 years and six months~~ of age shall cause such child to
34 attend school continuously for a period equal to the time that the regional
35 school shall be in session, unless the child graduates from high school. No
36 person shall encourage, entice, or counsel any child to be unlawfully absent
37 from the regional school. Any person who aids or abets a student's unlawful
38 absence from the regional school shall, upon conviction, be guilty of a Class
39 1 misdemeanor. The principal shall be responsible for implementing such
40 additional policies concerning compulsory attendance as shall be adopted by
41 the board of directors, including regulations concerning lawful and unlawful
42 absences, permissible excuses for temporary absences, maintenance of
43 attendance records, and attendance counseling."

44 **SECTION 4.(c)** G.S. 116-235(b)(2), as amended by Section 3(c) of this act, reads as
45 rewritten:

46 "(2) School Attendance. – Every parent, guardian, or other person in this State
47 having charge or control of a child who is enrolled in the School and who is
48 less than ~~17-18 years and six months~~ of age shall cause such child to attend
49 school continuously for a period equal to the time which the School shall be
50 in session, unless the child graduates from high school. No person shall
51 encourage, entice, or counsel any child to be unlawfully absent from the

1 School. Any person who aids or abets a student's unlawful absence from the
2 School shall, upon conviction, be guilty of a Class 1 misdemeanor. The
3 Chancellor of the School shall be responsible for implementing such
4 additional policies concerning compulsory attendance as shall be adopted by
5 the Board of Trustees, including regulations concerning lawful and unlawful
6 absences, permissible excuses for temporary absences, maintenance of
7 attendance records, and attendance counseling."

8 **SECTION 4.(d)** G.S. 116-239.8(b)(5), as amended by Section 3(d) of this act, reads
9 as rewritten:

10 "(5) School attendance. – Every parent, guardian, or other person in this State
11 having charge or control of a child who is enrolled in the laboratory school
12 and who is less than ~~17-18~~ years ~~and six months~~ of age shall cause such child
13 to attend school continuously for a period equal to the time that the laboratory
14 school shall be in session, unless the child graduates from high school. No
15 person shall encourage, entice, or counsel any child to be unlawfully absent
16 from the laboratory school. Any person who aids or abets a student's unlawful
17 absence from the laboratory school shall, upon conviction, be guilty of a Class
18 1 misdemeanor. The principal shall be responsible for implementing such
19 additional policies concerning compulsory attendance as shall be adopted by
20 the chancellor, including regulations concerning lawful and unlawful
21 absences, permissible excuses for temporary absences, maintenance of
22 attendance records, and attendance counseling."

23 **SECTION 4.(e)** G.S. 7B-1501(27), as amended by Section 3(e) of this act, reads as
24 rewritten:

25 "(27) Undisciplined juvenile. – A
26 a. ~~A juvenile who, while less than 17-18 years and six months of age but~~
27 ~~at least 10 years of age, is unlawfully absent from school; or is~~
28 ~~regularly disobedient to and beyond the disciplinary control of the~~
29 ~~juvenile's parent, guardian, or custodian; or is regularly found in places~~
30 ~~where it is unlawful for a juvenile to be; or has run away from home~~
31 ~~for a period of more than 24 hours; or hours.~~
32 b. ~~A juvenile who is between (i) 17 years and six months of age and (ii)~~
33 ~~18 years of age and who is regularly disobedient to and beyond the~~
34 ~~disciplinary control of the juvenile's parent, guardian, or custodian; or~~
35 ~~is regularly found in places where it is unlawful for a juvenile to be; or~~
36 ~~has run away from home for a period of more than 24 hours."~~

37 **SECTION 4.(f)** G.S. 143B-805(20), as amended by Section 3(f) of this act, reads as
38 rewritten:

39 "(20) Undisciplined juvenile. – A
40 a. ~~A juvenile who, while less than 17-18 years and six months of age but~~
41 ~~at least 10 years of age, is unlawfully absent from school; or is~~
42 ~~regularly disobedient to and beyond the disciplinary control of the~~
43 ~~juvenile's parent, guardian, or custodian; or is regularly found in places~~
44 ~~where it is unlawful for a juvenile to be; or has run away from home~~
45 ~~for a period of more than 24 hours; or hours.~~
46 b. ~~A juvenile who is between (i) 17 years and six months of age and (ii)~~
47 ~~18 years of age and who is regularly disobedient to and beyond the~~
48 ~~disciplinary control of the juvenile's parent, guardian, or custodian; or~~
49 ~~is regularly found in places where it is unlawful for a juvenile to be; or~~
50 ~~has run away from home for a period of more than 24 hours."~~

51 **SECTION 4.(g)** Section 8.21 of S.L. 2016-94 is repealed.

1
2 **PART V. COMPLETION RATE INDICATOR FOR SCHOOL PERFORMANCE**
3 **GRADES**

4 **SECTION 5.(a)** G.S. 115C-83.15(b)(2) is amended by adding a new sub-subdivision
5 to read:

6 "i. One half of a point for each percent of students who meet one of the
7 following criteria within five years of entering high school:

8 1. Graduate from high school.

9 2. Earn an adult high school diploma.

10 3. Earn an adult high school equivalency diploma."

11 **SECTION 5.(b)** G.S. 115C-83.16(a)(2)b. is amended by adding a new
12 sub-sub-subdivision to read:

13 "5. The percentage of students who meet one of the following
14 criteria within five years of entering high school:

15 I. Graduate from high school.

16 II. Earn an adult high school diploma.

17 III. Earn an adult high school equivalency diploma."

18 **SECTION 5.(c)** G.S. 115C-12 is amended by adding a new subdivision to read:

19 "(27b) Duty to Provide Dropout Data to the State Board of Community Colleges. –
20 For the purposes of calculating the high school completion rate required by
21 G.S. 115C-83.15(b)(2)i., by June 15 of each year, the State Board of
22 Education shall provide the State Board of Community Colleges with
23 identifying information for any students who meet the following criteria:

24 a. The student unenrolled from a public school unit before graduation or
25 completion of a program of study without transferring to another
26 secondary school.

27 b. The student entered high school no more than five years earlier."

28 **SECTION 5.(d)** G.S. 115D-5(a2) reads as rewritten:

29 "(a2) The State Board of Community Colleges shall comply with the following provisions
30 of to ensure an efficient exchange of information between education agencies in the State:

31 (1) The provisions of G.S. 116-11(10a) to plan and implement an exchange of
32 information between the public schools and the institutions of higher
33 education in the State.

34 (2) By July 15 of each year, for students included in the data provided pursuant
35 to G.S. 115C-12(27b), the State Board of Community Colleges shall provide
36 the State Board of Education with the dates that students earned an adult high
37 school equivalency diploma."

38
39 **PART VI. EFFECTIVE DATE**

40 **SECTION 6.** This act is effective as follows:

41 (1) Section 1 of this act becomes effective July 1, 2023, and applies beginning
42 with the 2024-2025 school year.

43 (2) Section 2 of this act becomes effective July 1, 2024, and applies beginning
44 with the 2025-2026 school year.

45 (3) Section 3 of this act becomes effective July 1, 2025, and applies beginning
46 with the 2026-2027 school year.

47 (4) Section 4 of this act becomes effective July 1, 2026, and applies beginning
48 with the 2027-2028 school year.

49 (5) Section 5 of this act is effective when it becomes law and applies to school
50 performance scores and grades issued based on data from the 2023-2024
51 school year.

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(6) The remainder of this act is effective when it becomes law.