

GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA
SESSION 2025

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HOUSE PRINCIPAL CLERK

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HOUSE BILL DRH40484-MT-50

Short Title: Occup. & Phys. Therapist Salaries/Employment. (Public)

Sponsors: Representative Crawford.

Referred to:

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT TO REQUIRE LOCAL BOARDS OF EDUCATION TO REVISE AND PUBLICIZE SALARY SCHEDULES FOR OCCUPATIONAL THERAPISTS AND PHYSICAL THERAPISTS, TO PROVIDE SALARY SUPPLEMENTS FOR OCCUPATIONAL THERAPISTS AND PHYSICAL THERAPISTS, AND TO REQUIRE LOCAL BOARDS OF EDUCATION TO SUBMIT A WORKFORCE REPORT FOR OCCUPATIONAL THERAPISTS AND PHYSICAL THERAPISTS.

The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

PART I. REVISE AND PUBLICIZE MINIMUM SALARY SCHEDULE FOR OCCUPATIONAL THERAPISTS AND PHYSICAL THERAPISTS

SECTION 1.(a) G.S. 115C-316(b1) reads as rewritten:

"(b1) Every local board of education shall adopt a minimum salary schedule for occupational therapists and physical therapists employed in full-time, permanent positions. The minimum salary schedule shall apply to positions paid from State, local, or federal funds. ~~In accordance with the noncertified salary grades and ranges adopted by the State Board of Education, the~~ The minimum salary schedule shall differentiate salaries based on years of experience, but experience-based experience as a licensed occupational therapist or physical therapist and incorporate the full range of all salary grades adopted by the State Board of Education for occupational therapists and physical therapists. Experience-based intervals shall be (i) divided evenly, (ii) no greater than five years-years apart, and (iii) limited to a maximum of 30 years of experience. Local boards of education may compensate occupational therapists and physical therapists above the minimum salary schedule provided all State-funded salaries are within the noncertified salary grades and ranges adopted by the State Board of Education. No later than October 15 of each year, every local board of education shall report the salary schedule adopted for occupational therapists and physical therapists pursuant to this subsection to the Department of Public Instruction. The Department shall collect the schedules and report them to the Joint Legislative Education Oversight Committee by December 15."

SECTION 1.(b) For the 2025-2026 fiscal year, local boards of education shall ensure that occupational therapists and physical therapists compensated in accordance with a salary schedule adopted pursuant to G.S. 115C-316(b1) receive an amount equal to the greater of the following:

- (1) The applicable amount under the salary schedule for the applicable year.
- (2) The salary the therapist received in the 2024-2025 fiscal year.



1 **PART II. SALARY SUPPLEMENTS FOR OCCUPATIONAL THERAPISTS AND**
2 **PHYSICAL THERAPISTS**

3 **SECTION 2.(a)** For the 2025-2026 fiscal year, in addition to any salary received
4 from State funds pursuant to the applicable salary schedule in effect, for occupational therapists
5 and physical therapists employed in full-time permanent positions in public schools, the
6 following shall apply:

- 7 (1) These employees shall receive the following salary supplements each month:
8 a. Ten percent (10%) of the salary a teacher would receive on the "A"
9 teacher's salary schedule if the teacher had five years of experience
10 more than the occupational therapist or physical therapist.
11 b. Three hundred fifty dollars (\$350.00).
12 (2) These employees are eligible to receive salary supplements equivalent to those
13 of teachers and instructional support personnel for academic preparation at the
14 six-year degree level or the doctoral degree level.

15 **SECTION 2.(b)** Funds provided for salary supplements pursuant to this section shall
16 be used to supplement and not to supplant State or non-State funds already provided for salaries
17 for occupational therapists and physical therapists.

18 **SECTION 2.(c)** The provisions of this section shall become effective July 1, 2025,
19 only if funds are appropriated by the General Assembly to the Department of Public Instruction
20 in the 2025-2026 fiscal year to provide salary supplements for occupational therapists and
21 physical therapists in accordance with this section.

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23 **PART III. WORKFORCE REPORT FOR OCCUPATIONAL THERAPISTS AND**
24 **PHYSICAL THERAPISTS**

25 **SECTION 3.** Article 21 of Chapter 115C of the General Statutes is amended by
26 adding the following new section to read:

27 "**§ 115C-316.3. Occupational therapist and physical therapist workforce report.**

28 (a) Definition. – For purposes of this section, the term "therapist" refers to a person
29 working in a local school administrative unit who is an occupational therapist or a physical
30 therapist.

31 (b) Local Report. – No later than February 15 of each year, every local board of education
32 shall report the following information to the Department of Public Instruction regarding
33 therapists in the unit, disaggregated by type of therapist:

- 34 (1) Number of employees of the local school administrative unit.
35 (2) Number of employees of a third-party contractor.
36 (3) Number of vacant positions.

37 (c) State Report. – No later than April 15 of each year, the Department of Public
38 Instruction shall report the information received pursuant to subsection (b) of this section to the
39 Joint Legislative Education Oversight Committee."

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41 **PART IV. EFFECTIVE DATE**

42 **SECTION 4.** Except as otherwise provided, this act is effective when it becomes
43 law.