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GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA
SESSION 2025

S **D**

SENATE BILL DRS15389-NHa-212

Short Title:	Safe Schools and Educational Access Act.	(Public)
Sponsors:	Senators Theodros and Murdock (Primary Sponsors).	
Referred to:		

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT TO PROTECT ACCESS TO EDUCATION FOR ALL STUDENTS REGARDLESS OF NATIONAL ORIGIN OR IMMIGRATION STATUS, TO ESTABLISH EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS AS PROTECTED LOCATIONS FOR IMMIGRATION ENFORCEMENT, AND TO INCREASE FUNDING FOR STUDENTS WITH LIMITED ENGLISH PROFICIENCY.

Whereas, the United States Supreme Court ruled in Plyler v. Doe (1982) that states may not deny access to public education based on immigration status; and

Whereas, the North Carolina Constitution guarantees access to a sound basic education for all students; and

Whereas, fear of immigration enforcement in or near schools can deter students from attending school and undermine the educational mission of public institutions; and

Whereas, educational institutions function best when students and families trust that schools are safe environments focused on learning; and

Whereas, North Carolina's population of multilingual learners continues to grow, requiring additional support for language instruction and academic success; Now, therefore,

The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

SECTION 1. Part 1 of Article 26 of Chapter 115C of the General Statutes is amended by adding a new section to read:

"**§ 115C-378.5. Protections for individuals based on immigration status.**

(a) For purposes of this section, "immigration authorities" means persons representing or working for U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) or U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP).

(b) Public school units shall not deny a student admission, enrollment, or participation in an educational program based on the student's national origin or immigration status. Public school units shall not require documentation of immigration status as a condition of admission or enrollment.

(c) Public school units shall not allow immigration authorities to perform immigration enforcement actions on school grounds unless required by judicial warrant, court order, or State or federal law.

(d) Public school units shall not disclose personally identifiable student information to immigration authorities unless required by judicial warrant, court order, or State or federal law.

(e) Public school units may establish protocols for responding to requests from immigration authorities while ensuring compliance with State and federal laws."

SECTION 2. Article 2 of Chapter 115D of the General Statutes is amended by adding a new section to read:

"**§ 115D-20.3. Protections for individuals based on immigration status.**

Community colleges shall comply with the protections for individuals based on immigration status under G.S. 116-40.15."

SECTION 3. Part 3 of Article 1 of Chapter 116 of the General Statutes is amended by adding a new section to read:

"**§ 116-40.15. Protections for individuals based on immigration status.**

(a) For purposes of this section, the following definitions apply:

(1) Immigration authorities. – Persons representing or working for U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) or U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP).

(2) Public institution of higher education. – A community college as defined in G.S. 115D-2(2) or a constituent institution of The University of North Carolina.

(b) A public institution of higher education shall not deny a student admission, enrollment, or participation in an educational program based on the student's national origin or immigration status. The institution shall not require documentation of immigration status as a condition of admission or enrollment.

(c) A public institution of higher education shall not allow immigration authorities to perform immigration enforcement actions on campus unless required by judicial warrant, court order, or State or federal law.

(d) A public institution of higher education shall not disclose personally identifiable student information to immigration authorities unless required by judicial warrant, court order, or State or federal law.

(e) A public institution of higher education may establish protocols for responding to requests from immigration authorities while ensuring compliance with State and federal laws."

SECTION 4.(a) The title of Article 32F of Chapter 115C of the General Statutes reads as rewritten:

"Supplemental School ~~Funding.~~Funding and Other Allotments."

SECTION 4.(b) Article 32F of Chapter 115C of the General Statutes is amended by adding a new section to read:

"**§ 115C-472.30. Limited English proficient allotment.**

To the extent funds are made available for this purpose, the State Board of Education shall allocate funds to local school administrative units, charter schools, regional schools, and laboratory schools operated under Article 29A of Chapter 116 of the General Statutes to provide services to students with limited English proficiency. The State Board shall allocate these funds under a formula that takes into account the average number of students in the units, charter schools, regional schools, or laboratory schools over the past three years who have limited English proficiency. Local school administrative units shall use funds allocated to them to pay for classroom teachers, teacher assistants, tutors, textbooks, classroom materials/instructional supplies/equipment, transportation costs, family engagement and translation services, bilingual services for limited English proficient students, and professional development of teachers for students with limited English proficiency. A county in which a local school administrative unit receives funds under this section shall use the funds to supplement local current expense funds and shall not supplant local current expense funds."

SECTION 4.(c) There is appropriated from the General Fund to the Department of Public Instruction the sum of one hundred eighty-one million dollars ($181,000,000) in recurring funds beginning with the 2026-2027 fiscal year to provide services and instructional supports for students with limited English proficiency.

SECTION 4.(d) Section 7.15 of S.L. 2003-284 is repealed.

SECTION 5. Section 4 of this act becomes effective July 1, 2026. The remainder of this act is effective when it becomes law.