



Public Schools of North Carolina
State Board of Education
Department of Public Instruction

Report to the North Carolina General Assembly

5th Grade Career Awareness Program
§115C-157

Date Due: November 15, 2020
Report # ----
DPI Chronological Schedule, 2020-2021

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OVERVIEW

The report was prepared in accordance with requirements of G.S. 115C-157.

§ 115C-157. Responsibility of local boards of education:

- (a) Each local school administrative unit shall provide free appropriate career and technical education instruction, activities, and services in accordance with the provisions of this Part for all youth, with priority given to youth in grades eight through 12, who elect the instruction and shall have responsibility for administering the instruction, activities, and services in accordance with federal and State law and State Board of Education policies.
- (b) Each local school administrative unit shall offer as part of its career and technical education program at least two work-based learning opportunities that are related to career and technical education instruction. A work-based learning opportunity shall consist of on-the-job training through an internship, cooperative education, or an apprenticeship program meeting the requirements of Chapter 115D of the General Statutes.
- (c) Each local board of education is encouraged to implement a career awareness program for students in grade five to educate students on the career and technical education programs offered in the local school administrative unit. A local board of education that adopts a career awareness program for fifth grade students shall report on program activities and student outcomes from the prior school year to the State Board of Education by October 1 of each year. By November 15 of each year, the State Board shall submit a consolidated report to the Joint Legislative Education Oversight Committee on program outcomes and any legislative recommendations based on local board of education reports. (1977, c. 490, s. 2; 1981, c. 423, s. 1; 1993, c. 180, s. 3; 2004-124, s. 7.15(c); 2017-57, s. 7.23H(e).)

Part I: Activities

The CTE Division developed and released a Survey Tool to all Public School Units (PSUs). The tool collected activities completed during the 2019-20 school year and included the following items: "How did your PSU participate in the following 5th Grade Career Awareness Activities:"

1. Middle School Tours
2. High School Tours
3. Field Trip / Business Tours
4. Job Shadows
5. Guest Speakers
6. Career Events / Other
7. Data used to support programs

Survey Response: Participation in the program is not required. Though, we were pleased in the third year of program to have a 97% response rate with 110 PSUs providing feedback, compared to 92 PSUs in the 2018-2019 reporting period and 53 during the first year of reporting (2017-2018). Seventy percent of the responding school districts across the state

reported the adoption of a career awareness program consisting of the aforementioned Career Awareness activities.

Part II: Student Outcomes

NCDPI CTE is pleased that the results of the 5th Grade Career Awareness survey indicated approximately 50,841 fifth grade students were exposed to career awareness related to the CTE programs offered in their respective PSUs for the 2019-20 school year.

The reported data from all the PSUs that implemented a Career Awareness Program show the following:

Career Awareness Event Type	Percentage of PSUs Participating	Number of 5th Grade Students
Middle School Tours	34%	8,769
High School Tours	12%	3,552
Field Trips/Business Tours	22%	5,345
Job Shadows	3%	486
Guest Speakers	31%	11,584
Other Career Events	40%	21,105
Data Used to Support Programs	82%	Not Applicable

NCDPI CTE believes these numbers were severely impacted during the 2020 spring semester due to the Covid-19 pandemic. Many districts reported that plans to engage students in activities such as middle and high school visits, field trips and business tours, guest speakers, and other events were cancelled or postponed until students were permitted to safely reassemble.

NCDPI CTE is also working to increase tools and resources for 5th grade educators in North Carolina.

82% of the PSUs collected supporting data on the programs. Many of these school districts engaged students in completing Career Inventories. These PSUs also provided Pre/Post Surveys for students, parents, school counselors, teachers, and business partners to determine the impact of the career awareness activities.

A session was conducted again at the annual CTE Summer Conference sharing best practices and data collected on Career Awareness Programs. NCDPI CTE staff also presented to CTE staff across the state that a new survey would be used for the 2020-2021 school year to increase user-friendliness, decrease time spent taking the survey, and to reduce opportunities for errors in collecting data. NCDPI CTE staff have worked to create a new survey for PSUs based on feedback to NCDPI CTE consultants and staff and in previous CTE Summer Conferences. The new survey was vetted by a

group of knowledgeable CTE DPI staff, staff at the PSU level, survey participants, and the CTE Advisory Board.

NCDPI CTE also works with the Education and Workforce Innovation Commission on two grants: The Education and Workforce Innovation Fund and the 6th and 7th Grade Expansion Grant. The 6th and 7th Grade Expansion Grant positively impacts 5th grade career awareness by nature, as it employs Career Development Coordinators in 28 school districts who are supporting activities that often engage fifth graders as well.

Part III: Legislative Recommendations

Due to the emphasis being placed on Work Based Learning at the state and federal levels, we anticipate this program will continue to grow and expand across the state. The implementation of The Strengthening Career and Technical Education for the 21st Century Act (Perkins V) beginning with the 2020-21 school year will support the adoption and implementation of career awareness programs in Grade 5. **The recommendation is to continue with the current legislation.**