



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

Report to the Joint Legislative Education Oversight Committee

**Plan to Track Dropouts/Reduce Rates
Senate Bill 1275, Section 1(a)**

**Strengthen Enrollment Opportunities with
Community Colleges
Senate Bill 1275, Section 2(b)**

Date Due: December 15, 2002

Report Numbers 17 and 18 in October 2002-December 2003
DPI Chronological Schedule

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Executive Summary

Senate Bill 1275, Dropout Reduction/LEA Accountability, was ratified on September 23, 2002 and requires the State Board of Education to study and/or report on five components of the law. Two (2) of these sections require reports on December 15, 2002, and the information is included in this report. The three sections addressed are

1. (a). the State Board's statewide plan to improve the tracking of dropout data so that accurate and useful comparisons can be made over time; and
2. (b). identification of technical high schools and career centers currently in operation and recommendations to strengthen concurrent enrollment opportunities between technical high schools and career centers and community colleges. This component must be done in collaboration with the State Board of Community Colleges.

Section 2(c) directs the State Board of Education to study the relationship between academic rigor and reducing the school dropout rate. That report will be submitted to the Joint Legislative Education Oversight Committee on January 15, 2003. The remaining section directs the State Board to adopt a policy to require kindergarten through eighth grade teachers to take three renewal credits in reading methods courses during each five-year license renewal cycle. The report will be submitted to the Joint Legislative Education Oversight Committee in the spring of 2003 with a specified beginning date for the requirement.

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Senate Bill 1275
Section 1. (a).: Reducing School Dropout Rates

Section 1. (a): Reducing School Dropout Rates

Subsection (27a) of Section 1. (a). states that “The State Board of Education shall develop a statewide plan to improve the State’s tracking of dropout data so that accurate and useful comparisons can be made over time. The plan shall include, at a minimum, how dropouts are counted and the methodology for calculating the dropout rate, the ability to track students’ movements among schools and districts, and the ability to provide information on who drops out and why.”

A Statewide Plan to Improve Tracking of Dropout Data

Goals	Strategies	Timeline
1. Improve the tracking of dropout data statewide by providing a student information management system that is interconnected among all schools in the state.	Fully implement the North Carolina Window of Information for Student Education (NCWISE) as a replacement for the current SIMS. NCWISE will assign a unique student identification number which can be tracked wherever the student moves within the state, among schools both within and outside of the LEAs.	Full implementation by 2007-2008
2. Clarify definitions and terms used in dropout data collection and reporting procedures.	<p>Conduct regional meetings to disseminate information.</p> <p>Publish dropout data collection and procedures manual.</p> <p>Disseminate information on specific and commonly used terms and definitions related to dropout data, collection and procedures, to include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annual or Event Rate • Completion/retention Rate • Dropout Status or Census Rate • Duplicated vs. Unduplicated Dropout Count • ABCs Dropout Rate 	2002-2003

Goals	Strategies	Timeline
3. Analyze the pros and cons of adjusting the North Carolina dropout definition and method of counting dropouts to comply with National Center for Education Statistics' Common Core of Data (CCD) guidelines.	<p>Review legislative and policy mandates currently in place and identify those in conflict with CCD guidelines, i.e., counting permanent expulsions as dropouts and more explicit procedures regarding counting community college and adult education enrollees in the dropout count.</p> <p>Conduct regional meetings to discuss proposed changes and elicit input on adjustments to: <i>school year, summer dropouts, students, and five racial categories.</i></p> <p>Collect feedback from LEAs on issues related to compliance, i.e., applying for federal funds under the national dropout prevention program.</p>	2003-2004
4. Improve accuracy, precision and uniformity in documenting reasons for dropping out.	<p>Conduct regional meetings to develop a plan for revising reason codes and assigning reasons.</p> <p>Revamp dropout reason codes to better capture the conditions and causes leading to students' dropping out of school.</p>	2003-2004
5. Coordinate services to better track movement of migrant and foreign students.	<p>Establish dialogue with migrant education coordinators.</p> <p>Recommend procedures for reporting movement of migrant students.</p> <p>Do not count students who leave the United States as dropouts.</p>	2003-2004

Definitions

In North Carolina, a **dropout** is a student who:

- was enrolled in school at some time during the reporting year;
- was not enrolled on Day 20 of the current year;
- has not graduated from high school or completed a state or district approved educational program; and does not meet any of the following reporting exclusions:
 1. transferred to another public school district, private school, home school or state/district approved educational program,
 2. temporarily absent due to suspension or school approved illness, or
 3. death.

Table 1
Differences in defining components of dropout calculations

Component	North Carolina	Common Core of Data
School year	The period of time beginning with the first day of school to the last day of summer vacation	The 12-month period beginning on October 1 and ending the following September 30
Summer dropouts	Counted with the reporting (previous) year for the last grade and school attended	Counted with the current school year for the grade and school where they failed to report
Racial/ethnic categories	American Indian, Asian, Black, Hispanic, Multi-racial and White	American Indian/Alaska Native; Asian/Pacific Islander; Black, Not Hispanic; Hispanic; White, Not Hispanic
Dropout rate numerator	Total number of dropouts	Total number of dropouts
Dropout rate denominator	20 th day membership of previous year minus initial enrollees + 20 th day membership of current school year / 2 + total number of dropouts	October 1 membership

Note. The National Center for Education Statistics collects and reports a Common Core of Data that provides a comprehensive national database of all public elementary and secondary schools and education agencies.

Table 2
Methods of Counting High School Dropouts

Rate	Who is counted	How rate is calculated	Comments
Annual event dropout rate	Students in a given grade span who were enrolled in prior year but failed to report for current school year.	The number of dropout events is divided by student membership. North Carolina's annual event dropout rate was 5.71% for grades 9-12 in 2000-2001.	Counts each event; if same student drops out more than once in multiple years, count is duplicated. Difficulty of tracking student whereabouts affects counts. Results depend on grade span.
School Completion Rate	Students who reach a particular age and have received a high school credential.	Divide the number of students who earn a diploma or certificate with 9 th grade enrollment four years earlier. North Carolina's retention rate was 57.1% in 2000-2001.	Does not distinguish between diplomas and certificates.
Status or Census Dropout Rate	Students of a particular age who have not received a high school credential and are not enrolled in school.	Divide the number of students in a given age range, for example, 18 to 24 year olds, who do not have a high school credential by total numbers in that age group.	Results depend on what age range is selected. Does not distinguish type of credential earned or where person was schooled. This rate is often quoted by media.
Longitudinal Graduation Rate	Students who graduate in a given year and were enrolled in ninth grade 3 years earlier.	For each cohort, number of high school graduates divided by the number in cohort at beginning of ninth grade.	Difficulty of tracking whereabouts of students who leave affects this count.
ABCs Dropout Rate	Grades 9-12 dropouts minus expulsions, long-term suspensions and incarcerations.	Dropouts divided by membership; uses event rate calculations.	A school-based rate; three years of data are necessary for inclusion in ABCs.

Senate Bill 1275
Section 2. (b).: Technical High Schools and Career Centers

Section 2. (b): Technical High Schools and Career Centers

Section 2. (b). directs the State Board of Education, in conjunction with the State Board of Community Colleges, to identify technical high schools and career centers currently in operation in the State and make recommendations to strengthen concurrent enrollment opportunities with the community colleges.

Existing Sites

Currently, North Carolina local school districts have nine career centers and two career and technology high schools. The Career-Technical Centers are

1. Buncombe Career Education Center, Buncombe County
2. Caldwell Career Center, Caldwell County
3. Forsyth Career Center, Forsyth County
4. Philip J. Weaver Career Center, Guilford County
5. Mooresville NF Woods Tech/Arts, Mooresville City
6. Lincoln School of Technology, Lincoln County
7. Robeson County Career Center, Robeson County
8. Union County Career Center, Union County
9. Wilkes County Career Center, Wilkes County

The two High Schools of Technology are Highland School of Technology, Gaston County and Berry Academy of Technology, Mecklenburg County. Winston-Salem Forsyth Schools are planning a technology high school.

These schools offer an array of career-technical courses, based on employment demand and business industry input. Except for the two high schools of technology, students attend the nine career centers for a portion of the day and a home base school for other subjects required for high school graduation.

Barriers for Concurrent Enrollment

In 2001-2002, 35,352 high school students (duplicated count) were enrolled in Huskins Bill courses and 11, 584 were participating in on-campus concurrent enrollment courses. This represents a 157 percent increase from 1997-1998 to 2001-2002. See attachments for additional information. All community colleges and at least 95 percent of the high schools have articulation agreements. These agreements allow high school students to gain college credit while they are still enrolled in high schools.

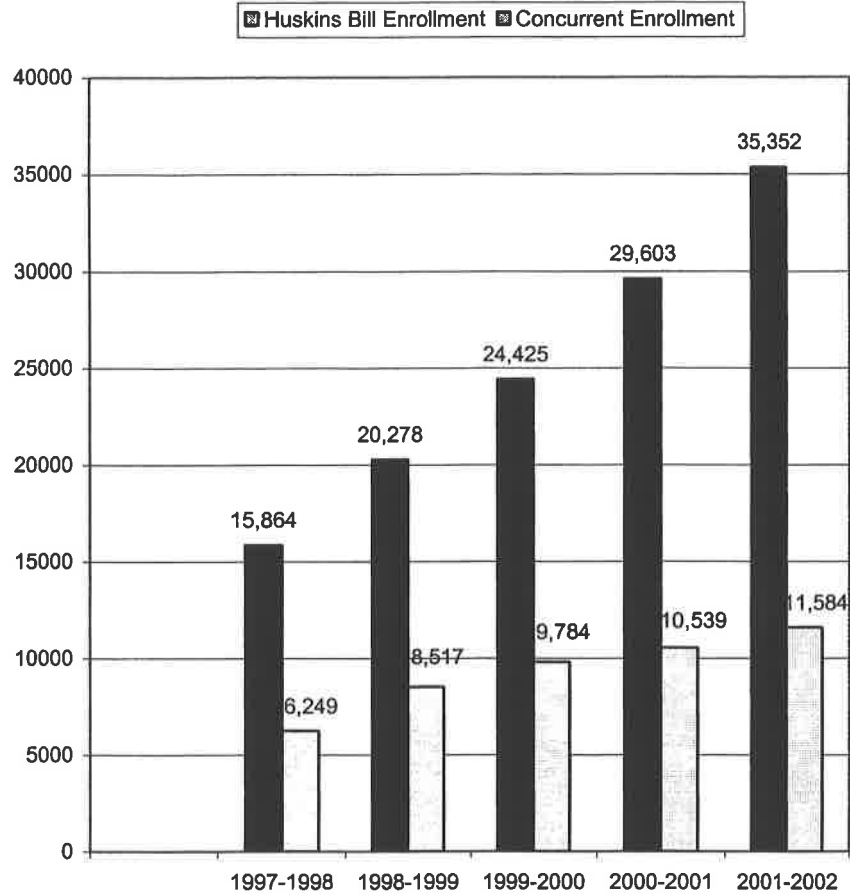
Over the past ten years, at least two studies have been conducted to determine barriers preventing high school students from enrolling in community colleges. The barriers identified continue to be the same: transportation and different schedules existing between the community colleges and high schools. Existing policies are flexible enough to allow high school students to enroll in community college courses when these barriers do not exist.

Recommendations

Except for transportation and differences in schedules, most perceived barriers have been removed. The State Board of Community Colleges and the State Board of Education recommend the following to improve opportunities for students to take community college courses.

1. Publicize more extensively opportunities for high school students to take community college courses.
2. Study the expansion of the statewide articulation agreement.
3. Hold regional meetings with local school administrators, central office personnel, guidance counselors, community college administrators, student services personnel and academic deans to publicize concurrent enrollment opportunities.
4. Strengthen College Tech Prep initiatives such as: coordinated industry advisory committees and transition high school programs to community college programs.
5. Expand the administration of the community college placement test to high school students.
6. Assess the costs and opportunities associated with expanding the number of career-technical high schools having articulated programs with community colleges. Consider the economic development needs of the state and its regions as a part of the study.

Huskins Bill and Concurrent Enrollment Duplicated Headcount



GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA
SESSION 2001

SENATE BILL 1275
RATIFIED BILL

AN ACT TO DIRECT THE STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION TO DEVELOP A PLAN TO IMPROVE THE STATE'S TRACKING OF DROPOUT DATA, TO EXAMINE THE ACCOUNTABILITY FORMULA TO REWARD HIGH SCHOOLS FOR REDUCING THEIR DROPOUT RATE, TO IDENTIFY CURRENT STATE TECHNICAL HIGH SCHOOLS AND CAREER CENTERS AND TO COOPERATE WITH THE STATE BOARD OF COMMUNITY COLLEGES TO ENCOURAGE CONCURRENT ENROLLMENT, TO STUDY THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN ACADEMIC RIGOR AND REDUCING THE DROPOUT RATE, TO ENCOURAGE LOCAL BOARDS OF EDUCATION TO PLACE EXCELLENT, EXPERIENCED TEACHERS IN GRADES SEVEN THROUGH NINE, TO DIRECT THE JOINT LEGISLATIVE EDUCATION OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE TO STUDY WHETHER RAISING THE COMPULSORY ATTENDANCE AGE TO EIGHTEEN WILL REDUCE THE DROPOUT RATE, TO DIRECT THE STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION TO ADOPT A POLICY TO REQUIRE KINDERGARTEN THROUGH EIGHTH GRADE TEACHERS TO TAKE THREE RENEWAL CREDITS IN READING METHODS COURSES, TO DIRECT THE UNC BOARD OF GOVERNORS TO STUDY WHETHER TO REQUIRE AT LEAST TWO READING METHODS COURSES FOR ALL ELEMENTARY EDUCATION MAJORS AND AT LEAST ONE READING METHODS COURSE FOR ALL MIDDLE GRADES EDUCATION MAJORS, TO DIRECT THE JOINT LEGISLATIVE EDUCATION OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE TO STUDY THE FISCAL AND INSTRUCTIONAL ACCOUNTABILITY OF LOCAL SCHOOL ADMINISTRATIVE UNITS, AND TO DIRECT THE STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION TO TAKE OVER ALL POWERS AND DUTIES RELATED TO A SCHOOL WHEN THAT SCHOOL AND ITS LOCAL BOARD OF EDUCATION FAIL TO IMPLEMENT RECOMMENDATIONS OF AN ASSISTANCE TEAM ASSIGNED TO THAT SCHOOL.

The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

SECTION 1.(a) G.S. 115C-12 is amended by adding a new subdivision to read:

"(27a) Reducing School Dropout Rates. - The State Board of Education shall develop a statewide plan to improve the State's tracking of dropout data so that accurate and useful comparisons can be made over time. The plan shall include, at a minimum, how dropouts are counted and the methodology for calculating the dropout rate, the ability to track students' movements among schools and districts, and the ability to provide information on who drops out and why."

SECTION 1.(b) The State Board of Education shall make a report on this plan to the Joint Legislative Education Oversight Committee by December 15, 2002.

SECTION 2.(a) The State Board of Education shall examine the accountability system for high schools created under the School-Based Management and Accountability Program. In particular, the State Board shall review, and make appropriate changes to, the growth composite for high schools so that the composite includes a growth standard that increases the weight currently given for a change in dropout rates, thus rewarding high schools for reducing dropout rates and improving graduation rates.

SECTION 2.(b) The State Board of Education, in cooperation with the State Board of Community Colleges, shall identify technical high schools and career centers currently in operation in the State and make recommendations to strengthen concurrent enrollment opportunities with the community colleges. The State Board shall report its findings to the Joint Legislative Education Oversight Committee by December 15, 2002.

SECTION 2.(c) The State Board of Education (Board) shall study the relationship between academic rigor and reducing the school dropout rate. As part of this study, the Board shall include the following:

- (1) The development of a proposal to accelerate the learning of students able to complete high school in three years;
- (2) The elimination of low-level classes at the middle and high school levels;
- (3) The examination of the appropriateness of electives and exploratory courses at the middle school level;
- (4) A review of current vocational courses to determine the rigor of the content; and
- (5) The development of up-to-date standards for vocational/technical teachers.

The Board shall report its findings to the Joint Legislative Education Oversight Committee by January 15, 2003.

SECTION 3. G.S. 115C-47 is amended by adding a new subdivision to read:

- "(42) Local boards of education are encouraged to adopt policies that require superintendents to assign to the core academic courses, in seventh through ninth grades, teachers who have at least four years' teaching experience and who have received within the last three years an overall rating on a formal evaluation that is at least above standard."

SECTION 4. The Joint Legislative Education Oversight Committee shall study whether raising the compulsory attendance age to 18 will reduce the dropout rate and increase the high school graduation rate. The Committee shall report its findings and recommendations to the 2003 General Assembly.

SECTION 5.(a) The State Board of Education shall adopt a policy that requires kindergarten through eighth grade teachers to take three renewal credits in reading methods courses during each five-year license renewal cycle.

SECTION 5.(b) The University of North Carolina Board of Governors shall study whether to require at least two reading methods courses for all elementary education majors and

at least one reading methods course for all middle grades education majors in teacher education programs. The study also shall examine appropriate reading-teaching pedagogy and reading-teaching methods to be required in these courses in light of G.S. 115C-81.2 and the requirements of the federal Reading First Program under Part B of Title I of P.L. 107-110. The study also shall document the course changes and personnel changes made to implement G.S. 115C-81.2. As part of the study, the Board shall review the reading methods course requirements by majors in the teacher education programs at Appalachian State and East Carolina University. The Board shall report its findings to the Joint Legislative Education Oversight Committee by December 15, 2002.

SECTION 6. The Joint Legislative Education Oversight Committee shall study the fiscal and instructional accountability of local school administrative units. As part of this study, the Committee shall:

- (1) Evaluate the fiscal management and instructional leadership provided by local school administrative units.
- (2) Analyze whether local school administrative units are utilizing their funding and resources in a proper, strategic manner with regard to their at-risk children.
- (3) Evaluate State fiscal controls that are available to ensure that local allocation of funding and resources is cost-effective and is appropriately focused on enhancing educational leadership, teaching the standard course of study, and improving student learning.
- (4) Analyze State and local procedures for identifying superintendents, principals, and teachers who need additional training or assistance in order to implement a strategic and cost-effective instructional program that meets the needs of all children, including at-risk children, so that they obtain a sound basic education by achieving grade level, or above, academic performance.
- (5) Identify current and possible actions that the State may implement in order to correct ineffective instructional leadership or teaching in a school or school system. In particular, the Committee shall ensure that fair and efficient procedures are available to the State for removing ineffective superintendents, principals, or teachers and for replacing them with effective, competent ones.

The Committee shall report its findings and any recommendations to the 2003 General Assembly.

SECTION 7. G.S. 115C-105.38 is amended by adding the following new subsection to read:

"(b1) Report to the State Board of Education if a school and its local board of education are not responsive to the team's recommendations. A copy of that report shall be made available to the local board, and the local board shall have an opportunity to respond. Notwithstanding G.S. 115C-36 and other

