



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

Report to the North Carolina General Assembly

Pilot Program to Raise the High School Dropout Age from Sixteen to Eighteen

SL 2016-94 (HB 1030)

Date Due: January 15, 2018

Report # 36

DPI Chronological Schedule, 2016-2017

STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION

SBE VISION: Every public school student will graduate ready for post-secondary education and work, prepared to be a globally engaged and productive citizen.

SBE MISSION: The State Board of Education will use its constitutional authority to lead and uphold the system of public education in North Carolina.

WILLIAM COBEY

Chair :: Chapel Hill – At-Large

A.L. COLLINS

Vice Chair :: Kernersville – Piedmont Triad Region

DAN FOREST

Lieutenant Governor :: Raleigh – Ex Officio

DALE FOLWELL

State Treasurer :: Raleigh – Ex Officio

MARK JOHNSON

Secretary to the Board :: Raleigh

BECKY TAYLOR

Greenville – Northeast Region

REGINALD KENAN

Rose Hill – Southeast Region

AMY WHITE

Garner – North Central Region

OLIVIA OXENDINE

Lumberton – Sandhill's Region

GREG ALCORN

Salisbury – Southwest Region

NC DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION

TODD CHASTEEN

Blowing Rock – Northwest Region

WAYNE MCDEVITT

Asheville – Western Region

ERIC DAVIS

Charlotte – At-Large

PATRICIA N. WILLOUGHBY

Raleigh – At-Large

Mark Johnson, State Superintendent :: 301 N. Wilmington Street :: Raleigh, North Carolina 27601-2825

In compliance with federal law, the NC Department of Public Instruction administers all state-operated educational programs, employment activities and admissions without discrimination because of race, religion, national or ethnic origin, color, age, military service, disability, or gender, except where exemption is appropriate and allowed by law. **Inquiries or complaints regarding discrimination issues should be directed to:**

Maria Pitre-Martin, Ph.D., Deputy State Superintendent :: 6307 Mail Service Center, Raleigh, NC 27699-6307 Phone: (919) 807-3759 :: Fax: (919) 807-4065

Visit us on the Web :: www.ncpublicschools.org

M0517

Introduction of the Pilot

North Carolina, like much of the nation, faces an ongoing dropout problem. To address this issue, some leaders in education have called for states to raise the upper limit of their age of compulsory school attendance – hereafter referred to as the “dropout age” – to 18. About half the country already follows this policy: twenty-five states and the District of Columbia do not allow students to drop out before turning 18. The remainder of states are split between dropout ages of 16 and 17, with fourteen and eleven states each, respectively. In recent years, several states, such as Kentucky and Maryland, have raised their dropout ages,¹ while other states, like South Carolina, have seen failed attempts.²

In North Carolina, students may legally leave school at the age of 16. The State Board of Education has recently voted to support raising the dropout age, and they’re not alone. The idea is supported by some education heavy-hitters, including the National Education Association (who actually recommends raising the age to 21).³ Advocates of this position say that this gives students a longer time to weigh their options and make an informed decision, and point to the significantly higher lifetime earning potential of those who graduate high school. They also emphasize the critical need for an educated workforce. Research indicates that students who drop out of school are more likely to be unemployed, earn lower salaries when they do work, and are more likely to become involved in the criminal justice system. http://www.nassp.org/Content.aspx?topic=Raising_the_Compulsory_School_Attendance_Age_Proposed These are, of course, very legitimate arguments, and reflect goals shared by all involved. But the question remains – does raising the dropout age, in fact, create better educational outcomes?

Studies conducted by the Brookings Institute, the United States Department of Education (USED), and the John Locke Foundation question the efficacy of raising the dropout age. The John Locke Foundation, a think tank with a conservative point-of-view, comes out strenuously against the idea in their 2007 study,⁴ while Brookings and USED cannot draw a correlative or causal relationship between higher dropout ages and higher graduation rates.⁵ Indeed, the state with the nation’s highest graduation rate in 2015 – Iowa⁶ – only requires students to remain in school until age 16. And Kentucky, who raised their dropout age to 18

¹ Maryland: <http://www.wmdt.com/top-stories/maryland-increases-high-school-drop-out-age-to-17/138025324>

Kentucky: <http://education.ky.gov/school/pages/compattend.aspx>

² <https://www.southcarolinaradionetwork.com/2016/01/27/sc-house-panel-rejects-raising-state-high-school-dropout-age/>

³ <http://www.nea.org/home/18106.htm>

⁴ John Locke Foundation, *Raise the Bar, not the Age*:

http://www.johnlocke.org/acrobat/spotlights/spotlight_321-compulsivede.pdf

⁵ Brown Center on Education Policy at Brookings, *Compulsory School Attendance: What Research Says and What It Means for State Policy*: [https://www.brookings.edu/wp-](https://www.brookings.edu/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/0801_education_graduation_age_whitehurst_whitfield.pdf)

[content/uploads/2016/06/0801_education_graduation_age_whitehurst_whitfield.pdf](https://www.brookings.edu/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/0801_education_graduation_age_whitehurst_whitfield.pdf)

U.S. Dept. of Education, *Does Raising the State Compulsory School Attendance Age Achieve the Intended Outcomes?*

<http://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED544499.pdf>

⁶ <http://whotv.com/2015/12/15/iowa-has-highest-graduation-rate-in-the-country/>

over a cautious multi-year process that began in 2013, has seen unintended negative repercussions as a result of the change.⁷

In North Carolina, in recent years, emphasis has been focused on a more comprehensive approach to education with increased wraparound services to meet the needs of “The Whole Child”. Also, alternative strategies to traditional education are being utilized, with virtual/online options, after hours programming, vocational education options, and multi-tiered systems of support. All of these factors support the concept that a continuum of strategies that engage students, support at-risk students, and allow for flexible educational opportunities, must be employed to improve results.

Legislation entitled “Pilot Program to Raise the High School Dropout Age from Sixteen to Eighteen” was initiated with SL 2013-360 (SB 402), sec. 8.49. The legislation instituted the pilot counties as Hickory Public Schools, Newton-Conover City Schools, and later Rutherford County Schools. The first year of the pilot- 2014-2015 school year was used primarily for planning, so that the first full year of implementation was 2015-16 school year. And since Rutherford County Schools entered the pilot later, their first year of implementation is the current school year 2017-18.

Newton-Conover City Schools was recently recognized for having the highest graduation rate in the State of North Carolina for the 2014-2015 school year (97.1%). In 2013-2014, Newton-Conover City Schools was recognized as a district with one of the lowest dropout rates in North Carolina (5th). In Hickory Public Schools, the graduation rate remains steady attaining some of the highest numbers over recent years. The graduation rate for Hickory Public Schools has held steady with 83.9 percent of students graduating in four years. This represents an increase of 13.6 percentage points from the 2006 graduation rate of 70.4 percent. In Hickory, high school students are offered balanced academic opportunities to enhance their path to career and college readiness—including classes in the International Baccalaureate (IB) program, Advanced Placement (AP) and career academies that provide college credit.

Impact of the Pilot

While a measure of the success the Hickory and Newton-Conover districts have experienced relative to graduation rate and dropout rate could be viewed as a by-product of the dropout age increase legislation, it is a stretch statistically to be able to correlate the legislation variable as causation of the outcomes. From the perspective of the two cooperating school systems as well as the steering committee that included representation from the court system and the Division of Social Services, there were two key impacts of the legislation.

First, the increased dropout age provided both school systems with a “bluff” factor. The “bluff” factor involves the potential punitive consequences of not complying with the pilot compulsory attendance age policy, even though the punitive consequences are more implied than concrete. The “bluff” factor has helped address poor student attendance in the following ways:

- Extends attendance processes beyond the freshman year of high school when most students turn 16 and dropout of school;
- Is an effective deterrent for elementary and middle school students since the age they are no longer subject to the compulsory attendance law has been pushed 2-3 years further into the future;

⁷ <http://www.cincinnati.com/story/news/2015/06/28/dropout-law-unintended-consequences/29328943/>

- Provides an impetus for forming a steering committee comprised of two school systems and local agencies that do not regularly meet otherwise;
- Provides an impetus for the creation of partnerships and interventions such as the Judges in

Schools program (modified to meet the needs of the two school systems) and the Adult Diploma Program at Sipe's Orchard Home (in conjunction with Catawba Valley Community College); and

- Provides an impetus for approaching local boards of education relative to policy and funding to help provide for the unique needs of students who typically have exited high school by age 16.

Secondly, the compulsory attendance age increase has helped delay the dropout decision for up to three additional school years. In that the adolescent brain is not fully developed until roughly age 25, removing the option to dropout at 16 provides additional time for students to realize the value of their education and prepare for life after high school. Newcomb (1996) indicates that the more time adolescents have to gain educational experience during the teenage years, the better prepared they will be to face life's challenges in adulthood. Early dropout from high school is a "pseudo mature" event that precipitates premature involvement in adult roles. It is important to extend education as long as possible within the developmental period from age 14-18.

An additional consideration that must be addressed before arriving at any definitive conclusions regarding the legislation involves the variable of time for data analysis. In order to provide a complete report of the progress of the legislation that can be correlated to producing outcomes, Hickory Public and Newton-Conover City Schools requested an extension through the end of the 2017-2018 school year to provide additional data for public consideration. Through the first year of the program, the districts collaborated with local court systems, Departments of Social Services and Juvenile Justice, judges and lawyers to develop a program and a prescriptive plan for implementation. These partnerships resulted in Judges in Schools, attendance contracts, cooperation with assistant district attorney's office, and procedures for appropriate documentation. The process was fully implemented during the spring of the 2014-15 school year. While the first year and a half of implementation is beginning to show increases in graduation rates and decreases in dropout counts and rates, further data analysis is needed to show long term sustainability.

Lessons Learned and Next Steps

A site visit was made to meet with the pilot LEAs (Hickory City, Newton-Conover and Rutherford County) on November 2, 2017. The following information was compiled as a result of that meeting:

During the first year, both Hickory and Newton-Conover experienced some of the same stumbling blocks in terms of enforcing the new policy. Overall, DSS and the court system were not willing to enforce, going so far as to say they would not enforce. Following several meetings and, ultimately, the involvement of the UNC Law School, some judges were willing to work with the LEAs. As a result, the "Judges in Schools" protocol was developed.

Moving forward, it is important that local law enforcement officials have knowledge of the law and that legal paperwork is developed to share with law enforcement as well as with juvenile justice officers in hopes all stakeholders have a clear understanding and buy in.

One of the key issues is the neighboring Catawba County School System not being a part of the pilot, so students who are 16 years old and want to drop out simply move to Catawba County district where they can drop out. This creates a problem for both Hickory and Newton-Conover when Catawba County will not enroll and the student stops attending school. The student no longer lives in the Hickory or Newton-Conover district, but they must count the student as a dropout, which they can't do because the student is under the age of 18.

The Department of Social Services serves all students in the area and feels that it is not fair for students under their supervision to have two sets of rules. Students in Catawba County can drop out at 16, while students in Hickory and Newton-Conover must remain in school until the age of 18. Because of this, DSS is not assisting in enforcing the policy with students attending school in the pilot LEAs.

Both LEAs felt that they were left to develop protocols, procedures and forms without any guidance, which delayed implementation to some degree. Everything the school systems have developed to this point were shared with Rutherford County.

Data taken over the last three years shows an increasing trend in graduation rates in Hickory Public Schools, as well as rising attendance rates. The positive outcomes are difficult to gauge at this point, but both LEAs have worked hard to implement pro-active programs and address potential at-risk students at an early age. It has forced the LEAs to develop solution focused thinking and to not think it is okay for students to give up their education.

The tables below provide data regarding Hickory Public, Newton-Conover, and Rutherford County schools. For additional comparison factors, data regarding Catawba County and Iredell County schools is also provided. In terms of school crime and violence, the rates have increased in Newton-Conover, and decreased significantly in Hickory Public Schools. Also, of interest is that school crime and violence has also decreased significantly in Catawba County Schools, which are not part of the pilot. The number of Juvenile complaints that are school related received in Catawba County have also been decreasing over the last few years, with the percentage, down from 56% to 53%. When we look at suspension rates in the pilot counties, it is reported that short term suspension has been decreasing, while long term suspensions have slightly increased.

In terms of graduation rates, Newton-Conover Schools are among the ten LEA's reporting the lowest high school dropout rates in the state. They are among the five LEA's reporting the largest 3-year percentage decreases in high school dropout rates. Now that Newton-Conover schools are in the second year of implementation of the pilot, we should monitor to see if this trend continues. The other LEA in the pilot, Hickory City, has seen an increasing trend in graduation rates, but is lower than Newton-Conover. Attendance rates in Newton-Conover schools are slightly down, while they have increased in Hickory City Schools.

The dropout counts and rates in Newton-Conover schools have decreased this past school year, as they have in Hickory City schools. It is notable that Catawba County schools' dropout counts and rates have also decreased significantly. They are not formally a part of the pilot, although may be experiencing some residual impact from it.

Recommendations Moving Forward

- Explore ways to encourage the Department of Social Services and Juvenile Justice to support and enforce the dropout pilot.
- Encourage the Catawba County School system to join the pilot.
- Identify strategies put in place by other LEA's who have experienced the largest 3-year percentage decreases in the high school dropout rates and counts but not raised the dropout age.
- Further explore the ramifications of attendance issues as the main reason listed by schools for students dropping out.
- Examine changes in suspension rates and enrollment in ALP's in pilot counties.

Dropout Age Increase Pilots Newton-Conover and Hickory City

2014-2015	Reportable	High School	High School	
Crime and Violence	Crimes	Crime Rate	State Rate	
		(per 100 students)	(per 100 students)	
Newton-Conover	11	1.39	1.30	
Hickory	21	1.83	1.30	
Catawba County	95	1.66	1.30	
2015-2016	Reportable	High School	High School	
Crime and Violence	Crimes	Crime Rate	State Rate	
		(per 100 students)	(per 100 students)	
Newton-Conover	11	0.81	1.27	
Hickory	37	3.32	1.27	
Catawba County	63	1.16	1.27	
2016-2017	Reportable	High School	High School	
Crime and Violence	Crimes	Crime Rate	State Rate	
		(per 100 students)	(per 100 students)	
Newton-Conover	19	1.93	1.21	
Hickory	4	0.38	1.21	
Catawba County	3	1.11	1.21	
Graduation Rates	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17

State	83.90%	85.60%	85.90%	86.50%
Newton-Conover	92.50%	95.00%	93.50%	>95%
Hickory	83.90%	83.90%	84.70%	85%
Catawba County	90.80%	89.80%	89.80%	91.50%

Dropouts Counts and Rates	Counts	Rate	Counts	Rate	Counts	Rate	Counts	Rate
	2013-14	2013-14	2014-15	2014-15	2015-16	2015-16	2016-17	2016-17
State	10,404	2.28	11,190	2.39	10,889	2.29	11,097	2.31
Newton-Conover	9	0.62	2	0.19	6	0.40	2	0.20
Hickory	35	1.82	40	3.04	30	1.52	18	1.42
Catawba County	98	1.20	110	2.01	105	1.29	64	1.45
Attendance Rates	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17				
Hickory High School	95%	92.99%	93.16%	93.4				
Hickory Career & Arts Magnet	N/A	90.16%	92.90%	94.19%				
Newton-Conover High School	96%	93.05%	93.16%	92.09%				
Discovery High School	97%	96.49%	96.92%	92.51%				

Short Term Suspension Counts in Pilot Counties and Neighboring Counties

	2014-2015	2015-2016	2016-2017
Catawba county	1171	1063	1157
Hickory City	752	759	674
Newton Conover City	440	289	270
Iredell-Statesville	2435	2492	2453

Short Term Suspension Counts in Pilot Counties and Neighboring Counties (per 100 students)

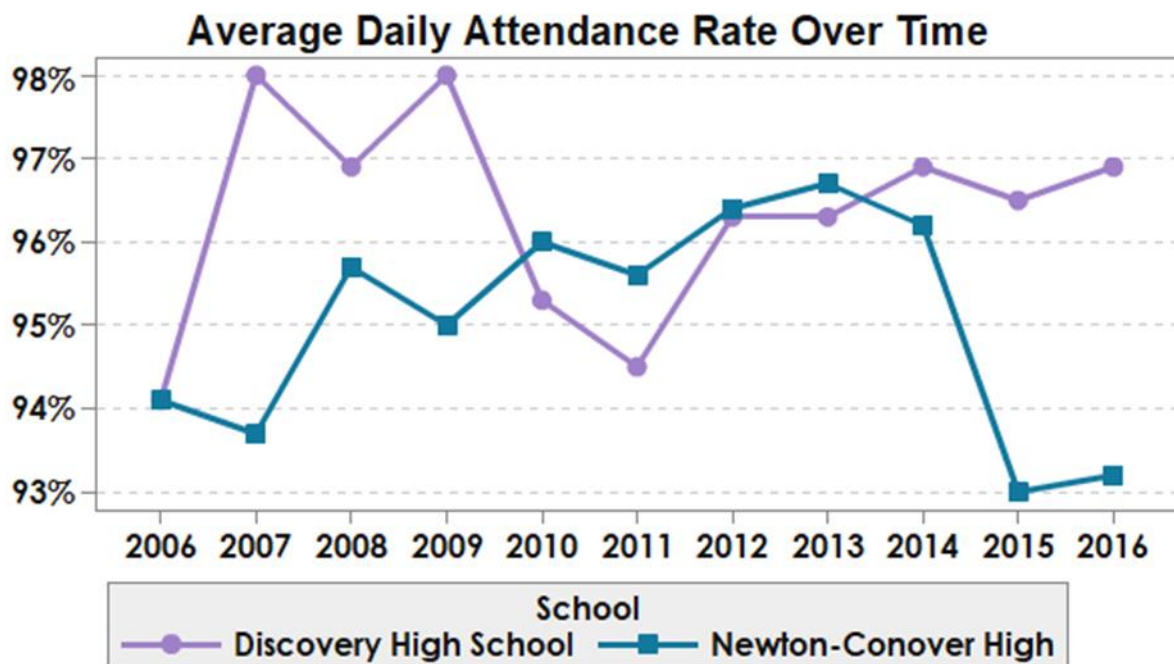
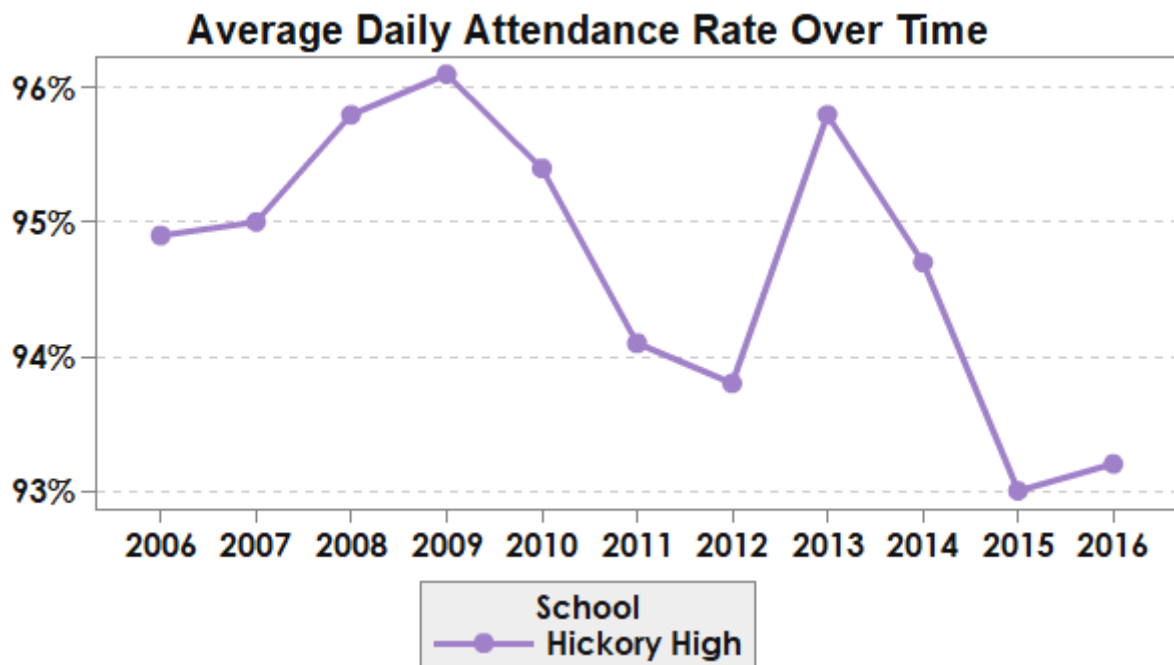
	2014-2015	2015-2016	2016-2017
Catawba county	7.06	6.51	7.1
Hickory City	17.26	17.83	16.01
Newton Conover City	14.08	9.36	9.01
Iredell-Statesville	11.73	12.07	12.08

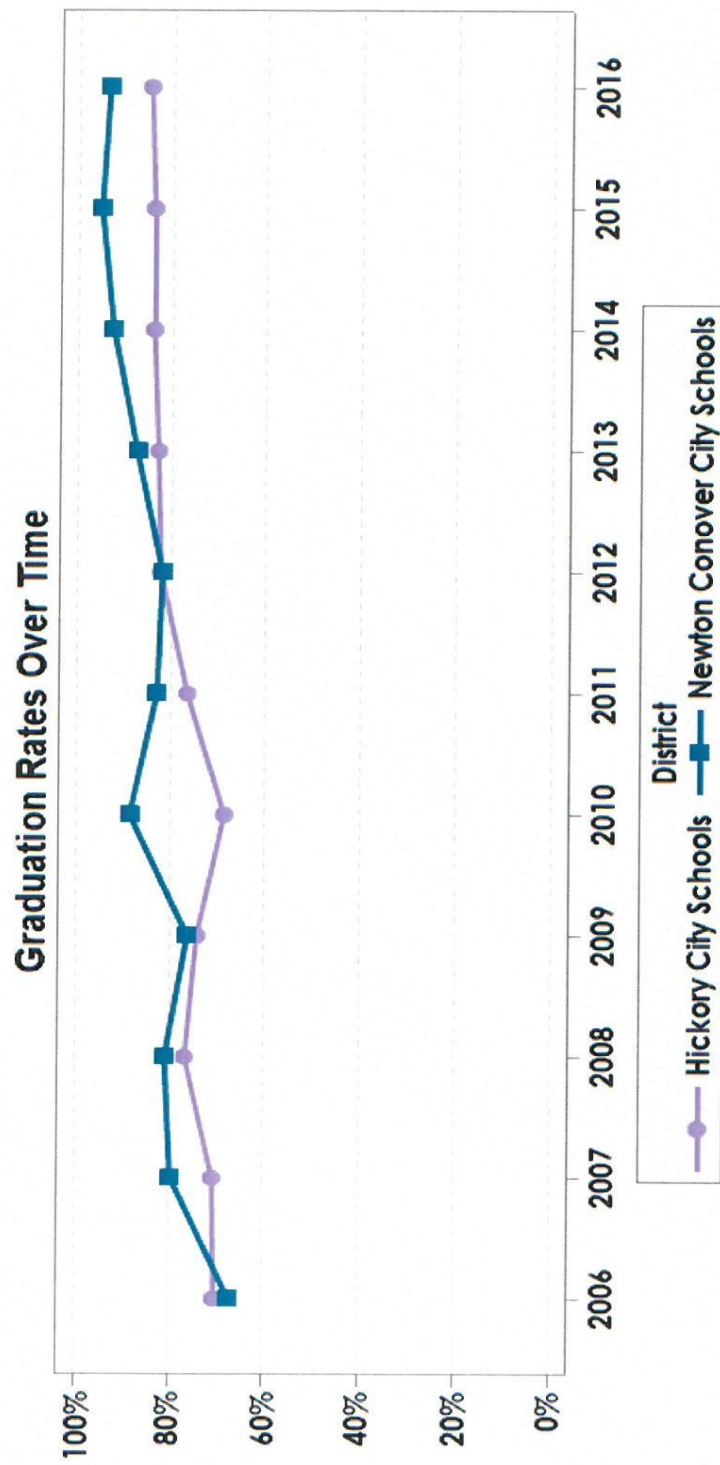
Long Term Suspension Counts in Pilot Counties and Neighboring Counties

	2014-2015	2015-2016	2016-2017
Catawba county	1	0	3
Hickory City	16	8	4
Newton Conover City	0	1	0
Iredell-Statesville	4	4	6

Long Term Suspension Counts in Pilot Counties and Neighboring Counties (per 100 students)

	2014-2015	2015-2016	2016-2017
Catawba county	0.06	0	0.184
Hickory City	3.673	1.879	0.95
Newton Conover City	0	0.324	0
Iredell-Statesville	0.193	0.194	0.296





Juvenile Complaints Received in 3 Selected Counties

Year								
	FY 14-15			FY 15-16		FY 16-17		
	School Related	Total Complaints Received	School Related	Total Complaints Received	School Related	Total Complaints Received	FY 14-15	FY 15-16
County							% School Related	% School Related
Catawba	372	664	287	517	234	440	56%	53%
Iredell	289	656	451	764	298	655	44%	45%
Rutherford	117	271	106	205	74	178	43%	42%

Information is current as of November 20, 2017

INTERVENTIONS

<u>HICKORY PUBLIC SCHOOLS</u>	<u>NEWTON-CONOVER CITY SCHOOLS</u>
<p>District-Intervention Process (developed cooperatively with Newton-Conover City Schools)</p> <p>Home Visits</p> <p>After-Hours Academy (see above)</p> <p>Judges in Schools</p> <p>Virtual/Online Options</p> <p>School-Level Group Sessions</p> <p>Hickory Career Arts Magnet Graduation Coach</p> <p>Partnership with FamilyNet for onsite mental health Therapists</p> <p>Alternatives to Suspension Program</p> <p>Core Academy (grades 9-12)</p> <p>Youth Summit (sponsored by Western Piedmont Council on Government)</p> <p>Multi-Disciplinary Meetings (monthly) DA's Office, Juvenile Court, Social Services, School-System Student Services</p> <p>Capturing Kids Hearts</p> <p>OLWEUS Bullying Prevention Program</p> <p>Adjustments to Attendance Procedures</p> <p>Deferred prosecution</p> <p>Steering committee</p> <p>Referrals to local mental health</p>	<p>District-Intervention Process (developed cooperatively with Hickory Public Schools)</p> <p>Home Visits</p> <p>School-Level Group Sessions</p> <p>Judges in Schools</p> <p>Virtual/Online Options</p> <p>N-CHS Pride Card Program</p> <p>Youth Summit (sponsored by Western Piedmont Council on Government) develops job skills, interview skills, life skills</p> <p>Core Academy Slots</p> <p>Totally Responsible Person Bullying Prevention Program</p> <p>Multi-Disciplinary Meetings (monthly): DA's Office, Juvenile Court, Social Services, School-System Student Services</p> <p>Celebration Meals for Improvement in Attendance, Behavior, Academic Performance</p> <p>Initial 10-Day Judges in School Court Session to ensure re-enrollment of students 16-18 years of age who have not currently enrolled</p> <p>Deferred prosecution</p> <p>Steering committee</p> <p>Referrals to local mental health</p> <p>Adjustments of Attendance Procedures</p>

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Judges in Schools Process Information (Sample): Newton-Conover City Schools

Process

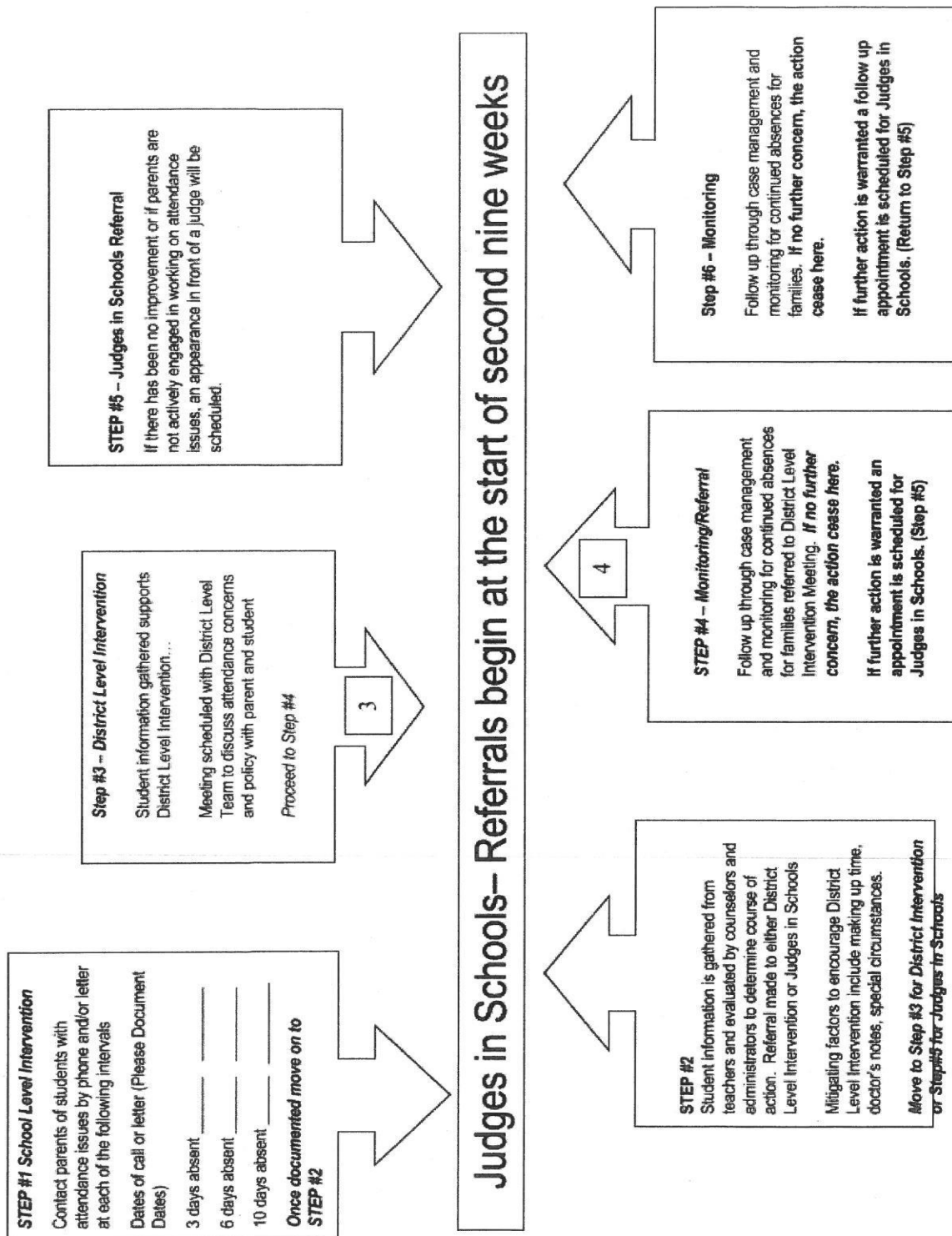
1. Contact Judy McLaughlin and/or Dr. Aron Gabriel regarding referral for Judges in Schools to determine availability and next scheduled date of JIS.
2. Contact the parents of the student that you are referring and explain the purposed of Judges in Schools is to provide an intervention to the court process. This is a service provided to Newton Conover City Schools and is held at either the Newton Courthouse or Hickory Courthouse depending on date. Parents are HIGHLY encouraged to be present as there will be great strategies and support given during this process
3. Provide family with date and time for JIS session - This session will be Tuesday, October 13th at 12 noon at Newton Courthouse. Courtroom will be given on that day. Just let them know you are there for Judges in Schools.
4. Send/email students' behavior reports/discipline reports, attendance reports, and summary of referral to Judy McLaughlin and Aron Gabriel by Monday noon so that we can get information to Judge Walker for review and get the students on the docket.
5. School principals/counselors/SROs are invited to attend if they would like to speak during the process or be present to hear any of the Judges suggestions.

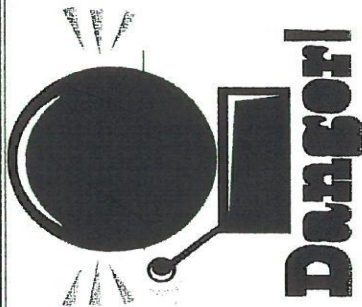
We realize this is a quick turnaround for this JIS session. Future sessions will be scheduled in the near future.

Let me know if you would like to discuss any specific students in person or would like to know more information about the Judges in Schools program. I will be glad to swing by and see you at anytime.

In Summary Please have information regarding student referrals to JIS to me by noon on Monday so that we can gather the necessary documentation and get information to Judge Walker. Also if you will contact the parents and let them know they have been referred and schedule for transportation to the courthouse. It is wonderful if the parents can be there as well although I understand this sometimes may not be a possibility.

Judges in Schools Referral Flow Chart





TRUANCY/ABSCENCES MAY LEAD TO DROPPING-OUT

- * Children do best in school when they are in class every day. The U.S. Department of Education reports that for every missed day of school, it takes a student two days to catch up.
- * Left unchecked, truancy is a risk factor for juvenile delinquency and is often followed by progressively more serious behavioral and adjustment problems in adulthood. 87% of the current prison population has a history of truancy.
- * Students who regularly attend school are more likely to graduate. High School grads earn an income 67% higher than nongraduates.
- * Parents who have dropped out of school are more likely to have children that also drop out.
- * Children who are absent more than 10 days are more likely to have lower test scores.
- * A student can lose their driver's license or learner's permit if they are absent frequently.

This brochure does not serve as an all inclusive explanation but only a summary of Hickory Public Schools Attendance policy, NC GS 115-378, & S.L. 2013-360 which recognizes that regular, punctual attendance is a significant factor in educational achievement. Students, parents, and school personnel are encouraged to recognize their individual responsibilities in upholding the laws, regulations, and policies governing student attendance at school. Please refer to your school handbook, HPS School Board Policy, and the NC General Statutes for details.

HICKORY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

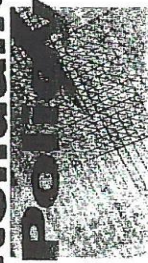
432 4th Ave SW
Hickory, NC 28602

www.hickoryschools.net

Phone: 828.322.2855
Fax: 828.322.1834

HICKORY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Attendance



The Hickory Public Schools attendance policy recognizes that regular, punctual attendance and participation in class are an integral part of academic achievement. Regular attendance by every student between the ages of seven (or younger if enrolled) and 18 is mandatory and a requirement of the State of North Carolina. Students and/or parents/guardians may be guilty of a class 1 misdemeanor if a child is considered



Beginning with the 2014-15 school year, Hickory Public Schools is part of a pilot program to increase the dropout age to 18 or high school graduation. A student or parent/guardian who violates the compulsory attendance provisions, shall be guilty of a Class 1 misdemeanor. The guidelines of the North Carolina Compulsory Attendance law will be followed.

HPS ATTENDANCE POLICY

Parents must notify the school to provide the reason for the absence. The following reasons are recognized as valid reasons for the absences with appropriate documentation:

- Illness or injury that prevents the student from being physically able to attend school.
- Quarantine ordered by the local health officer or by the State Board of Health
- Death in the immediate family
- Medical or dental appointments
- Court or administrative proceedings
- Religious observances (The approval of such absences is within the discretion of the local Board of Education, but approval should be granted unless the religious observance is of such a duration to interfere with the education of the student)
- Educational opportunity (An absences may be lawful when it is demonstrated that the purpose of the absence is to take advantage of valid educational opportunity. Approval from the principal for such an absence must be gained prior to the absence)

Parents are expected to provide advance notice in writing for absences, late arrivals, or early dismissals due to medical or dental appointments, court or administrative proceedings, religious observances, or educational opportunities. Letters will be sent home upon the 3rd, 6th, & 10th absence. Upon the 6th absence in a semester, a conference may be held with the student's school counselor to discuss ways to improve the student's attendance. Upon the 11th absence in the semester, the student may lose credit for the course. The student & parent will have the opportunity to request an appeal if there are extenuating circumstances they wish to be considered.

The appeal must be requested within 10 school days of the 11th absence.

ATTENDANCE TIPS

SCHOOL OFFERS THE OPPORTUNITIES YOUR CHILD WILL NEED TO SUCCEED IN LIFE.

Make sure your child is in school all day, every day!

Make it clear that education is important to you by showing interest in your child's schoolwork and activities.

Keep an accurate calendar that shows school breaks. Plan family vacations when school is in recess.

Make sure your child arrives on time. Being late 10 minutes a day totals 30 hours of lost instruction for the school year.

Schedule appointments after school hours, whenever possible.

Talk with your child about the reasons for their refusal to attend school. There are many factors that influence a child's refusal to attend school.

Be aware of any changes in behavior or frequent mood swings. These changes may be indicative of substance abuse, mental health problems, even cyber bullying, or inappropriate internet communications.

Work with school personnel to develop a plan to improve your child's attendance. The plan may include referrals for services in the community along with supports at the school level

Practice positive parenting.
Have consistent rules and routines. Know and monitor your child's friends.

Have consequences for not attending school. Allowing a child to go outside and play, allowing them to play video games or watch t.v. when they didn't attend school sends a message to the child that it is okay to be absent. If you are at work and you find out after the fact that they did not attend, talk with your child and take away privileges.

Set a regular bedtime. Make sure your child gets between 8-10 hours of sleep each night

Prepare for school the night before. Sign papers and place in book bags. Have book bags, homework, lunches in a set place ready for the morning. For younger children, have them pick out clothes the night before. Make sure clean clothes are ready for the morning.

Know your child's bus pick up time and have them there at least 10 minutes before. If they are a car rider, be aware when school starts and arrive early so they are not tardy.

Inform the school of any change of address, cell or home telephone numbers when they occur. Keep the school informed of changes with emergency contact numbers as well. Children may become ill at school or have accidents and the school needs to be able to communicate with you..

Elementary At-Risk Matrix							
Student Name	Is student reading/ writing and comprehending at grade level when entering	Has student been retained one or more years?	Has student demonstrated attendance problems (especially in early grades?) Defined as 10% or more a year (18 days)	Has student attended 2 or more schools during grades k-5	student has little or no parental involvement in their academics	Low socio- economic factors	At lease one parent did not complete HS

Middle At-Risk Matrix

Student Name	Student is making either D's or F's in Language Arts or Mathematics or at least 2 grade levels behind (if both subjects at 8th grade changes of HS diploma are 50%)	Has student been retained one or more years? Is the student at least 1-2 years older than other students in his grade?	Is student attending school less than 80% of the school year? This is exacerbated if policies prohibit them from making up work.	Is student considered a behavior problem by the teachers and administrators?	student has little or no parental involvement in their academics	Low socio-economic factors	At lease one parent did not complete HS

[illegible]