

# Education

**See full summary documents for additional detail**

## **School Extension Learning Recovery Program – Disaster Recovery Act of 2025 - Part I.**

SL 2025-2 (H47), Sec. 2G.1

Section 2G.1 of S.L. 2025-2 (House Bill 47) requires local school administrative units (LEAs) in the following counties affected by Hurricane Helene to offer a School Extension Learning Recovery Program (Program) following the 2024-2025 school year for students in grades four through eight: Ashe, Avery, Buncombe, Burke, Haywood, Henderson, Madison, McDowell, Mitchell, Rutherford, Transylvania, Watauga, and Yancey. Any charter school within any of these counties can elect to participate in the Program.

To be eligible for the Program, students must have been enrolled in a participating LEA or charter school during the 2024-2025 school year. The Program must give first priority to students who have not reached proficiency in reading or mathematics by the end of the 2024-2025 school year. Participation is voluntary and the parent or guardian of a student must provide consent for a student to enroll in the Program.

Whenever possible, a student must participate at the school the student was enrolled in for the 2024-2025 school year. A student who was enrolled in a charter school that elects not to participate in the Program can attend the Program in the participating LEA closest to the student's residence.

A participating LEA or charter school must develop and submit a plan to the Department of Public Instruction (DPI) for its Program no later than 30 days prior to the final instructional day of the 2024-2025 school year. DPI must notify the participating LEA of any recommended changes within 21 days.

The plan for the Program must meet the following requirements:

- Is separate and apart from the 2024-2025 school year rather than an extension of the school year.
- Includes at least 72 hours of instruction that meets the following:
  - Includes at least three hours of daily instructional time (excluding time for lunch, transition periods, and physical activity).
  - Includes at least one hour of enrichment activity, such as sports, music, or arts.
  - Includes a period of physical activity during the instructional day.
  - Does not provide instruction on Saturdays.
  - Provides instruction in person.
  - Provides grade level course offerings in reading, mathematics, or a combination of both.

- Provides meal service for each instructional day.
- Provides transportation services to the school.
- Identifies the assessment that will be administered at the beginning and end of the Program to evaluate student progress.

Participating LEAs and charter schools must employ teachers and other school personnel as temporary employees on a contract basis. These temporary employees are not considered employees or teachers for the purposes of the Teachers and State Employees Retirement System (TSERS) or the State Health Plan and their earnings are not treated as compensation for the purpose of TSERS. Additionally, these employees are not eligible to accrue paid leave during their temporary employment.

Participating LEAs and charter schools must select assessments from a list provided by DPI for students to complete at the beginning and conclusion of the Program. Assessment results must be shared with all teachers of record for that student for the 2025-2026 school year.

By October 15, 2025, participating LEAs and charter schools must report all of the following to DPI:

- The number of students offered first priority enrollment in the Program, and the total number of students that enrolled in the Program.
- The attendance record of enrolled students.
- Results of the assessment given to students at the beginning and end of the Program.
- The number of students who progressed to the next grade level and the number of students who were retained in the same grade level after participating in the Program.

By January 15, 2026, DPI must report on the following to the Joint Legislative Education Oversight Committee (JLEOC):

- Implementation of the Program.
- The information required to be reported by participating LEAs to DPI.
- A copy of each Program plan submitted to DPI, including any changes recommended by DPI, the reason the change was recommended, and whether the recommendation was followed.
- Any other data or information DPI deems relevant.

The Office of Learning Research at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill (OLR) must study the effectiveness of the Program. OLR must report the results of the study to the JLEOC by January 15, 2027.

This section appropriates \$9 million to DPI for the Program. Any remaining funds will revert to the Helene Fund on October 15, 2025.

This section became effective March 19, 2025.

## **School Calendar Flexibility and School Nutrition Compensation – Disaster Recovery Act of 2025 - Part I.**

SL 2025-2 (H47), Sec. 5.8

Section 5.8 of S.L. 2025-2 (House Bill 47) addresses school calendar flexibility and school nutrition compensation for counties affected by Hurricane Helene.

School Calendar Flexibility: For instructional days or equivalent hours missed due to Hurricane Helene between December 2024 and February 2025, the governing body of a specified public school unit can, in its discretion, do the following: (i) make up any number of the instructional days or equivalent hours missed, (ii) deem as completed any number of the instructional days or equivalent hours missed up to a total of 10 days, or (iii) implement a combination of both of these options. The section only applies to public school units in the following counties: Ashe, Avery, Buncombe, Burke, Haywood, Henderson, Madison, McDowell, Mitchell, Rutherford, Transylvania, Watauga, and Yancey.

All employees and contractors of public school units that have been granted school calendar flexibility are deemed to have worked for any scheduled instructional days missed due to inclement weather during the months of December 2024 through February 2025 if the public school unit deemed the instructional time was completed. Employees and contractors must be compensated as if they had worked on the scheduled instructional days that were missed.

School Nutrition Compensation: Of the disaster recovery funds appropriated to the Department of Public Instruction (DPI) in S.L. 2024-51, DPI must provide compensation to public school employees and contractors of schools participating in the National School Lunch Program or School Breakfast Program for scheduled instructional days when compensation would have been provided by school meal receipts or by federal funds either (i) as authorized by the provision deeming those days to have been worked or (ii) for a scheduled instructional day that was conducted remotely. Employees and contractors compensated using funds described in this section must be compensated in the same manner they would have been compensated if they had worked on the scheduled instructional days that were missed or provided remotely.

If the funds appropriated are insufficient to provide for the authorized compensation, DPI must develop uniform criteria to determine the comparative economic need of public school units and prioritize those with the greatest economic need when awarding available funds.

Reporting Requirements: By May 1, 2025, DPI was required to report to the Joint Legislative Education Oversight Committee and the Fiscal Research Division of the General Assembly on the following information for each public school unit that was allowed calendar flexibility and school nutrition compensation:

- The number of instructional days or hours missed due to inclement weather from December 2024 through February 2025, the number of days deemed completed as allowed by this section, and any makeup days scheduled for missed days from December 2024 through February 2025.

- Any compensation provided to employees and contractors as allowed by this section.

This section became effective March 19, 2025.

### **Revise Deadline for University of North Carolina Report on State Budget Allocations and Policies – House Budget Technical Corrections.**

SL 2025-4 (H74), Sec. 2.1

Section 2.1 of S.L. 2025-4 (House Bill 74) changes the deadline for the Board of Governors of The University of North Carolina to submit a report on the actions and adjustments necessary to its budgetary policies, regulations, and standards resulting from the Current Operations Appropriation Act to the Joint Legislative Education Oversight Committee, the Senate Appropriations Committee on Education/Higher Education, the House of Representatives Appropriations Subcommittee on Education, and the Fiscal Research Division from February 1 of each year to March 1 of each year.

This section became effective May 14, 2025.

### **University of North Carolina Board of Governors Temporary Employment Authority – House Budget Technical Corrections.**

SL 2025-4 (H74), Sec. 2.2

Section 2.2 of S.L. 2025-4 (House Bill 74) adds student-oriented professionals and temporary employees to the list of employees of The University of North Carolina who are exempt from most provisions of the Human Resources Act (HRA). These employees continue to be covered by Article 6 of the HRA related to equal employment and compensation opportunities and Article 7 of the HRA related to privacy of employee personnel records.

This section becomes effective January 1, 2026.

### **University of North Carolina School of the Arts Building Purchase – House Budget Technical Corrections.**

SL 2025-4 (H74), Sec. 7.2

Section 7.2 of S.L. 2025-4 (House Bill 74) appropriates \$4.5 million from funds available in the Office of State Budget and Management Flexibility Funds to the University of North Carolina School of the Arts Foundation. These funds are nonrecurring for the 2025-2026 fiscal year to be used to purchase real property and for a new loading dock.

This section became effective July 1, 2025.

## **Expand and Codify Free School Group Admission – Department of Natural and Cultural Resources Agency Bill.**

SL 2025-10 (S477), Sec. 6

Section 6 of S.L. 2025-10 (Senate Bill 477) prohibits the Department of Natural and Cultural Resources (DNCR) from imposing regular admission fees on school groups visiting any site owned or managed by DNCR.

This section became effective June 13, 2025.

## **University of North Carolina Tuition Discounts for Certain Students.**

SL 2025-17 (H373)

S.L. 2025-17 (House Bill 373), as amended by Section 2.4 of S.L. 2025-92 (House Bill 358), allows constituent institutions of The University of North Carolina (UNC) to discount tuition to qualifying military students up to the difference between the maximum amount of military tuition assistance funds received by the student and the applicable tuition. Qualifying military students are those that are residents of the State for tuition purposes and receive either (i) federal military tuition assistance funds, or (ii) military tuition assistance for members of the North Carolina National Guard.

This act also allows constituent institutions to discount tuition to students who are enrolled in an employer-sponsored financial support program approved by the Board of Governors of UNC (BOG). The discount can be up to the difference between the maximum amount provided by the employer and the applicable tuition. Any employer-sponsored financial support program is a program in which the employer of a student has committed to providing financial support to the student to offset the costs of tuition or fees for the student's degree or credential program.

No later than February 15 of each year, the BOG is required to report to the Joint Legislative Education Oversight Committee and the Fiscal Research Division on the discounted tuition provided in the previous academic year for qualifying military students and students enrolled in employer-sponsored financial support programs, including the number of students that received the discounts and the annual financial impact on each constituent institution because of the discounted tuition.

This act became effective June 26, 2025, and applies beginning with the 2025-2026 academic year.

## **Department of State Treasurer Technical Corrections/Administrative Changes 2025.**

SL 2025-19 (H476)

S.L. 2025-19 (House Bill 476), as amended by Section 18.(a) of S.L. 2025-25 (House Bill 40), does the following:

- Authorizes the Board of Trustees (Board) of the Teachers' and State Employees' Retirement System (TSERS) to extend a school's provisional entry into the TSERS by up to two years at the conclusion of the school's initial year of provisional entry, or the school can apply to become a participating employer in the TSERS.
- Requires charter schools seeking to participate in the TSERS after the initial year of provisional entry, or during the extended period of provisional entry, to undergo an actuarial and financial review by the Board before a decision is made.
- Provides that a charter school that is approved by the Board contingent upon receiving a financially sound independent audit report will continue its period of provisional entry for up to one year, or until the Board denies the application, whichever occurs first. The charter school's participation ceases the first of the month following the month its provisional period ends, or its application is denied.
- Requires members or former members seeking reversal of a benefits forfeiture to present their evidence to the board of trustees of their retirement system, rather than to the State Treasurer.
- Requires the fee paid by an out-of-state attorney to be admitted pro hac vice for the limited purpose of appearing for a client in a proceeding in this State be transferred to the North Carolina Administrative Office of the Courts.
- Prohibits the State from filing a claim for medical assistance paid upon the death of a beneficiary of an Achieving a Better Life Experience (ABLE) account unless federal law requires it to do so, and if so, requires the State to file its claim with the State Treasurer within 60 days of receiving notice from the State Treasurer of the beneficiary's death.
- Requires the ABLE account application package to include a notification of the State's right to file a claim for payment upon the beneficiary's death only if required by federal law.
- Makes various technical and conforming changes.

This act became law on June 26, 2025, and the provision regarding ABLE accounts applies to deaths of designated beneficiaries occurring on or after that date. The provision regarding charter schools applies to any charter schools that seek to become a participating employer in the TSERS, or are in the initial period of provisional entry into the Retirement System, on or after that date.

## **Designate the Department of Health and Human Services as the State Agency Responsible for Managing School Nurse Funds – Department of Health and Human Services Revisions.**

SL 2025-27 (H576), Sec. 1.1

Section 1.1 of S.L. 2025-27 (House Bill 576) makes the Department of Health and Human Services the state agency responsible for managing school nurse funds. Previously, this had been done by the Division of Public Health.

This section became effective June 27, 2025.

## **Internet Safety Policy – Various Education Changes.**

SL 2025-38 (H959), Sec. 1

Section 1 of S.L. 2025-38 (House Bill 959) requires local boards of education to adopt policies on student access to the internet on devices or internet services provided by local school administrative units (LEAs). The policies must do all of the following:

- Limit access by students to only age-appropriate subject matter and materials.
- Protect the safety and security of students when accessing email, chat rooms, and other forms of electronic communication.
- Prohibit unauthorized access by students to data or information maintained by the LEA, including by "hacking" and other unlawful online activities.
- Prevent access to websites, web applications, or software that do not protect against the disclosure, use, or dissemination of a student's personal information.
- Prohibit and prevent students from accessing social media platforms, except when expressly directed by a teacher solely for educational purposes.

This section became effective July 1, 2025. Local boards of education must adopt required policies by January 1, 2026.

## **Social Media and Mental Health – Various Education Changes.**

SL 2025-38 (H959), Sec. 2

Section 2 of S.L. 2025-38 (House Bill 959) requires the standard course of study to include instruction on social media and its effects on health, including social, emotional, and physical effects. Instruction must be provided once during elementary school, once during middle school, and twice during high school. In addition, this instruction must include information on at least the following:

- Negative effects of social media on mental health, including addiction.
- Distribution of misinformation on social media.
- Methods of manipulating behavior using social media.

- The permanency of information shared online.
- How to maintain personal security.
- How to identify cyberbullying, predatory behavior, and human trafficking on the internet.
- How to report suspicious behavior encountered on the internet.
- Personal and interpersonal skills or character education that enhances individual level protective factors and mitigates or reduces risk-taking or harmful behavior.

This section became effective July 1, 2025, and applies beginning with the 2026-2027 school year.

## **Regulation of Wireless Communication Devices – Various Education Changes.**

SL 2025-38 (H959), Sec. 3

Section 3 of S.L. 2025-38 (House Bill 959) requires governing bodies of public school units to establish a wireless communication policy that prohibits students from using, displaying, or having a wireless communication device turned on during instructional time, except in the following circumstances:

- If authorized by a teacher for educational purposes or for use in the event of an emergency.
- As required by the student's individualized education program (IEP) or Section 504 Plan.
- As required to manage a student's health care, in accordance with a documented medical condition.

The governing body is required to establish the consequences of violations of the policy, which can include confiscation of the wireless communication device and disciplinary measures under the public school unit's Code of Student Conduct.

Each governing body is required to submit its policy to the Department of Public Instruction (DPI). DPI must annually report by October 1 to the Joint Legislative Education Oversight Committee on the number of public school units that are in compliance with this requirement and provide a list of any units that are not.

This section became effective July 1, 2025. Governing bodies must adopt the policy by no later than January 1, 2026.

## **Residency Licenses for Certain Nonpublic Exceptional Children's Teachers – Various Education Changes.**

SL 2025-38 (H959), Sec. 4

Section 4 of S.L. 2025-38 (House Bill 959) authorizes certain nonpublic schools to request a residency license. A residency license is a one-year teaching license that can be renewed twice. The nonpublic school is authorized to request a residency license if it meets both of the following:



- Meets the nonpublic school requirements in either Part 1 or Part 2 of Article 39 of Chapter 115C of the General Statutes.
- Is approved and monitored by the Department of Public Instruction to provide special education and related services pursuant to a student's individualized education program.

This section became effective July 1, 2025, and applies to applications for residency licenses occurring on or after that date.

### **Allow Certain Schools to Apply for Re-Accreditation by the Criminal Justice Education and Trainings Standards Commission – Various Education Changes.**

SL 2025-38 (H959), Sec. 5

Section 5 of S.L. 2025-38 (House Bill 959) requires the Criminal Justice Education and Training Standards Commission to allow any school that received a suspension of its accreditation for at least four years to apply for re-accreditation after serving two years of the suspension.

This section became effective July 1, 2025, and applies to suspensions occurring on or before that date.

### **School Contracted Health Services.**

SL 2025-40 (S77)

S.L. 2025-40 (Senate Bill 77) requires local educational agencies (LEAs) to contract with the parent's choice of nurse when providing nursing services pursuant to a child's individualized education program (IEP) if the following conditions are met:

- The child received nursing services from the nurse (i) prior to the nursing services being required by the child's IEP or (ii) prior to the child enrolling in his or her current school.
- The parent's choice of nurse is employed by a nursing agency and willing to provide the nursing services required by the child's IEP.
- The nursing agency employing the parent's choice of nurse is willing to enter into a contract with the LEA that otherwise meets all standard contract terms required for any other nursing agency contracted by the LEA, including licensing and liability requirements.
- The contracted rate is equal to or less than the contracted rate of other nurses contracted by the LEA.

Nursing services are defined as services that can only be provided by a nurse licensed in accordance with Article 9A of Chapter 90 of the General Statutes. The act does not limit the LEA's responsibility to provide a free appropriate public education.

This act became effective July 1, 2025, and applies beginning with the 2025-2026 school year.

## **Leon's Law – Various Education Law/Tax Accounts/Name, Image, and Likeness Changes.**

SL 2025-46 (H378), Part II

Part II of S.L. 2025-46 (House Bill 378) requires the State Board of Community Colleges to direct each community college to adopt a policy that requires a minor student to complete a form, prior to registration in any course at the community college, acknowledging the following:

- To the extent allowed under the Federal Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), the education records of a minor student must be provided to the student's parent as long as the parent has not opted out of receiving the education records.
- To the extent allowed under FERPA, the education records of a minor student must be provided to the school administrators and school counselors at the school in which the student is dually enrolled.

This Part became effective July 1, 2025, and applies beginning with the 2025-2026 academic year.

## **Expand Academic Transition Pathways for Sophomore High School Students – Various Education Law/Tax Accounts/Name, Image, and Likeness Changes.**

SL 2025-46 (H378), Part III

Part III of S.L. 2025-46 (House Bill 378) was repealed by the enactment of S.L. 2025-56 (Senate Bill 125) on July 3, 2025.

## **Nondiscriminatory Admissions Evaluations and Military Deferment – Various Education Law/Tax Accounts/Name, Image, and Likeness Changes.**

SL 2025-46 (H378), Part IV

Part IV of S.L. 2025-46 (House Bill 378) was repealed by Section 2.5 of S.L. 2025-92 (House Bill 358) on September 30, 2025.

## **Protect Certain Tax-Advantaged Accounts – Various Education Law/Tax Accounts/Name, Image, and Likeness Changes.**

SL 2025-46 (H378), Part VI

Part VI of S.L. 2025-46 (House Bill 378) exempts the following funds from liens, attachment, garnishment, levy, seizure, any involuntary sale or assignment by operation or execution of law, or the enforcement of any other judgment or claim to pay any debt or liability of any account owner, beneficiary, or contributor to the account:

- Funds located in a 529 Plan or withdrawn from a 529 Plan and used for purposes permitted by section 529 of the Internal Revenue Code. This section's increased protections replace previous exemptions from creditors for 529 Plans.
- Funds located in an ABL account or withdrawn from the account and used for purposes permitted under section 529A of the Internal Revenue Code.

The protections provided under this Part do not apply to the following:

- Any state claims, following the death of the ABL account owner, to reimburse the state's Medicaid program for benefits received by the participant after the establishment of the ABL account.
- Funds that were not used for a qualifying purpose under federal law.
- Funds deposited into a qualifying 529 Plan or ABL account as a result of fraud, intentional wrongdoing, or other violation of law.

Part VI became effective September 1, 2025, and applies to actions filed on or after that date.

### **Authorization for Name, Image, and Likeness Agency Contracts – Various Education Law/Tax Accounts/Name, Image, and Likeness Changes.**

SL 2025-46 (H378), Part VII

Part VII of S.L. 2025-46 (House Bill 378) modifies the Uniform Athlete Agents Act to allow student-athletes to use registered agents for the purpose of representation in name, image, and likeness contracts (NIL contracts).

NIL contracts are defined as contracts between the student-athlete and another entity where the student-athlete receives consideration in exchange for use of the student-athlete's name, image, or likeness. The Part authorizes a student-athlete to enter into a contract, called an NIL agency contract, with a registered athlete agent to negotiate NIL contracts. Those contracts must contain a warning to student-athletes that an NIL contract conflicting with law or institutional policies could have negative consequences. The NIL agency contract can be cancelled by the student within 14 days. These contracts are distinguished from professional sports services agency contracts, where an athlete entering into an agreement to negotiate a professional sports contract would lead to the loss of amateur status.

This Part also prohibits athlete agents who currently or within the prior two years have been in an employment or contractual relationship with an educational institution from entering into NIL agency contracts with student-athletes enrolled in that educational institution. Additionally, any NIL agency contract with an athlete agent who has such a connection to an educational institution is void if the student-athlete subsequently enrolls in that educational institution.

Part VII became effective July 1, 2025, and applies to NIL agency contracts entered into on or after that date.

## **Public Records Exemption for Certain Name, Image, and Likeness Contracts – Various Education Law/Tax Accounts/Name, Image, and Likeness Changes.**

SL 2025-46 (H378), Part VIII

Part VIII of S.L. 2025-46 (House Bill 378) exempts records related to a student-athlete's name, image, and likeness contract from being public records subject to disclosure.

This Part became effective July 1, 2025, and applies retroactively to all records related to a student-athlete's name, image, and likeness contract ever in the possession of an institution of higher education.

## **Regulation of Drivers Education Offered by Commercial Driver Training Schools – Department of Transportation Omnibus.**

SL 2025-47 (S391), Sec. 1

Section 1 of S.L. 2025-47 (Senate Bill 391) clarifies the ability of the Commissioner of Motor Vehicles to adopt regulations governing the private driver training schools the Commissioner licenses when they are offering the driver education course required for teen drivers. It specifies that the Commissioner may adopt regulations in addition to requirements applicable to the program of driver education offered in the public schools.

This section became effective July 1, 2025.

## **Criminal History Checks for Drivers Providing Transportation Services to Children Pursuant to Contracts with Local Boards of Education – Department of Transportation Omnibus.**

SL 2025-47 (S391), Sec. 12

Section 12 of S.L. 2025-47 (Senate Bill 391) requires a criminal history check for an individual before a local board of education may allow the individual to act as a driver pursuant to a contract entered into by a local board of education with a person, firm, or corporation to provide transportation services to students in lieu of operating school buses. It also provides for sharing of information between school boards if one local school board has previously done a criminal history check on an individual, the check was done within the previous three years, and the individual consents.

This section became effective July 1, 2025, and applies to contracts for transportation services for students beginning with the 2025-2026 school year.

## **Authorize Use of Electronic Speed-Measuring Systems in School Zones – Department of Transportation Omnibus.**

SL 2025-47 (S391), Sec. 13

Section 13 of S.L. 2025-47 (Senate Bill 391) authorizes cities and counties to use electronic speed-measuring systems to enforce speed limits in school zones. Local governments must adopt ordinances to allow for the civil enforcement of those speed limits, providing processes for issuing and processing citations, and providing an administrative hearing process for contesting citations. Installation of systems on North Carolina Department of Transportation right-of-way must be approved by the Department. A civil penalty of \$250 must be assessed for violations, and the Division of Motor Vehicles must refuse registration of a vehicle when the owner fails to pay a penalty.

This section became effective October 1, 2025.

## **Allow Physical Therapists in School Concussion Protocol.**

SL 2025-49 (H928)

S.L. 2025-49 (House Bill 928) adds physical therapists licensed under Article 18E of Chapter 90 of the General Statutes to the list of medical professionals approved to evaluate students who have exhibited signs of concussion when participating in an interscholastic athletic activity and provide written clearance for the students to return to play or practice in the athletic activity.

This act became effective July 2, 2025.

## **Reorganization of Chapter 115D and Conforming Changes – Various Education Changes.**

SL 2025-56 (S125), Parts I & II

Parts I and II of S.L. 2025-56 (Senate Bill 125), as amended by Section 2.3 of S.L. 2025-92 (House Bill 358), reorganize Chapter 115D of the General Statutes as follows:

- Divides Article 1, "General Provisions for State Administration," into the following Parts:
  - Establishment and Administration of the North Carolina Community Colleges System.
  - Administration of Local Community Colleges by State Board of Community Colleges.
  - Community College Programs.
  - Students.
- Creates a new Article 2B, "High School Programs."
- Divides Article 3, "Financial Support," into the following Parts:
  - Funding of Community Colleges.
  - Tuition and Fees.

- Repeals and recodifies statutes to place them in the appropriate Article and Part.

Part II makes the necessary conforming changes to reflect the reorganization of Chapter 115D.

These Parts became effective July 3, 2025.

### **Various Statutory Changes – Various Education Changes.**

SL 2025-56 (S125), Part II.5

Part II.5 of S.L. 2025-56 (Senate Bill 125) does the following:

- Allows the State Board of Community Colleges to approve the use of up to 15% of the funds appropriated for the Customized Training Program for the training and support of regional community college personnel to deliver Program services.
- Allows all qualified high school students to participate in the CTE pathways, removing the restriction to specific pathways for freshmen and sophomore students.
- Codifies the Career and College Ready Graduate program as a pathway under the Career and College Promise program and allows high school juniors to participate, including during the summer preceding their junior year.
- Allows the Community Colleges System Office to use up to 4% of the funds appropriated for the NC Career Coach Program for administrative costs, including staffing, professional development, and program management and evaluation.
- Allows the State Board of Community Colleges to evaluate the success rate of students in credit-bearing Math or Science courses.

This Part became effective July 3, 2025, and applies beginning with the 2025-2026 academic year.

### **Residency Licenses for Certain Nonpublic Exceptional Children's Teachers – Various Education Changes.**

SL 2025-56 (S125), Part III

Part III of S.L. 2025-56 (Senate Bill 125) was repealed by Section 2.6 of S.L. 2025-92 (House Bill 358) on September 30, 2025.

### **Extend Reversion Date for School Safety Grant Funds – Various Education Changes.**

SL 2025-56 (S125), Part IV

Part IV of S.L. 2025-56 (Senate Bill 125) extends the reversion date for funds appropriated to the Department of Public Instruction for the School Safety Grants Program from June 30, 2025, to June 30, 2027.

This Part became effective June 30, 2025.

## **Allow Use of Epinephrine Nasal Spray in Addition to Auto-Injectors – Improve Health and Human Services.**

SL 2025-60 (S600), Part IV

Part IV of S.L. 2025-60 (Senate Bill 600) expands reference to epinephrine delivery systems in statutes governing public schools to include nasal sprays in addition to auto-injectors.

This Part became effective July 3, 2025, and applies beginning with the 2025-2026 school year.

## **Registered Nurses in Schools – Improve Health and Human Services.**

SL 2025-60 (S600), Part V

Part V of S.L. 2025-60 (Senate Bill 600) clarifies that the State Board of Education (SBE) cannot impose a four-year degree requirement for an individual to be hired or contracted for as a school nurse. In addition, this section requires that a school nurse be paid on the certified nurse pay scale as established by the SBE if the nurse is a registered nurse licensed under Article 9A of Chapter 90 of the General Statutes and has at least two years of experience serving in a hospital or health clinic.

This Part gives the SBE authority to adopt temporary rules until permanent rules can be adopted. The Department of Public Instruction must conform salary manuals with this section's requirements.

Part V became effective July 3, 2025, and applies to school nurses hired or contracted for on or after that date.

## **North Carolina Community College System Learning Management System/North Carolina Longitudinal Data System.**

SL 2025-62 (S133)

S.L. 2025-62 (Senate Bill 133) does the following:

- Directs the State Board of Community Colleges (SBCC) to solicit a learning management system (LMS) for all community colleges.
- Provides the Community College System Office (System Office) with an exemption from the Department of Information Technology (DIT).
- Makes changes to the statutes related to the North Carolina Longitudinal Data System (NCLDS).

Community College Learning Management System. – Section 1 of the act requires the SBCC to conduct a competitive solicitation to provide an LMS to all community colleges by December 31, 2025. The transition to the new LMS must be completed by December 31, 2027. Answers to the competitive solicitation must include information about how the LMS would align with the systems (i) offered by the Department of Public Instruction (DPI), and (ii) used by the constituent

institutions of The University of North Carolina. The SBCC must report to the Senate Appropriations Committee on Education/Higher Education, the House Appropriations Committee on Education, and the Fiscal Research Division on the information received by December 31, 2025.

DIT Exemption. – Section 2 of the act exempts the System Office from the DIT requirements in Article 15 of Chapter 143B of the General Statutes but allows it to elect to participate in the information technology programs, services, or contracts offered by DIT, including information technology procurement, by having the SBCC elect to do so in writing.

North Carolina Longitudinal Data System. – Section 3 makes various changes to the statutes governing the NCLDS, including the following:

- Removing the five year limit on the linkage of student data and workforce data.
- Removing the requirement that the Governmental Data Analytics Center (GDAC) designate a compliance timeline for electronic transcripts.
- Requiring GDAC to publish an inventory of the data proposed to be accessible in the NCLDS.
- Moving the NCLDS from being administratively housed within DPI to DIT.
- Requiring that the NCLDS act as a data broker for all public school units and the entire Department of Commerce.
- Requiring the NCLDS and recipients of data in fulfillment of approved data requests to use only aggregated data in public reports.
- Clarifying that all data collected and maintained by the NCLDS remains owned by the contributors and that all data sharing supported by the NCLDS must comply with applicable federal and State laws and regulations.

Section 3 of the act became effective July 1, 2025. The remainder of the act became effective July 3, 2025.

### **Clarify that all Felony School Notifications are limited to Class A through Class E Felonies – 2025 Public Safety Act.**

SL 2025-70 (S429), Sec. 10

Section 10 of S.L. 2025-70 (Senate Bill 429) modifies G.S. 7B-3101 to clarify that a juvenile court counselor is only required to notify the juvenile's school if the juvenile committed what would be a Class A through E felony, if committed by an adult.

This section became effective July 9, 2025.



## **Provide Additional Time for Military Families to Provide Proof of Residency for Public School Enrollment – Military and Veteran Support Act.**

SL 2025-72 (S118), Part II

Part II of S.L. 2025-72 (Senate Bill 118), as amended by Section 2.2 of S.L. 2025-92 (House Bill 358), allows military children to begin attending school in a local school administrative unit (LEA) without proof of residency if proof of residency has not yet become available because the military parent and military child are residing in temporary housing.

In this situation, the LEA must:

- Allow the military child to enroll and begin attending school in the LEA of anticipated domicile (i) for a period of up to one year from the military parent's reporting-for-duty date, separation date from active military duty, or anticipated separation date from active military duty, or (ii) through the end of the school year, before being considered a resident of another LEA.
- Allow a military child who is a high school junior or senior to enroll and begin attending school in the LEA of anticipated domicile through high school graduation.

This Part became effective July 9, 2025, and applies beginning with the 2025-2026 school year.

## **Prohibit Discriminatory Admissions Policies Regarding Active Duty Service Members and Veterans, Require Military Admissions Deferment for Certain Persons Admitted to the UNC System, and Provide In-State Tuition to Certain Honorably Discharged Veterans – Military and Veteran Support Act.**

SL 2025-72 (S118), Part III

Part III of S.L. 2025-72 (Senate Bill 118) prohibits constituent institutions of The University of North Carolina (UNC) from denying admissions to any applicant solely on the basis of the applicant's indication that he or she is serving or intends to serve in the uniformed service.

The Board of Governors of UNC must adopt a policy requiring constituent institutions to provide enrollment deferment for members of the uniformed service and their spouses if the deferment is requested at least 30 days prior to enrollment in a constituent institution. Members of the reserve Armed Forces and their spouses must be granted deferments of at least two years after entry into the reserve Armed Forces. All other members and their spouses must be granted deferments of at least five years after entry into the uniformed service.

This Part requires that any qualifying veteran admitted to a constituent institution of UNC or a community college under the jurisdiction of the State Board of Community Colleges be charged the in-State tuition rate and applicable fees for enrollment without having to satisfy the 12-month residency requirement. A qualifying veteran is an individual who (i) served not less than 90 days in the Armed Forces, (ii) was honorably discharged, and (iii) meets at least one of the following:

- Graduated from a high school in North Carolina on or after January 1, 2004.
- Served active duty in the Armed Forces with a permanent station in North Carolina for at least 90 continuous days.
- Was awarded a Purple Heart.

This Part became effective July 9, 2025, and applies beginning with the 2025-2026 academic year.

## **Children of Wartime Veterans Scholarship Funds Award Flexibility – Military and Veteran Support Act.**

SL 2025-72 (S118), Part VI

Part VI of S.L. 2025-72 (Senate Bill 118) makes the following changes to the administration of funds for the Scholarships for the Children of Wartime Veterans Program (Program) in the 2024-2025 and the 2025-2026 academic years:

- Allows the State Education Assistance Authority (SEAA), after consultation with the Secretary of the Department of Military and Veterans Affairs (Department), to fund scholarships with monies from the Escheat Fund for eligible children of wartime veterans who have not been identified by the Department under the Program.
- Requires the Secretary, after consulting with SEAA, to determine whether to prioritize the award of new applicants for the 2025-2026 academic year in Class I-A, I-B, and IV scholarships, prior to awarding Class II and III scholarships.
- Permits the Secretary, after consulting with SEAA, to determine whether to reduce the room and board allowance award for students attending a public institution and the maximum allowance award for students attending private institutions, prior to August 15, 2025. The determination must be based on the number of eligible students, including new and renewal students, that have applied for the 2025-2026 academic year.
- Allows SEAA to adjust and standardize award amounts for the 2025-2026 academic year, if funds available for the Program are insufficient to provide scholarships to all eligible students.
- Requires that all scholarship notifications include language that the scholarship award is contingent upon the availability of funds.
- Directs SEAA to disburse scholarship funds in accordance with the authority granted by the General Statutes.
- Allows SEAA to use an amount of up to 2.5% for the administration costs related to the Program from the total amount of funding appropriated to the Board of Governors of The University of North Carolina and allocated to SEAA in a fiscal year to support the award of scholarship funds under the Program. SEAA must place any unexpended and unencumbered appropriated funds remaining at the end of the 2024-2025 and 2025-2026 fiscal years into an institutional trust fund for the purposes of awarding scholarships and paying administration costs.

This Part became effective June 30, 2025, and applies to awards granted for the 2024-2025 and 2025-2026 academic years.

## **Local Boards of Education to Publish Total Compensation and Position Information for Central Office Employees – Harrison's Law.**

SL 2025-73 (S375), Sec. 2

Section 2 of S.L. 2025-73 (Senate Bill 375) requires each local board of education to publish and maintain the following information on its website by August 15 each year:

- For each central office employee (superintendent, assistant superintendent, associate superintendent, director/coordinator, supervisor, finance officer, person categorized as a central office employee by the Department of Public Instruction or the local school administrative unit [LEA], and permanent employee or third-party contractor not assigned to a school campus):
  - Total compensation from all funding sources, including at least salary, including supplements, and reimbursements and allowances for travel.
  - Position title.
  - Position description.
  - Date the position was created.
  - Department, unit, or office of the LEA in which the position is located.
- The title of each central office employee position in the LEA and the number of positions with that title.
- For each department, unit, or office of the LEA:
  - The number of central office employees located in that department, unit, or office.
  - The number of central office employees or each position title.

This act became effective July 9, 2025.

## **Regional Water Study/Interbasin Transfer Subbasin/Total Maximum Daily Load Revision.**

SL 2025-77 (H694)

S.L. 2025-77 (House Bill 694) (i) directs the Environmental Finance Center at the UNC School of Government to study water and wastewater regionalization, and to report its findings and recommendations to the House Oversight Committee, the Senate Committee on Regulatory Reform, and the Joint Legislative Commission on Governmental Operations by April 1, 2026; (ii) eliminates subbasin designations for the Haw River and Deep River basins within the Cape Fear River major river basin, and the Contentnea Creek basin within the Neuse River major river basin, allowing for the transfer of surface water between those subbasins within the same major river basin in any amount without first needing to obtain an Interbasin transfer certificate from the Environmental Management Commission; and (iii) revises the 2020 Farm Act Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) transport factor calculation applicability so that all wastewater discharge

permit applications for local governments in the Neuse River Basin would apply the transport factors as specified in the 1999 Phase I TMDL, regardless of the size of the customer base.

This act became effective July 9th, 2025. The provision related to interbasin transfers applies to water withdrawals or transfers initiated on or after that date.

## **Charter School Changes.**

SL 2025-80 (S254)

S.L. 2025-80 (Senate Bill 254) does the following:

- Requires that rules or policies adopted by the State Board of Education (SBE) regarding charter schools must first be approved by the Charter Schools Review Board (CSRB). The CSRB is authorized to propose, recommend, and approve rules and policies on all aspects of charter school operation.
- Directs the SBE to assign the CSRB to conduct any hearings required under federal law on federal funds for charter schools. The CSRB has the duty to make findings and recommendations about these hearings.
- Authorizes the CSRB to employ legal counsel, including private counsel, to advise, represent, and provide litigation services to the CSRB without having to get permission from the Attorney General or the Governor.
- Provides that the Executive Director of the Office of Charter Schools reports and serves at the pleasure of the CSRB, rather than the Superintendent of Public Instruction (Superintendent), at a salary established by the CSRB within the funds appropriated for that purpose.
- Allows for charter schools to relocate without prior approval by the CSRB as long as the new location is within a 10-mile radius of the location specified and approved in the charter and located within the same local school administrative unit (LEA).
- Requires that all terms of the written charter that a charter school will operate under be approved by the CSRB.
- Provides that charter schools are not required to list class rank on a student's official transcript or record.
- Allows charter schools to develop and use any evaluation for conducting the evaluation of teachers, if the evaluation instrument includes standards and criteria similar to those used in the North Carolina Professional Teaching Standards and North Carolina Teacher Evaluation Process or such other evaluation standard and process required to be used by LEAs.
- Directs the CSRB to require charter schools that are identified as low-performing or continually low-performing to prepare and report plans to improve the performance of the school. Charter schools are not required to create school improvement plans as required for LEAs.
- Requires the SBE to withhold or reduce distribution of funds to a charter school if the CSRB notifies the SBE that a charter school has failed to meet generally accepted

standards of fiscal management or has violated a State or federal requirement for receipt of funds. This notification was previously the responsibility of the Superintendent.

- Requires the CSRB, instead of the Superintendent, to create standardized (i) enrollment verification and transfer request documents and (ii) transfer procedures for the per pupil share of the local current expense fund in consultation with charter schools and LEAs.
- Requires the Department of Public Instruction (DPI) to provide each charter school with access to any required financial data reporting platforms for the school's first year of operation at no cost.
- Allows charter schools operating under a charter that allows for a remote academy that enrolls or intends to enroll 250 or more students in the remote academy to request that the CSRB grant the remote academy a separate charter. The CSRB must review these requests through an expedited process and cannot require a planning year for the remote academy.
- Requires that a charter school with both in-person instruction and a remote academy receive a separate school performance grade for the remote academy. The remote academy must be treated as a separate school for the purpose of assessing performance.
- For the 2025-2027 biennium, requires DPI to use \$82,100 per fiscal year of lapsed salary funds to provide operating funds to the CSRB. Legal counsel retained by the CSRB and funded with these monies can provide litigation services to the CSRB.

This bill was vetoed by the Governor on July 2, 2025, and that veto was overridden by the General Assembly on July 29, 2025. This act became effective July 29, 2025, and applies beginning with the 2025-2026 school year.

### **Excuse Students with Religious Objections – Prevent Sexual Exploitation/Women and Minors.**

SL 2025-84 (H805), Sec. 3.2

Section 3.2 of S.L. 2025-84 (House Bill 805) requires local boards of education to adopt policies allowing a student or the student's parent or guardian to request excusal from any classroom discussions, activities, or assigned readings if the student, parent, or guardian believes either of the following:

- The discussion, activity, or assigned reading would impose a substantial burden on the student's religious beliefs.
- The discussion, activity, or assigned reading would invade the student's privacy by calling attention to the student's religion.

To the extent practicable, the local board of education must provide advance notice to students, parents, and guardians of the discussions, activities, or assigned readings. The school must provide the excused student with an alternative activity or assignment aligned with the standard course of study.

This bill was vetoed by the Governor on July 3, 2025, and that veto was overridden by the General Assembly on July 29, 2025. This section became effective July 29, 2025.

## **Parent Access to Library Books – Prevent Sexual Exploitation/Women and Minors.**

SL 2025-84 (H805), Sec. 3.3

Section 3.3 of S.L. 2025-84 (House Bill 805) requires local boards of education to adopt policies to do both of the following:

- Provide public access to the titles of library books available within each school within the local school administrative unit.
- Allow a parent of a student to identify library books that cannot be borrowed by the student.

Library books are defined as electronic, print, and nonprint resources, excluding textbooks, for independent use by students and school personnel outside of the standard course of study for any grade or course. Library books can be held in a formal school library or in a classroom.

This bill was vetoed by the Governor on July 3, 2025, and that veto was overridden by the General Assembly on July 29, 2025. This section became effective July 29, 2025, and applies beginning with the 2025-2026 school year.

## **Restrictions on Sleeping Quarters – Prevent Sexual Exploitation/Women and Minors.**

SL 2025-84 (H805), Sec. 3.4

Section 3.4 of S.L. 2025-84 (House Bill 805) requires the governing bodies of public school units to adopt a policy prohibiting students from sharing sleeping quarters with a member of the other biological sex during any activity or event authorized by a school within the public school unit, except when authorized by the school when either (i) written permission is provided from the parents or legal guardians of all students sharing the sleeping quarters, or (ii) the member of the other biological sex is the student's immediate family member, which includes parent, brother, sister, or grandparent, including step and half relationships. Sleeping quarters are a room with a bed that is intended to be used to house a person overnight or other area designated for overnight sleep.

This bill was vetoed by the Governor on July 3, 2025, and that veto was overridden by the General Assembly on July 29, 2025. This section became effective July 29, 2025, and applies beginning with the 2025-2026 school year.

## **Maintain Coverage of Copays for Reduced-Price School Meals – Continuing Budget Operations.**

SL 2025-89 (H125), Sec. 2A.8

Section 2A.8 of S.L. 2025-89 (House Bill 125) requires local boards of education operating school nutrition programs to provide school meals at no cost to students who qualify for reduced-price meals under the federal National School Lunch Program or School Breakfast Program. If funds from alternate sources are insufficient to cover these costs, the Department of Public Instruction can use funds appropriated to the State Aid for Public Schools Fund for this purpose. Additionally, this section repeals a similar uncodified provision that only applied to the 2023-2024 biennium.

This section became effective July 1, 2025.

## **Revise Higher Education Accreditation Requirements – Continuing Budget Operations Part II.**

SL 2025-92 (H358), Sec. 2.11

Section 2.11 of S.L. 2025-92 (House Bill 358) revises accreditation requirements for constituent institutions of The University of North Carolina and community colleges in the State by doing the following:

- Defining "institutional accrediting agency" as an accrediting agency that is recognized as an institutional accrediting agency by the United States Department of Education.
- Defining "preferred accrediting agency" as an accrediting agency that (1) is an institutional accrediting agency and (2) is one of seven listed accrediting agencies including the Commission for Public Higher Education.
- Repealing the defined term "regional accrediting agency" and replacing references in statute to regional accrediting agencies with references to institutional or preferred accrediting agencies.
- Repealing provisions prohibiting consecutive accreditation by the same accrediting agency in consecutive accrediting cycles of a constituent institution or community college.
- Requiring that a constituent institution or community college maintain accreditation from a preferred accrediting agency.
- Providing that a constituent institution or community college can receive accreditation from an institution that is not a preferred accrediting agency, if the constituent institution or community college continues to maintain accreditation from a preferred accrediting agency.
- Requiring virtual education providers, other than North Carolina Virtual Public School, that partner with local school administrative units to be accredited by an accrediting agency such as Cognia or an institutional accrediting agency.
- Providing that private institutions that are not eligible to be considered for accreditation can be accredited by a nationally recognized accrediting agency that is designated by the State Education Assistance Authority.
- Making various other conforming and technical changes.

This section became effective September 30, 2025.

### **Advanced Teaching Roles - Limited Class Size Exception and Track Roles in Student Information System – Regulatory Reform Act of 2025.**

SL 2025-94 (H926), Sec. 7

Section 7 of S.L. 2025-94 (House Bill 926) allows the State Board of Education to authorize any local school administrative unit that received its final year of grant funding in the 2024-2025 school year to exceed the maximum class size requirements for the 2025-2026 and 2026-2027 school years. Additionally, this section requires the Department of Public Instruction to create designations in the student information system for teachers serving in advanced teaching roles.

This section became effective October 6, 2025.

### **Zoning Regulation/University Property – Regulatory Reform Act of 2025.**

SL 2025-94 (H926), Sec. 18

Section 18 of S.L. 2025-94 (House Bill 926) exempts on a Statewide basis any building project managed by the State Construction Office from local zoning and development regulations. This section would also exempt projects that are both: (i) managed by The University of North Carolina or any of its constituent institutions, and (ii) are in Buncombe, Orange, Watauga, or Wake County.

This section became effective October 6, 2025.

### **Increase NC Promise Tuition for Nonresidents – Continuing Budget Operations Part IV.**

SL 2025-97 (S449), Sec. 2.2

Section 2.2 of S.L. 2025-97 (Senate Bill 449) raises out-of-State tuition for new students enrolled at NC Promise institutions from \$2,500 per semester to \$3,500 per semester beginning in the 2026-2027 academic year. Out-of-State students enrolled at NC Promise institutions for the 2025-2026 academic year will continue to receive the lower rate of tuition while continuously enrolled.

This section became effective July 1, 2025.

### **Educational Choice for Children Act (ECCA).**

Ratified (H87)

House Bill 87 would authorize the North Carolina State Education Assistance Authority (NCSEAA) to certify and submit a list of qualifying scholarship granting organizations to the Secretary of the Treasury (Secretary).



The bill would voluntarily elect the State to (i) participate in the federal tax credit program for qualified elementary and secondary education scholarships established under § 25F of the Internal Revenue Code and (ii) identify scholarship granting organizations located in the State. NCSEAA would be required to submit to the Secretary and publish on its website a list of the scholarship granting organizations located in the State that meet the federal requirements. NCSEAA could establish rules governing the process and documentation necessary for an organization to be included on the list and enter into agreements with other State agencies to meet these requirements.

NCSEAA would be required to comply with all federal regulations regarding the administration of the federal tax credit program set in federal law to ensure that the State could participate in taxable years beginning after December 31, 2026. NCSEAA would establish any necessary rules by the later of July 1, 2026, or within 120 days of federal regulations being published.

Scholarship granting organizations would be authorized to provide scholarships for home school expenses to the extent allowed under federal law.

House Bill 87 was ratified by the General Assembly on July 31, 2025, and was vetoed by the Governor on August 6, 2025.

## **Freedom to Carry NC.**

Ratified (S50)

Senate Bill 50 would have made the following changes to the firearms laws of North Carolina:

- Created a new Article 54C in the General Statutes, which would have authorized the concealed carry of a handgun by any U.S. citizen, who is at least 18 years old, and who is not otherwise disqualified by law because of a disqualifying criminal conviction or otherwise. The list of disqualifying criteria would have mirrored the criteria contained in G.S. 14-415.12(b) which would disqualify a person from obtaining a concealed handgun permit.
- Allowed a person to carry a concealed handgun pursuant to Article 54B or Article 54C.
- Continued to authorize the issuance of concealed handgun permits for purposes of reciprocity with other states, efficiency of purchasing a firearm, and various other reasons.
- Eliminated an impaired driving conviction within the prior three years as a disqualifying event to obtaining a concealed handgun permit.
- Amended the current prohibitions against carrying a firearm into an assembly where a fee is charged for admission or an establishment where alcohol is served to only prohibit firearms in those locations if the person is consuming alcohol or has alcohol or a controlled substance remaining in their body.
- Amended several statutes that generally prohibit firearms in certain locations but provide an exception for a person with a concealed handgun permit, to modify the exception to reflect the creation of Article 54C.

- Amended the disqualifying criteria for restoration of firearm rights for a felon to remove a finding of probable cause for a felony from the list of disqualifying criteria. Being under indictment for a felony would have remained a disqualifier.

Section 1.9 of the bill would have increased the public safety employee death benefit to \$150,000.

Section 9.1 would have increased the punishment for assault with a firearm to a Class B1 felony if the assault is committed against one of the following:

- A law enforcement officer
- A probation officer
- A parole officer
- A member of the North Carolina National Guard
- An employee of a detention facility
- An emergency medical technician or other emergency health care provider
- A medical responder
- A firefighter
- A telecommunicator employed by a law enforcement agency.

Sections 15.5 and 15.6 would have amended the offense of possession of a firearm by a felon, which is a Class G felony, to include two new offenses as follows:

- A Class F felony for possession of a firearm by a felon during the commission or attempted commission of a felony under Chapter 14 or Article 5 of Chapter 90.
- A Class C felony for possession of a firearm by a felon when a firearm is discharged during the commission or attempted commission of a felony under Chapter 14 or Article 5 of Chapter 90.

Section 8 of S.L. 2025-71, which creates new offenses regarding possession of a firearm or weapon of mass death and destruction by a felon, is similar to the provisions in Section 15.5 and Section 15.6 of Senate Bill 50. Senate Bill 50 was ratified by the General Assembly on June 12, 2025, and vetoed by the Governor on June 20, 2025.

## **Children of Disabled First Responders Scholarship Program – Freedom to Carry NC.**

Ratified (S50), Sec. 16.7

Section 16.7 of Senate Bill 50 would require The University of North Carolina Board of Governors (BOG) to develop a scholarship program for any child of a law enforcement officer, correctional officer, firefighter, volunteer firefighter, or rescue squad worker who is permanently and totally disabled as a direct result of a traumatic injury sustained in the line of duty.

The scholarship would be available to children at least 17 years old but not yet 28 years old and could be used for the following:

- Tuition, fees, educational supplies, and boarding expenses not covered under Chapter 115B of the General Statutes (Tuition and Fee Waivers).
- Both undergraduate and graduate programs.

The BOG would be required to report to the Joint Legislative Education Oversight Committee on the establishment of the program no later than July 1, 2026.

Senate Bill 50 was ratified by the General Assembly on June 12, 2025, and was vetoed by the Governor on June 20, 2025.

### **University of North Carolina Constituent Institutions to Comply with Laws Related to Immigration – North Carolina Border Protection Act.**

Ratified (S153), Part VI

Part VI of Senate Bill 153 would prohibit constituent institutions of The University of North Carolina from having policies or procedures that limit the enforcement of federal immigration laws to less than the full extent permitted by federal law. Constituent institutions would not be allowed to do any of the following with respect to information about an individual's citizenship or immigration status:

- Prohibit law enforcement officials or agencies from gathering the information.
- Prohibit communication of the information to federal law enforcement agencies.

Senate Bill 153 was ratified by the General Assembly on June 10, 2025, and was vetoed by the Governor on June 20, 2025.

### **Eliminating "DEI" in Public Education.**

Ratified (S227)

Senate Bill 227 would prohibit public school units from doing the following:

- Engaging in or advocating for discriminatory practices.
- Compelling students, teachers, administrators, or other school employees to affirm or profess belief in divisive concepts.
- Providing instruction to students on divisive concepts.
- Engaging in activities related to professional development that include or advocate for divisive concepts or discriminatory practices.
- Maintaining an office or other unit (i) promoting discriminatory practices or divisive concepts or (ii) referred to as or named diversity, equity, and inclusion.
- Employing or assigning an employee whose duties for a public school unit include promoting discriminatory practices or divisive concepts.

The bill would prohibit the State Board of Education (SBE) from approving, providing, recommending, or requiring professional development that includes or advocates for divisive concepts or discriminatory practices. The SBE would not be able to:

- Approve, recommend, or require a professional educator to participate in that professional development.
- Develop, purchase, or provide the professional development.
- Contract with an entity for the professional development.
- Provide an entity access for the purpose of delivering the professional development.

No continuing education credit for professional educator license renewal could be awarded for any professional development that includes or advocates for divisive concepts or discriminatory practices.

The following would not be construed to be limited under the bill:

- Speech protected by the First Amendment of the United States Constitution.
- Materials accessed on an individual basis that advocate divisive concepts or discriminatory practices for research or independent study.
- Policies, procedures, or professional development required by State or federal law.
- Instruction on divisive concepts in accordance with the North Carolina Standard Course of Study when it is made clear that the public school unit does not sponsor, approve, or endorse any divisive concepts including instruction related to:
  - The history of an ethnic group as described in textbooks and instructional materials adopted in accordance with State law.
  - The impartial discussion of controversial aspects of history.
  - The impartial discussion of the historical oppression of a particular group of people based on race, ethnicity, class, nationality, religion, or geographic region.
  - Historical documents such as the United States Constitution and the writings of the founding fathers.

Discriminatory practice would be defined as any of the following based on an individual's protected classification under federal law:

- Treating an individual differently solely to advantage or disadvantage that individual as compared to other individuals or groups.
- Excluding an individual from employment, except as allowed under federal law.
- Excluding an individual from participation in an educational program or activity, except as allowed under federal law.

Divisive concepts would be defined as any of the following:

- One race or sex is inherently superior to another race or sex.
- An individual is inherently racist, sexist, or oppressive solely because of his or her race or sex.

- An individual should be discriminated against or receive adverse treatment solely or partly because of the individual's race or sex.
- Moral character is necessarily determined by an individual's race or sex.
- An individual solely by virtue of his or her race or sex bears responsibility for actions committed in the past by members of the same race or sex.
- An individual solely by virtue of his or her race or sex should feel discomfort, guilt, anguish or other psychological distress.
- A meritocracy is inherently racist or sexist.
- The United States was created by members of a particular race or sex for the purpose of oppressing members of another race or sex.
- Particular character traits, values, moral or ethical codes, privileges, or beliefs should be ascribed to a race or sex or to an individual because of the individual's race or sex.
- The rule of law does not exist but instead is a series of power relationships and struggles among racial or other groups.
- Americans are not created equal and not endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights, including life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.
- Governments should deny to any person within the government's jurisdiction the equal protection of the law.

By September 1 of each year, each public school unit would be required to certify in writing to the Department of Public Instruction (DPI) that it fully complies with the requirements of this bill and include any actions taken to achieve compliance. DPI must summarize the certifications in a report to the Joint Legislative Commission on Governmental Operations and the Joint Legislative Education Oversight Committee by January 15 of each year. For the certifications due by September 1, 2025, each public school unit would be required to include information on the initial implementation of these requirements, including reductions in force and spending, changes to job titles and position descriptions, and how savings achieved from these actions have been directed.

Senate Bill 227 was ratified by the General Assembly on June 26, 2025, and was vetoed by the Governor on July 3, 2025.

### **Eliminating "DEI" in Public Higher Education.**

Ratified (S558)

Senate Bill 558 would prohibit public institutions of higher education from doing any of the following:

- Engaging in or advocating for discriminatory practices.
- Compelling students, professors, administrators, or other employees to affirm or profess believe in divisive concepts.
- Endorsing divisive concepts.
- Maintaining an office, division, or other unit (i) promoting discriminatory practices or divisive concepts or (ii) referred to as or named diversity, equity, and inclusion.

- Employing or assigning an employee whose duties include promoting discriminatory practices or divisive concepts.
- Requiring completion of a course related to divisive concepts for purposes of awarding a degree or completing a program, unless approved by the chancellor of the institution.

These prohibitions would not apply to any of the following:

- Speech protected by the First Amendment of the United States Constitution.
- Materials accessed on an individual basis for research or independent study that advocate for divisive concepts or discriminatory practices.
- Policies or procedures required by State or federal law.
- Instruction or discussion on divisive concepts that makes it clear the public institution of higher education does not endorse the divisive concepts.

Discriminatory practices would be defined as doing any of the following based on an individual's protected classification under federal law:

- Treating an individual differently solely to advantage or disadvantage that individual as compared to other individuals or groups.
- Excluding an individual from employment, except as allowed under federal law.
- Excluding an individual from participation in an educational program or activity, except as allowed under federal law.

Divisive concepts would include any of the following:

- One race or sex is inherently superior to another race or sex.
- An individual, solely by virtue of his or her race or sex, is inherently racist, sexist, or oppressive.
- An individual should be discriminated against or receive adverse treatment solely or partly because of his or her race or sex.
- An individual's moral character is necessarily determined by his or her race or sex.
- An individual, solely by virtue of his or her race or sex, bears responsibility for actions committed in the past by other members of the same race or sex.
- Any individual, solely by virtue of his or her race or sex, should feel discomfort, guilt, anguish, or any other form of psychological distress.
- A meritocracy is inherently racist or sexist.
- The United States was created by members of a particular race or sex for the purpose of oppressing members of another race or sex.
- Particular character traits, values, moral or ethical codes, privileges, or beliefs should be ascribed to a race or sex or to an individual because of the individual's race or sex.
- The rule of law does not exist but instead is a series of power relationships and struggles among racial or other groups.
- All Americans are not created equal and are not endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights, including life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.
- Governments should deny to any person within the government's jurisdiction the equal protection of the law.

Public institutions of higher education would be required to certify annually in writing by September 1 to their applicable governing board that they fully comply with the bill's requirements. The University of North Carolina Board of Governors and the State Board of Community Colleges would be required to summarize the relevant certifications and submit a consolidated report by January 15 annually to the Joint Legislative Commission on Governmental Operations and the Joint Legislative Education Oversight Committee. For the first certifications due September 1, 2025, public institutions of higher education would have to include information on the initial implementation of the requirements, including reductions in force and spending, changes to job titles and position descriptions, and how savings achieved from these actions have been directed.

The bill would also prohibit constituent institutions and community colleges from establishing, maintaining, or otherwise implementing a process for reporting or investigating offensive or unwanted speech that is protected by the First Amendment, including satire or speech labeled as microaggression.

Senate Bill 558 was ratified by the General Assembly on June 26, 2025, and was vetoed by the Governor on July 3, 2025.