

GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA
SESSION 2025

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SENATE BILL 820

Short Title: Safe Schools and Educational Access Act. (Public)

Sponsors: Senators Theodros and Murdock (Primary Sponsors).

Referred to: Rules and Operations of the Senate

April 23, 2026

1 A BILL TO BE ENTITLED
2 AN ACT TO PROTECT ACCESS TO EDUCATION FOR ALL STUDENTS REGARDLESS
3 OF NATIONAL ORIGIN OR IMMIGRATION STATUS, TO ESTABLISH
4 EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS AS PROTECTED LOCATIONS FOR IMMIGRATION
5 ENFORCEMENT, AND TO INCREASE FUNDING FOR STUDENTS WITH LIMITED
6 ENGLISH PROFICIENCY.

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

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

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

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

15 Whereas, North Carolina's population of multilingual learners continues to grow,
16 requiring additional support for language instruction and academic success; Now, therefore,
17 The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

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

20 "**§ 115C-378.5. Protections for individuals based on immigration status.**

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

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

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

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

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

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



1 **"§ 115D-20.3. Protections for individuals based on immigration status.**

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

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

6 **"§ 116-40.15. Protections for individuals based on immigration status.**

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

31 **"§ 115C-472.30. Limited English proficient allotment.**

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

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

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

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