



HOUSE BILL 581: Career Pathways Transparency Act.

2025-2026 General Assembly

Committee:	House Education - K-12. If favorable, re-refer to Appropriations. If favorable, re-refer to Rules, Calendar, and Operations of the House	Date:	May 6, 2025
Introduced by:	Reps. Johnson, Winslow, Paré, Tyson	Prepared by:	Samantha Yarborough Committee Counsel
Analysis of:	First Edition		

OVERVIEW: *House Bill 581 would do the following:*

- *Require the North Carolina State Education Assistance Authority to provide information on employment needs for each prosperity zone and provide outcomes data for vocational and technical schools through the "Know Before You Go" website.*
- *Require that 10th grade students be provided certain information about postsecondary education and career options and create a grant program for local boards of education to use to provide 10th grade students the information.*

CURRENT LAW: G.S. 116-209.16A requires the North Carolina State Education Assistance Authority (SEAA) to provide information on the "Know Before You Go" website to students and parents to assist in selecting majors for postsecondary education or career options. SEAA is required to provide information on the projected employment needs in the labor economy, including the salary ranges, potential college majors, and institutions of higher education (IHEs) providing those majors. SEAA must also provide information on the outcomes of students attending North Carolina public and private IHEs, including completion rates, transfer rates, percentage of students receiving financial aid, average loan debt, average salary, and employment rates.

G.S. 143B-28.1 divides the State into the eight prosperity zones: Western, Northwest, Southwest, Piedmont-Triad (Central), North Central, Sandhills (South Central), Northeast, and Southeast.

Article 8 of Chapter 115D governs proprietary schools, which are institutions that educate or train students in a program leading toward (i) examinations for licensing in a profession or vocation, (ii) employment at a beginning or advanced level, or (iii) a postsecondary educational credential below the associate degree level.

Chapter 116E establishes the North Carolina Longitudinal Data System to coordinate data sharing among State agencies and contain individual-level student data and workforce data from all levels of education and the State's workforce.

BILL ANALYSIS:

Section 1 would require SEAA to provide information on the projected employment needs of each prosperity zone, including the highest demand career areas.

SEAA would be required to provide the following data on the outcomes of public and private IHEs and vocational and technical schools:

- Completion rates within the expected number of semesters for the degree sought.

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- Transfer rates of students to other institutions.
- Average tuition.
- Percentage of students receiving financial aid, by type of aid.
- Average and median amount of loan debt upon student graduation by major.
- Average monthly student loan payment.
- Average and median salary by major.
- Percentage of graduates employed within 6 months of graduation by major.
- Percentage of graduates enrolled in graduate school within 6 months of graduation by major.

Section 2 would require the State Board of Education and the Department of Public Instruction (DPI) to collaborate with the Department of Commerce and the Department of Labor in collecting data for local boards of education to provide to 10th grade students about their postsecondary education choices and professional futures.

Section 3 would require each local board of education to provide a program for students in the 10th grade informing them about their postsecondary education choices and professional futures.

Section 4 would require the Department of Commerce, the Department of Labor, and the Department of Public Instruction to collect and compile data annually for the "Know Before You Go" website maintained by SEAA by using the longitudinal data system. The data would be compiled as soon as practicable.

Section 5 would appropriate \$500,000 to create a grant program for local boards of education to apply for funds to provide 10th grade students with the information about their postsecondary education choices and professional futures. DPI would establish application criteria for the grants. Grant funds would be used to promote and distribute materials, including printing and distribution costs, or to hire or pay supplemental compensation to career coaches or career development coordinators.

EFFECTIVE DATE: Sections 1 and 3 of House Bill 581 would be effective January 1, 2026. The grant program would be effective July 1, 2025. The remainder of the bill would be effective when it becomes law.