



2015-2016 General Assembly

HOUSE BILL 1030: 2016 Appropriations Act, Sec. 8.21: Pilot Program to Raise the High School Dropout Age from Sixteen to Eighteen

Committee:		Date:	August 5, 2016
Introduced by:		Prepared by:	Drupti Chauhan Staff Attorney
Analysis of:	Sec. 8.21 of S.L. 2016-94		

OVERVIEW: *Sec. 8.21 of S.L. 2016-94 directs the State Board of Education (SBE) to authorize the Hickory Public Schools, the Newton-Conover City Schools, and the Rutherford County Schools to establish and implement a pilot program to increase the high school dropout age from 16 to the completion of a school year coinciding with the calendar year in which a student reaches 18 years of age, unless the student has previously graduated from high school. However, the SBE may not authorize a pilot program in Catawba County before it receives a copy of a joint resolution adopted by the boards of education for the Hickory Public Schools and the Newton-Conover City Schools setting forth a date to begin establishment and implementation of the pilot program. Additionally, the SBE may not authorize a pilot program in Rutherford County before it receives a copy of a resolution adopted by the board of education for the Rutherford County Schools setting forth a date to begin establishment and implementation of the pilot program.*

The local boards of education of these local school administrative units (LEAs) must prescribe specific rules to address when a student who is 18 years of age can be excused from attendance. An example would be enlistment in the Armed Forces. The LEAs can use any funds available to implement the pilot program to employ up to three additional teachers and fund additional student-related costs such as transportation and technology costs. The LEAs may also use any available funds to operate a night school program for students at-risk of dropping out of high school. To the extent possible, the Hickory Public Schools and Newton-Conover City Schools must partner with Catawba Valley Community College and Rutherford County Schools must partner with Isothermal Community College in administering the pilot program.

The LEAs, in collaboration with the SBE, must report to the Joint Legislative Education Oversight Committee, the House Appropriations Subcommittee on Education, and the Senate Appropriations Committee on Education/Higher Education on or before January 15, 2018, and by January 15 of each even-numbered year thereafter until the end of the pilot programs. The report must contain all of the following information:

- An analysis of the graduation rate in each LEA and the impact of the pilot program on the graduation rate.*
- The teen crime statistics for Catawba County and Rutherford County.*
- The number of reported cases of violations of compulsory attendance laws in Catawba County and Rutherford County and the disposition of those cases.*
- Implementation of enforcement mechanisms for violations of the compulsory attendance law and the disposition of those cases.*

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- *The number of at-risk students served in any night programs established as part of the pilot program and student graduation and performance outcomes for those students.*
- *All relevant data to assist in determining the effectiveness of the program and specific legislative recommendations, including the continuation, modification, or expansion of the program statewide.*

This section became effective July 1, 2016.