



HOUSE BILL 704: Divide School Systems/Study Committee.

2017-2018 General Assembly

Committee:	Senate Rules and Operations of the Senate	Date:	June 28, 2017
Introduced by:	Reps. Brawley, Malone, Bradford	Prepared by:	Kara McCraw Staff Attorney
Analysis of:	First Edition		

OVERVIEW: *HB 704 would authorize the Joint Legislative Study Committee on the Division of Local School Administrative Units to study issues related to division of local school administrative units (LEAs).*

CURRENT LAW: Article 7 of the Chapter 115C of the General Statutes provides statutory authority for merger of contiguous LEAs in adjacent counties as well as mergers of city and county LEAs within the same county, subject to approval by the State Board of Education The General Statutes do not provide a process for division of an existing LEA.

BILL ANALYSIS: HB 704 would establish the Joint Legislative Study Committee on the Division of Local School Administrative Units (Committee) to meet during the 2017-2018 interim and study issues related to division of local school administrative units (LEAs).

- **Membership:** The committee would consist of 5 members of the Senate (including a co-chair) appointed by the President Pro Tempore, and 5 members from the House of Representatives (including a co-chair) appointed by the Speaker of the House.
- **Duties:** The Committee would study and make recommendations on the following:
 - The feasibility and advisability of permitting LEA merged from separate units to be divided into separate LEAs once again.
 - The varied and best ways by which the division of a LEA could be achieved.
 - Whether legislation permitting division of LEAs should require as a prerequisite a majority vote of the qualified voters of the county through a referendum or election.
 - Whether legislation permitting the division of LEAs should require as a prerequisite a petition from a percentage of qualified county voters.
 - Any other issue the Committee considers relevant to this study.
- **Final Report:** The Committee would submit a final report on or before May 1, 2018, to the Office of the President Pro Tempore of the Senate, the Office of the Speaker of the House of Representatives, the Joint Legislative Education Oversight Committee, and the Legislative Library. The Committee would terminate on May 1, 2018, or upon the filing of its final report, whichever occurs first.

EFFECTIVE DATE: HB 704 would become effective when it becomes law.

BACKGROUND: Currently there are 115 LEAs in the State. Each county has an LEA. In addition, 11 counties have both a county LEA as well as 1 or 2 city LEAs within the county. Since 1960, there have been 45 mergers of city and county LEAs in North Carolina. There have been no mergers of county LEAs.

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