



HOUSE BILL 151: Katelyn's Law.

2019-2020 General Assembly

Committee:	House Rules, Calendar, and Operations of the House	Date:	April 11, 2019
Introduced by:	Rep. Lambeth	Prepared by:	Samantha Yarborough*
Analysis of:	Second Edition		Staff Attorney

OVERVIEW: *House Bill 151 would require the State Board of Education to adopt rules excusing absences for students attending a legislative event or serving as a Governor's page, and would ensure that certain excused absences do not affect a student's participation in an approved attendance recognition program.*

CURRENT LAW: G.S. 115C-378 requires every parent, guardian, or custodian having charge or control of a child between the ages of seven and 16 to ensure that the child attends school. G.S. 115C-379 authorizes the State Board of Education to determine what is considered an unlawful absence, and what causes might constitute legitimate excuses for temporary nonattendance, such as service as a legislative page or a Governor's page. Additionally, a minimum of two excused absences each academic year must be allowed for religious observances required by the faith of a student or the student's parents. Students can be required to give advance notice of absences for religious observances, but the students must be given the opportunity to make up any tests or other work missed.

G.S. 115C-382.5 encourages local boards of education to adopt student attendance recognition programs. If the local board adopts such a program, a student's absence due to service as a legislative page or a Governor's page must not be part of the student's record of attendance for the purpose of the program.

BILL ANALYSIS: House Bill 151 would do the following:

- Require the State Board of Education to adopt rules that would treat student attendance at a legislative event and service as a Governor's page as an excused absence.

A legislative event is defined as an event sanctioned by at least one chamber of the North Carolina General Assembly that a student attends for an educational, civic, or familial purpose, including, but not limited to:

- Service as a legislative page.
 - Attendance at the legislative swearing-in ceremony of a parent or grandparent.
 - Attendance at an event in which the student's relative is receiving special recognition by the General Assembly.
- For excused absences due to attendance at legislative events or service as a Governor's page, authorize the State Board to adopt rules requiring advance notice of requests for excused absences. Students must be given the opportunity to make up any tests of other work missed due to an excused absence.

Karen Cochrane-Brown
Director



Legislative Analysis
Division
919-733-2578

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- Include attendance at a legislative event as an absence that would be prohibited from being part of a student's record of attendance for the purpose of any attendance recognition program adopted by the local board of education.

EFFECTIVE DATE: The act would be effective when it becomes law and would apply beginning with the 2019-2020 school year.

**Brian Gwyn and Jessica Sammons, Staff Attorneys, substantially contributed to this summary.*