



# SENATE BILL 105: 2021 Appropriations Act, Sec. 7.61: Student Digital Learning Access

2021-2022 General Assembly

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| <b>Committee:</b>     |                            | <b>Date:</b>        | February 23, 2022            |
| <b>Introduced by:</b> |                            | <b>Prepared by:</b> | Brian Gwyn<br>Staff Attorney |
| <b>Analysis of:</b>   | Sec. 7.61 of S.L. 2021-180 |                     |                              |

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**OVERVIEW:** *Section 7.61 of S.L. 2021-180 requires the State Board of Education (SBE) to establish and maintain a publicly available digital learning dashboard that displays specified categories of information on student access to digital devices both in-school and out-of-school, as well as out-of-school internet connectivity. The dashboard must provide details such as the source of the digital devices, types of devices, and reasons for lack of devices or internet connectivity, where applicable. The information must be disaggregated by public school unit, school, and grade level.*

*Public school units must annually submit the required information by November 15 each year. By February 15 each year, the SBE must report to the Joint Legislative Education Oversight Committee (JLEOC) on statewide trends reflected in the dashboard, successes and continued challenges in ensuring all students have digital learning access both in and out of school, and recommendations on ways to continue to close the digital learning accessibility gap. For the 2021-2022 school year only, public school units must submit required information by January 15, 2022, and the SBE must submit its report based on this information by April 15, 2022.*

*Additionally, for the 2019-2020 and 2020-2021 school years, the Department of Public Instruction and the Department of Information Technology (Departments), in collaboration with the Friday Institute for Educational Innovation at North Carolina State University, must collect data from public school units at the most granular level possible for a statewide assessment of student internet and device access during the COVID-19 pandemic. In completing the assessment, the Departments must review the available data to identify the following:*

- *Scope of students who lack out-of-school internet access or devices at home.*
- *Reasons students lack such access.*
- *Methods students and schools used to address the lack of access during the 2019-2020 and 2020-2021 school years.*

*The Departments must use the assessment to make recommendations for policies to close the student digital access gap and for approaches to maintain current data on the student digital access gap. The Superintendent of Public Instruction (State Superintendent) must coordinate access to available data for the Departments and the reporting of the Departments' recommendations. By January 15, 2022, the State Superintendent must report to JLEOC on the assessment of the student digital access gap. By January 15, 2022, the SBE must combine the NC Digital Learning and Media Inventory with the new digital learning dashboard.*

*This section became effective November 18, 2021.*

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