



HOUSE BILL 166: American Indians Graduating with Honors Act.

2023-2024 General Assembly

Committee: Senate Education/Higher Education. If **Date:** May 31, 2023
favorable, re-refer to Rules and Operations of
the Senate

Introduced by: Reps. Lowery, Gillespie, B. Jones, Clampitt **Prepared by:** Andrew Worrell,
Analysis of: Second Edition Legal Extern,
Kara McCraw
Staff Attorney

OVERVIEW: *HB 166 would require public schools to allow enrolled members of a State or federally recognized Indian Tribe, and those eligible to be members, to wear objects of cultural significance at school graduation ceremonies.*

CURRENT LAW: G.S. 115C-390.2 authorizes governing bodies of public school units to adopt student discipline policies, which may include dress code policies. The North Carolina Court of Appeals, in *Fowler v. Williamson*, 39 N.C.App. 715 (1979) held that "a school may adopt a dress code and may exclude a student from participating in certain school programs, including graduation ceremonies, if the student does not comply with the dress code."

BILL ANALYSIS: The 2nd Edition of HB 166 would authorize American Indian students who are enrolled members, or are eligible to be members, of a federal or State recognized Indian Tribe to wear feathers or plumes when participating as a graduate in a public school graduation ceremony.

EFFECTIVE DATE: HB 166 would become effective when it becomes law.

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