



HOUSE BILL 389: Child Care Workforce Pilot Program.

2025-2026 General Assembly

Committee:	House Health. If favorable, re-refer to Rules, Calendar, and Operations of the House	Date:	April 1, 2025
Introduced by:	Reps. Arp, Lambeth, Bell, Strickland	Prepared by:	Debbie Griffiths
Analysis of:	PCS to First Edition H389-CSCI-13		Staff Attorney

OVERVIEW: *The Proposed Committee (PCS) Substitute to House Bill 389 would create a child care academy workforce pilot program contingent on appropriation of funds to the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS), Division of Child Development and Early Education (DCDEE), to be allocated to the North Carolina Partnership for Children, Inc. (NCPC) for the development and implementation of the pilot program.*

BILL ANALYSIS: The PCS to House Bill 389 would do the following:

SECTIONS 1, 2, and 3. Establish a statewide two-year pilot program expanding the child care workforce academies currently operating in Johnston and Wayne for individuals with no experience or education in child care who are interested in pursuing a career in child care. Smart Start local partnerships (local partnerships) in Johnston and Wayne counties would be included in the pilot program in addition to 10 other local partnerships across the four local partnership regions of the NCPC network. The North Carolina Community Colleges System Office would be responsible for verifying that the academies' content meets the requirements for receipt of the North Carolina Early Childhood Education credential.

SECTION 4. Requirements for the academies would include:

- Each academy must have enrollment of no less than 10 students with a goal 15 students.
- Each academy must be operational up to eight hours per day over a two- to three-week period making sure that equivalent instructional hours for EDU 119 or EDU 3119 are met to enable academy graduates to be credentialed as a lead teacher.
- Each academy partnership must strive to offer the academy up to three times per year with one of the academies being offered at the end of the traditional public school calendar year to allow participation by high school and college students.
- Each academy must be offered free-of-charge and provide the knowledge, skills, and training, including the necessary health screenings, background checks, and fingerprinting, required for a lead teacher in a licensed child care program in the State.

Upon successful completion of the academy, the student would receive the North Carolina Early Childhood credential and would be eligible to begin work in a licensed childcare program in the State as a lead teacher.

SECTION 5. NCPC and the local partnerships would be required to (i) collaborate with the community college or colleges in which the local partnership operates to implement the academy and to (ii) make sure information about the academy is available to the public.

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SECTION 6. NCPC, the local partnerships, and the local community colleges participating in the pilot program would be required to collaborate to prepare and submit a progress report on the academies, including any concerns or recommendations for expansion of the pilot program, by March 31, 2026, and a final report would be required by December 31, 2026. Submission of both reports would be to the Joint Legislative Oversight Committee on Health and Human Services and the Fiscal Research Division.

SECTION 7.(a) The provisions of the act would become effective only if funds are appropriated to DHHS, DCDEE to be allocated to NCPC for one or both years of the 2025-2027 fiscal biennium for the purpose of the development and implementation of the pilot program.

SECTION 7.(b) If the appropriation in Section 7.(a) is made, a local partnership could provide each graduate a one-time stipend of not less than \$150. After completing one year of employment as a lead teacher in a licensed child care program in the State, a graduate would be eligible to receive an additional one-time stipend of \$500.00.

EFFECTIVE DATE: The act would become effective when it becomes law.