



HOUSE BILL 971: Career Development Adjustment.

2025-2026 General Assembly

Committee:	House Education - K-12. If favorable, re-refer to Rules, Calendar, and Operations of the House	Date:	April 29, 2025
Introduced by:	Reps. Blackwell, Torbett, Willis, Reeder	Prepared by:	Brian Gwyn
Analysis of:	First Edition		Committee Co-Counsel

OVERVIEW: *House Bill 971 would establish a pilot program for reviewing career development plans annually in select schools.*

CURRENT LAW: G.S. 115C-158.10 requires all middle and high school students enrolled in a local school administrative unit to complete a career development plan. Students cannot be promoted from eighth grade before creating a career development plan and students cannot be promoted from 10th grade until the plan has been revised.

BILL ANALYSIS: The bill would require the Superintendent of Public Instruction to create an Annual Career Development Plan Pilot Program (Program) for students entering seventh grade at select schools during the 2025-2026 and 2026-2027 school years and continuing through the students' graduation from high school. The purpose of the Program would be to evaluate the benefits of reviewing students' Career Development Plans (Plans) annually rather than only in eighth and 10th grade.

The Superintendent of Public Instruction would be required to select 12 partnered schools to participate in the Program. Partnered schools would be required to have each student entering the seventh grade during the 2025-2026 and 2026-2027 school years complete an annual review of the plans.

The local boards of education governing the partnered schools would be required to ensure that students in partnered schools are provided assistance by a school counselor and planning time during the instructional day each school year to update their Plans prior to scheduling courses for the next school year. Local boards of education would be required to ensure that Plans are easily accessible to parents and students and provide annual notice of information related to the Plans.

School counselors in partnered schools would be required to do the following:

- Attempt to meet with parents prior to creating or updating a student's Plan.
- Beginning in 10th grade, provide each student and parent information regarding State and federal need-based and merit-based financial aid programs, including the federal free application for federal student aid (FAFSA).
- Notify parents that information included in the FAFSA is confidential and not accessible by the school.

Partnered schools would be required to provide the following information prior to each annual Plan update:

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Legislative Analysis
Division
919-733-2578

House Bill 971

Page 2

- For eighth grade students, by the end of the school year, a list of the required core courses to be taken in ninth and tenth grade.
- For tenth grade students, an identification of the graduation requirements relevant to the student's chosen postsecondary goals based on the student's career development planning.
- For eleventh grade students not meeting the career and college readiness standards established by the State Board of Community Colleges, a plan for enrolling in remedial coursework for his or her senior year.
- Any other minimum requirements established by the Superintendent.

The Superintendent of Public Instruction or a local board of education would be required to develop reporting requirements for partnered schools. The Superintendent would be required to report the Joint Legislative Education Oversight Committee by August 15, 2026, and each year thereafter on the progress of the program, including any logistical issues that have been identified.

EFFECTIVE DATE: The bill would be effective when it becomes law.