SENATE BILL 257: 2026 Appropriations Act, Sec. 8A.14: Advise NC

2025-2026 General Assembly

Analysis of: S.L. 2026-41, Sec. 8A.14

Date: August 27, 2026

Prepared by: Legislative Analysis Division Staff

Section 8A.14 of S.L. 2026-41 (Senate Bill 257), as amended by Section 3.23 of S.L. 2026-61 (House Bill 268), requires the State Education Assistance Authority (SEAA) to establish the Advise NC College Access Initiative (Initiative). To implement the Initiative, SEAA will coordinate with education partners and other stakeholders to place college access advisors in high-need or underserved regions of the State. Education partners are entities providing college access and advising information in this State, including constituent institutions of The University of North Carolina, community colleges, and private postsecondary institutions of higher education.

SEAA must provide matching State funds to education partners to place college access advisors in high-need or underserved regions of the State. SEAA can only allocate State funds to education partners when coupled with matching non-State funds from non-State entities. In allocating State and non-State funds to education partners, SEAA must match $1 in State funds for every $1 in non-State funds.

SEAA can use a portion of the State and non-State funds for actual administrative costs associated with the Initiative. These costs can include one or more full-time positions to coordinate the Initiative, information technology upgrades, maintenance, and other costs.

By February 15 of each year, SEAA must report to the Joint Legislative Education Oversight Committee on at least the following information from the prior fiscal year:

- Non-State funds received and allocated pursuant to this section and the identity of the non-State entities providing those funds.
- The identity of each education partner and the amount of State and non-State funds received by that education partner.
- The number of college advisors in the State supported by the Initiative and the region of the State in which each college advisor is placed.
- The total funds expended for administration of the Initiative, disaggregated on the basis of State and non-State funds.
- Funds used by SEAA for administrative costs, the specific administrative uses of those funds, and the source of those funds.

SEAA must submit an interim report for the 2026-2027 fiscal year by April 15, 2027.

For the 2026-2027 fiscal year, the Board of Governors of The University of North Carolina must allocate $2.5 million in nonrecurring funds to SEAA for the Initiative. These funds do not revert at the end of the 2026-2027 fiscal year and remain available until the end of the 2027-2028 fiscal year.

This section became effective July 1, 2026.