



2025-2026 General Assembly

SENATE BILL 257: 2026 Appropriations Act, Sec. 7.31: Northeast Regional School of Biotechnology and Agriscience

Analysis of: S.L. 2026-41, Sec. 7.31

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Section 7.31 of S.L. 2026-41 (Senate Bill 257) repeals the statutes governing regional schools (Part 10 of Article 16 of Chapter 115C of the General Statutes) and replaces them with Article 15A of Chapter 115C of the General Statutes governing the Northeast Regional School of Biotechnology and Agriscience (NERSBA), including making conforming changes to references throughout the statutes. This section makes the following changes to the regional school structure:

- Creates NERSBA as a public school unit with charter-like flexibility serving grades 7-12 governed by a board of directors.
- Establishes the region served by NERSBA as Beaufort, Bertie, Camden, Chowan, Currituck, Dare, Edgecombe, Gates, Halifax, Hertford, Hyde, Martin, Northampton, Pasquotank, Perquimans, Pitt, Tyrrell, and Washington Counties.
- Requires the board of directors to consist of the following members:
 - Three members appointed by the Superintendent of Public Instruction (Superintendent) who are members of a local board of education or superintendents of a local school administrative unit in counties where at least 5% of the students enrolled in NERSBA reside.
 - Five members appointed by the State Board of Education (SBE) who are representatives of the business community, upon the recommendation of the North Carolina Economic Developers Association, who reside in a county where at least 5% of the students enrolled in NERSBA reside. At least one must be a resident of the county where NERSBA is located.
 - One member of the Parent Advisory Council appointed by the Council. The Parent Advisory Council is made up of parents of students attending NERSBA appointed by the Superintendent from each county where at least 5% of the students enrolled in NERSBA reside.
 - Representatives of any partner institution of higher education can serve as ex officio members.
- Establishes that students domiciled in a county served by NERSBA are eligible to attend the school and allows the board of directors to set admission criteria, standards, and procedures.

The terms of members currently serving on a regional school board of directors terminate on June 30, 2027. Initial appointments to the board of directors of NERSBA begin July 1, 2027. To establish a stagger of terms on the board, the Superintendent must appoint two members to two-year terms and one member

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to a four-year term; the SBE must appoint two members to two-year terms and three members to four-year terms. After the initial terms, all members will be appointed to four-year terms.

The (i) title and ownership of all property of the regional school established under Part 10 of Article 16 of Chapter 115C of the General Statutes, (ii) all claims and demands against the school, and (iii) all obligations and liabilities against the school will be vested in and transferred to NERSBA, as established by Article 15A of Chapter 115C of the General Statutes, by July 1, 2027.

This section became effective July 1, 2026.