



SENATE BILL 257: 2026 Appropriations Act, Sec. 7.62: Schools for the Deaf and Blind Amendments

2025-2026 General Assembly

Analysis of: S.L. 2026-41, Sec. 7.62

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Section 7.62 of S.L. 2026-41 (Senate Bill 257) transfers the Early Learning Sensory Support Program for Vision from the Department of Public Instruction (DPI) to the Governor Morehead School for the Blind as a Type I transfer. This section also transfers the Early Learning Sensory Support Program for Hearing from DPI to the Eastern North Carolina School for the Deaf (ENCSD) and the North Carolina School for the Deaf (NCSD) as a Type I transfer.

This section makes the following modifications to the laws governing the schools for the deaf and blind (specialty schools):

- Includes the Early Learning Sensory Support Program for Vision as a part of the Governor Morehead School for the Blind.
- Includes the Early Learning Sensory Support Program for Hearing (Program for Hearing) as part of the ENCSD and NCSD. The ENCSD and NCSD must enter into a memorandum of understanding that allows the schools to do all the following:
 - Divide the administrative responsibilities for the Program for Hearing between the schools based on the geographic boundaries for enrollment in the schools.
 - Facilitate the provision of Program for Hearing services to individuals, groups, municipalities, and counties.
 - Enter into and manage contracts for goods and services for the Program for Hearing under a single contract.
- Removes the requirement that the Department of Administration provide support for information technology to the specialty schools.
- Allows the board of trustees of a specialty school to conduct remote meetings without a declaration of emergency.
- Clarifies that the superintendent of a specialty school is not required to reside in the county in which the school is located, unless required by the board of trustees of the specialty school.

The transfers of the Early Learning Sensory Support Program for Vision and the Early Learning Sensory Support Program for Hearing become effective December 1, 2026.

The remainder of this section became effective July 1, 2026.

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