

GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA
SESSION 2017

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SENATE BILL 662*

Short Title: Charter School Transportation Grant Program. (Public)

Sponsors: Senator Smith-Ingram (Primary Sponsor).

Referred to: Rules and Operations of the Senate

April 5, 2017

1 A BILL TO BE ENTITLED
2 AN ACT TO PROVIDE FOR A GRANT PROGRAM FOR CHARTER SCHOOLS TO
3 RECEIVE FUNDS TO COVER A CERTAIN PERCENTAGE OF THEIR STUDENT
4 TRANSPORTATION COSTS.

5 The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

6 SECTION 1. Article 14A of Chapter 115C of the General Statutes is amended by
7 adding a new section to read:

8 "**§ 115C-218.106. Charter School Transportation Grant Program.**

9 (a) Purpose. – The Department of Public Instruction shall establish the Charter School
10 Transportation Grant Program (Program). The purpose of the Program shall be to award grant
11 funds to a charter school for the reimbursement of a certain percentage of eligible student
12 transportation costs incurred by the school in accordance with the provisions of this section.

13 (b) Program Eligibility. – A charter school may apply to the Department of Public
14 Instruction for grant funds under the Program to be reimbursed for a percentage of the eligible
15 student transportation costs incurred by the school for each semester of the school year as
16 follows:

17 (1) A charter school with a student enrollment of at least fifty percent (50%) of
18 its students residing in households with an income level not in excess of the
19 amount required for a student to qualify for the federal free or reduced-price
20 lunch program shall be eligible for a reimbursement of sixty-five percent
21 (65%) of its eligible costs.

22 (2) A charter school with a student enrollment of less than fifty percent (50%) of
23 its students residing in households with an income level not in excess of the
24 amount required for a student to qualify for the federal free or reduced-price
25 lunch program shall be eligible for a reimbursement of twenty-five percent
26 (25%) of its eligible costs.

27 (c) Applications. – By August 1 of each year, the Department shall establish the criteria
28 and guidelines for the grant application process for the upcoming school year, including criteria
29 for eligible student transportation costs to be covered under the Program and any
30 documentation required to be submitted with the application. The Department shall accept
31 applications until December 31 for eligible student transportation costs incurred during the fall
32 semester of the school year and until June 30 for eligible student transportation costs incurred
33 during the spring semester of the school year.

34 (d) Award of Funds. – From funds available for the Program, the Department of Public
35 Instruction shall award grant funds under the Program to charter schools by January 15 for
36 eligible costs incurred during the fall semester of the school year and by July 15 for eligible



1 costs incurred during the spring semester of the prior school year. If the funds appropriated for
2 the Program in a fiscal year are insufficient, the Department may use other funds within the
3 State Public School Fund for this purpose.

4 (e) Reporting. – The Department of Public Instruction shall report by March 15 of each
5 year to the Fiscal Research Division and the Joint Legislative Education Oversight Committee
6 on the administration of the grant program for the prior year, including (i) the amount of grant
7 funds awarded to charter schools, (ii) the number of charter schools that received a sixty-five
8 percent (65%) reimbursement of eligible student transportation costs, (iii) the number of
9 schools that received a twenty-five percent (25%) reimbursement of eligible student
10 transportation costs, (iv) the types of student transportation costs eligible for reimbursement
11 under the Program, and (v) an estimate of the cost of the Program for the upcoming fiscal
12 year."

13 **SECTION 2.** There is appropriated from the General Fund to the Department of
14 Public Instruction the sum of two million five hundred thousand dollars (\$2,500,000) in
15 recurring funds to be used to award grant funds to charter schools for the reimbursement of a
16 percentage of eligible student transportation costs incurred by charter schools in accordance
17 with G.S. 115C-218.106, as enacted by Section 1 of this act.

18 **SECTION 3.** This act becomes effective July 1, 2017.