

GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA
SESSION 2023

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HOUSE BILL 136

Short Title: Arts High School Diploma Endorsement. (Public)

Sponsors: Representatives Elmore, K. Hall, and Carney (Primary Sponsors).

For a complete list of sponsors, refer to the North Carolina General Assembly web site.

Referred to: Education - K-12, if favorable, Rules, Calendar, and Operations of the House

February 20, 2023

1 A BILL TO BE ENTITLED
2 AN ACT TO REQUIRE THE STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION TO CREATE AN ARTS
3 PROFICIENCY HIGH SCHOOL DIPLOMA ENDORSEMENT AND TO MAKE
4 VARIOUS CONFORMING CHANGES.

5 The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

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7 **PART I. ARTS PROFICIENCY DIPLOMA ENDORSEMENT**

8 **SECTION 1.(a)** Article 8 of Chapter 115C of the General Statutes is amended by
9 adding a new Part to read:

10 "Part 1D. High School Graduation.

11 "§ 115C-83.30. Reserved for future codification purposes.

12 "§ 115C-83.31. Exit standards and graduation requirements.

13 (a) The State Board of Education shall require the following for high school graduation:

14 (1) Successful completion of instruction in cardiopulmonary resuscitation as
15 provided in G.S. 115C-81.25(c)(10).

16 (2) A passing grade in the semester course on the Founding Principles of the
17 United States of America and the State of North Carolina described in
18 G.S. 115C-81.45(d)(1).

19 (b) The following restrictions apply to the State Board of Education regarding Algebra I
20 and high school graduation projects:

21 (1) The Board shall not adopt or enforce any rule that requires Algebra I as a
22 graduation standard or as a requirement for a high school diploma for any
23 student whose individualized education program (i) identifies the student as
24 learning disabled in the area of mathematics and (ii) states that this learning
25 disability will prevent the student from mastering Algebra I.

26 (2) The Board shall not require any student to prepare a high school graduation
27 project as a condition of graduation from high school; local boards of
28 education may, however, require their students to complete a high school
29 graduation project as provided in G.S. 115C-47(54a).

30 "§ 115C-83.32. High school diploma endorsements.

31 (a) The State Board of Education shall establish, implement, and determine the impact of
32 adding (i) college, (ii) career, and (iii) college and career endorsements to high school diplomas
33 to encourage students to obtain requisite job skills necessary for students to be successful in a
34 wide range of high-quality careers and to reduce the need for remedial education in institutions



1 of higher education. The Board shall develop criteria for receiving a diploma endorsement under
2 this subsection that address the following:

- 3 (1) Courses completed by the student.
- 4 (2) Overall grade point average.
- 5 (3) Reading achievement, including the requirement that a student receive on a
6 nationally norm-referenced college admissions test for reading, either
7 administered under G.S. 115C-174.11(c)(4) or as an alternative nationally
8 norm-referenced college admissions test approved by the Board, at least the
9 benchmark score established by the testing organization that represents the
10 level of achievement required for students to have approximately a fifty
11 percent (50%) chance of obtaining a grade B or higher or a seventy-five
12 percent (75%) chance of obtaining a grade C or higher in a corresponding
13 credit-bearing, first-year college course. A student may retake a nationally
14 norm-referenced test as many times as necessary to achieve the required
15 benchmark score for reading in order to receive a high school diploma
16 endorsement prior to the student's graduation.
- 17 (4) Any additional criteria deemed necessary by the Board.

18 (b) The State Board of Education shall establish an arts proficiency high school diploma
19 endorsement to encourage students to obtain a well-rounded, high-quality arts education. The
20 Board shall create any form necessary for students to document their arts participation and shall
21 provide this form to local boards of education. The Board shall develop criteria for receiving a
22 diploma endorsement under this subsection that include the following:

- 23 (1) Completion of a minimum of four arts credits with an unweighted grade point
24 average of 3.0 or higher in each arts credit completed by the student.
- 25 (2) Completion of a minimum of 40 hours of arts-related extracurricular activities.
26 To receive credit for completing these hours, a student shall meet all of the
27 following requirements:
 - 28 a. The student participates in an arts-related extracurricular activity that
29 is approved by the local board of education.
 - 30 b. The student completes all of the required hours outside of instructional
31 hours.
 - 32 c. The student does not receive any course credit for participation in the
33 activity.
 - 34 d. The student documents the hours on the form provided by the Board
35 to local boards of education.
- 36 (3) Any additional criteria deemed necessary by the Board.

37 (c) The Board shall report annually to the Joint Legislative Education Oversight
38 Committee on high school diploma endorsements as required by G.S. 115C-156.2."

39 **SECTION 1.(b)** This section is effective when it becomes law. The State Board of
40 Education shall make available arts proficiency high school diploma endorsements, as provided
41 under this section, to students graduating high school beginning with the 2023-2024 school year.
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43 **PART II. CONFORMING CHANGES**

44 **SECTION 2.(a)** G.S. 115C-12(9d) reads as rewritten:

45 "(9d) Power to Develop Exit Standards and Graduation Requirements. –

- 46 a. ~~The Board~~ In accordance with G.S. 115C-83.31, the Board shall
47 require certain exit standards and may develop additional exit
48 standards that shall be required for high school graduation. The Board
49 shall require the following for high school graduation:
 - 50 1. ~~Successful completion of instruction in cardiopulmonary~~
51 ~~resuscitation as provided in G.S. 115C-81.25(c)(10).~~

- 1 2. A passing grade in the semester course on the Founding
2 Principles of the United States of America and the State of
3 North Carolina described in G.S. 115C-81.45(d)(1).
4 b. The following restrictions apply to the Board regarding Algebra I and
5 high school graduation projects:
6 1. The Board shall not adopt or enforce any rule that requires
7 Algebra I as a graduation standard or as a requirement for a
8 high school diploma for any student whose individualized
9 education program (i) identifies the student as learning
10 disabled in the area of mathematics and (ii) states that this
11 learning disability will prevent the student from mastering
12 Algebra I.
13 2. The Board shall not require any student to prepare a high
14 school graduation project as a condition of graduation from
15 high school; local boards of education may, however, require
16 their students to complete a high school graduation as provided
17 in G.S. 115C-47(54a)."

18 **SECTION 2.(b)** G.S. 115C-12(40) reads as rewritten:

19 "(40) To Establish High School Diploma Endorsements. – The State Board of
20 Education shall establish, implement, and determine the impact of adding (i)
21 college, (ii) career, and (iii) college and career endorsements to high school
22 diplomas to encourage students to obtain requisite job skills necessary for
23 students to be successful in a wide range of high quality careers and to reduce
24 the need for remedial education in institutions of higher education. These
25 endorsements shall reflect courses completed, overall grade point average,
26 reading achievement, and other criteria as developed by the State Board of
27 Education. A student shall only receive a high school diploma endorsement if
28 that student receives on a nationally norm referenced college admissions test
29 for reading, either administered under G.S. 115C-174.11(e)(4) or as an
30 alternative nationally norm referenced college admissions test approved by
31 the State Board, at least the benchmark score established by the testing
32 organization that represents the level of achievement required for students to
33 have approximately a fifty percent (50%) chance of obtaining a grade B or
34 higher or a seventy-five percent (75%) chance of obtaining a grade C or higher
35 in a corresponding credit-bearing, first-year college course. A student may
36 retake a nationally norm referenced test as many times as necessary to achieve
37 the required benchmark score for reading in order to receive a high school
38 diploma endorsement prior to the student's graduation. The State Board of
39 Education shall report annually to the Joint Legislative Education Oversight
40 Committee on high school diploma endorsements in accordance with
41 G.S. 115C-156.2. establish high school diploma endorsements as provided in
42 G.S. 115C-83.32."

43 **SECTION 2.(c)** G.S. 115C-156.2(b) reads as rewritten:

44 "(b) ~~Beginning in 2019, the~~ The State Board of Education shall report to the Joint
45 Legislative Education Oversight Committee by November 15 of each year on the following
46 information:

- 47 (1) The number of students in career and technical education courses who earned
48 (i) community college credit and (ii) related industry certifications and
49 credentials.

(2) Implementation of high school diploma endorsements, including adding (i) college, (ii) career, and (iii) college and career endorsements to high school diplomas, through evaluation of at least the following data:

a. Impact on the rates of high school graduation, college acceptance and remediation, and post-high school employment.

b. ~~Beginning with the 2019-2020 school year, the~~ The number of students who had to retake a nationally norm-referenced college admissions test to meet the reading benchmark score required by ~~G.S. 115C-12(40)~~ G.S. 115C-83.32(a) to receive a college or career high school diploma endorsement and the number of students who were not awarded a college or career high school diploma endorsement solely because of the inability to meet the benchmark score for reading required by ~~G.S. 115C-12(40);~~ G.S. 115C-83.32(a).

c. The number of students receiving an arts proficiency high school diploma endorsement."

SECTION 2.(d) This section is effective when it becomes law. Subsection (c) of this section applies beginning with the report due to the Joint Legislative Education Oversight Committee on November 15, 2024.

PART III. EFFECTIVE DATE

SECTION 3. Except as otherwise provided, this act is effective when it becomes law.