

GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA
SESSION 2003

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SENATE DRS35139-LE-59B (2/13)

Short Title: Eliminate High School Exit Exam. (Public)

Sponsors: Senator Metcalf.

Referred to:

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT TO ELIMINATE THE HIGH SCHOOL EXIT EXAM AND RESTRICT THE STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION FROM DEVELOPING ANY FURTHER STANDARDIZED TESTS THAT ARE NOT REQUIRED TO FULFILL THE NO CHILD LEFT BEHIND ACT OF 2001 OR OTHER FEDERAL LAW.

The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

SECTION 1. G.S. 115C-12(9a) and G.S. 115C-12(9b) read as rewritten:

"§ 115C-12. Powers and duties of the Board generally.

The general supervision and administration of the free public school system shall be vested in the State Board of Education. The State Board of Education shall establish policy for the system of free public schools, subject to laws enacted by the General Assembly. The powers and duties of the State Board of Education are defined as follows:

...

(9a) Power to Develop Content Standards. – The Board shall develop a comprehensive plan to revise content standards and the standard course of study in the core academic areas of reading, writing, mathematics, science, history, geography, and civics. The Board shall involve and survey a representative sample of parents, teachers, and the public to help determine academic content standard priorities and usefulness of the content standards. A full review of available and relevant academic content standards that are rigorous, specific, sequenced, clear, focused, and measurable, whenever possible, shall be a part of the process of the development of content standards. The revised content standards developed in the core academic areas shall (i) reflect high expectations for students and an in-depth mastery of the content; (ii) be clearly grounded in the content of each academic area;

1 (iii) be defined grade-by-grade and course-by-course; (iv) be
2 understandable to parents and teachers; (v) be developed in full
3 recognition of the time available to teach the core academic areas at
4 each grade level; and (vi) be measurable, whenever possible, in a
5 reliable, valid, and efficient manner for accountability purposes.

6 High school course content standards shall include the knowledge
7 and skills necessary to enter the workforce and also shall be aligned
8 with the coursework required for admission to the constituent
9 institutions of The University of North Carolina. The Board shall
10 develop and implement a plan for end-of-course tests for ~~the minimum~~
11 ~~courses required for admission to the constituent institutions. those~~
12 courses identified by the State Board of Education and not inconsistent
13 with G.S. 115C-174.11(d). All end-of-course tests shall be aligned
14 with the content standards.

15 The Board also shall develop and implement an ongoing process to
16 align State programs and support materials with the revised academic
17 content standards for each core academic area on a regular basis.
18 Alignment shall include revising textbook criteria, support materials,
19 State tests, teacher and school administrator preparation, and ongoing
20 professional development programs to be compatible with content
21 standards. The Board shall develop and make available to teachers and
22 parents support materials, including teacher and parent guides, for
23 academic content standards. The State Board of Education shall work
24 in collaboration with the Board of Governors of The University of
25 North Carolina to ensure that teacher and school administrator degree
26 programs, ongoing professional development and other university
27 activity in the State's public schools align with the State Board's
28 priorities.

29 (9b) Power to Develop Exit Exams. – The Board shall develop a plan to
30 implement ~~high school exit exams,~~ grade-level student proficiency
31 benchmarks, student proficiency benchmarks for academic courses
32 ~~required for admission to constituent institutions of The University of~~
33 ~~North Carolina,~~ designated by the State Board of Education not
34 inconsistent with G.S. 115C-174.11(d), and student proficiency
35 benchmarks for the knowledge and skills necessary to enter the
36 workforce. The State Board may develop student proficiency
37 benchmarks for other courses offered to secondary school students.
38 The ~~high school exit exams and~~ student proficiency benchmarks shall
39 be aligned with G.S. 115C-12(9a) and may contain pertinent
40 components of the school-based accountability annual performance
41 goals."

42 **SECTION 2.** G.S. 115C-174.11 reads as rewritten:

43 **"§ 115C-174.11. Components of the testing program.**

1 (a) Assessment Instruments for First and Second Grades. – The State Board of
2 Education shall adopt and provide to the local school administrative units
3 developmentally appropriate individualized assessment instruments consistent with the
4 Basic Education Program for the first and second grades, rather than standardized tests.
5 Local school administrative units may use these assessment instruments provided to
6 them by the State Board for first and second grade students, and shall not use
7 standardized tests.

8 (b) Competency Testing Program.

9 (1) The State Board of Education shall adopt tests or other measurement
10 devices which may be used to assure that graduates of the public high
11 schools and graduates of nonpublic schools supervised by the State
12 Board of Education pursuant to the provisions of Part 1 of Article 39
13 of this Chapter possess the skills and knowledge necessary to function
14 independently and successfully in assuming the responsibilities of
15 citizenship.

16 (2) The tests shall be administered annually to all ninth grade students in
17 the public schools. Students who fail to attain the required minimum
18 standard for graduation in the ninth grade shall be given remedial
19 instruction and additional opportunities to take the test up to and
20 including the last month of the twelfth grade. Students who fail to pass
21 parts of the test shall be retested on only those parts they fail. Students
22 in the ninth grade who are enrolled in special education programs or
23 who have been officially designated as eligible for participation in
24 such programs may be excluded from the testing programs.

25 (3) The State Board of Education may develop and validate alternate
26 means and standards for demonstrating minimum competence. These
27 standards, which must be more difficult than the tests adopted pursuant
28 to subdivision (1) of this subsection, may be passed by students in lieu
29 of the testing requirement of subdivision (2) of this subsection.

30 (4) Repealed by Session Laws 1996, Second Extra Session, c. 18, s. 18.14.

31 (c) Annual Testing Program.

32 (1) The State Board of Education shall adopt a system of annual testing
33 for grades three through 12. These tests shall be designed to measure
34 progress toward reading, communication skills, and mathematics for
35 grades three through eight, and toward competencies designated by the
36 State Board for grades nine through 12. Students who do not pass the
37 tests adopted for eighth grade shall be provided remedial instruction in
38 the ninth grade. This assistance shall be calculated to prepare the
39 students to pass the competency test administered under subsection (b)
40 of this section. ~~Notwithstanding subsection (a) of this section, the State~~
41 ~~Board shall develop and implement a study allowing selected local~~
42 ~~school administrative units that volunteer to administer a standardized~~
43 ~~test in May, 12 months prior to the third grade end of grade test, in~~
44 ~~order to establish a baseline that will be used to measure academic~~

1 ~~growth at the end of third grade. Initially, the State Board shall select~~
2 ~~12 volunteer local school administrative units that are diverse in~~
3 ~~geography and size to participate in the study. If the State Board~~
4 ~~determines that a standardized test administered in May, 12 months~~
5 ~~prior to the third grade end-of-grade test, is more reliable than a~~
6 ~~standardized test administered at the beginning of third grade for the~~
7 ~~purpose of measuring academic growth, the State Board may change~~
8 ~~the test date for additional local school units. The State Board shall~~
9 ~~report the results of the study to the Joint Legislative Education~~
10 ~~Oversight Committee by October 15, 2000.~~

11 Baseline measurements administered in May, 12 months prior to
12 the third grade end-of-grade test, are not public records as provided in
13 Chapter 132 of the General Statutes.

- 14 (2) If the State Board of Education finds that additional testing in grades
15 three through 12 is desirable to allow comparisons with national
16 indicators of student achievement, that testing shall be conducted with
17 the smallest size sample of students necessary to assure valid
18 comparisons with other states.

19 (d) Limitation on Additional Tests. – The State Board of Education shall not
20 require any additional standardized tests beyond those that were administered in the
21 2002-2003 academic year, unless the administration of the tests is required to comply
22 with the No Child Left Behind Act, Public Law 107-110 (115 U.S. Stat. 1425-2094) or
23 any other federal law. Nothing in this subsection shall preclude modification of existing
24 tests or the creation of an end-of-course test for Civics and Economics."

25 **SECTION 3.** This act is effective when it becomes law.