

Chapter 116C.

Continuum of Education Programs.

§ 116C-1. Education Cabinet created.

(a) The Education Cabinet is created. The Education Cabinet shall be located administratively within, and shall exercise its powers within existing resources of, the Office of the Governor. However, the Education Cabinet shall exercise its statutory powers independently of the Office of the Governor.

(b) The Education Cabinet shall consist of the Governor, who shall serve as chair, the President of The University of North Carolina, the State Superintendent of Public Instruction, the Chairman of the State Board of Education, the President of the North Carolina Community Colleges System, the Secretary of Health and Human Services, and the President of the North Carolina Independent Colleges and Universities. The Education Cabinet may invite other representatives of education to participate in its deliberations as adjunct members.

(c) The Education Cabinet shall be a nonvoting body that:

- (1) Works to resolve issues between existing providers of education.
- (2) Repealed by Session Laws 2014-120, s. 1(c), effective September 18, 2014.
- (3) Develops a strategic design for a continuum of education programs, in accordance with G.S. 116C-3.
- (4) Studies other issues referred to it by the Governor or the General Assembly.

(d) The Office of the Governor, in coordination with the staffs of The University of North Carolina, the North Carolina Community College System, and the Department of Public Instruction, shall provide staff to the Education Cabinet. (1993, c. 393, s. 1; 1995, c. 324, s. 15.12(b); 2001-123, s. 1; 2005-276, s. 7.38(a); 2014-120, s. 1(c).)

§ 116C-2: Repealed by Session Laws 2014-120, s. 1(d), effective September 18, 2014.

§ 116C-3. Strategic design for a continuum of education programs.

The Education Cabinet shall develop a strategic design for a continuum of education programs. A continuum of education programs is the complement of programs delivered by the State to learners at all levels.

The new design shall take into account issues raised by the Government Performance Audit Committee of the Legislative Research Commission.

The design process shall:

- (1) Include vigorous examination of all programs as if they were being created for the first time.
- (2) Compare the existing structures, funding levels, and responsibilities of each system to the new design.
- (3) Focus on issues concerning coursework articulation and plan for how to improve coursework articulation among existing providers of education.

The Education Cabinet shall report to the Joint Legislative Education Oversight Committee on the strategic design it develops prior to January 1, 1995. (1993, c. 393, s. 1; 1993 (Reg. Sess., 1994), c. 677, s. 12.1.)

§ 116C-4. First in America Innovative Education Initiatives Act.

(a) The General Assembly strongly endorses the Governor's goal of making North Carolina's system of education first in America by 2010. With that as the goal, the Education Cabinet shall set as a priority cooperative efforts between secondary schools and institutions of higher education so as to reduce the high school dropout rate, increase high school and college graduation rates, decrease the need for remediation in institutions of higher education, and raise certificate, associate, and bachelor degree completion rates. The Cabinet shall identify and support efforts that achieve the following purposes:

- (1) Support cooperative innovative high school programs developed under Part 9 of Article 16 of Chapter 115C of the General Statutes.
- (2) Improve high school completion rates and reduce high school dropout rates.
- (3) Close the achievement gap.
- (4) Create redesigned middle schools or high schools.
- (5) Provide flexible, customized programs of learning for high school students who would benefit from accelerated, higher level coursework or early graduation.
- (6) Establish high quality alternative learning programs.
- (7) Establish a virtual high school.
- (8) Implement other innovative education initiatives designed to advance the State's system of education.

(b) The Education Cabinet shall identify federal, State, and local funds that may be used to support these initiatives. In addition, the Cabinet is strongly encouraged to pursue private funds that could be used to support these initiatives.

(c) The Cabinet shall report by January 15, 2004, and annually thereafter, to the Joint Legislative Education Oversight Committee on its activities under this section. The annual reports may include recommendations for statutory changes needed to support cooperative innovative initiatives, including programs approved under Part 9 of Article 16 of Chapter 115C of the General Statutes. (2003-277, s. 1.)

§ 116C-5. STEM education priorities.

(a) The Education Cabinet shall set as a priority an increase in the number of students earning postsecondary credentials in the fields of science, technology, engineering, and mathematics to reduce the gap between needed credentialed workers and available jobs in those fields by 2015.

(b) The Education Cabinet shall encourage cooperative efforts between secondary schools and institutions of higher education to prepare students for postsecondary study in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics, and shall identify and support efforts at institutions of higher education to increase the number of students seeking and successfully completing postsecondary certificates or degrees in those fields. The Education Cabinet shall monitor progress of those efforts.

(c) The Education Cabinet shall determine measurements for assessing the number of available jobs in the fields of science, technology, engineering, and mathematics in the State, and the number of students earning postsecondary credentials in the fields of science, technology, engineering, and mathematics at all institutions of higher education in the State, including community colleges and both public and private colleges and universities.

(d) The Education Cabinet shall identify federal, State, and local funds that may be used to support this priority. In addition, the Education Cabinet is strongly encouraged to pursue private funds that could be used to support this priority.

(e) The Education Cabinet shall report by November 1, 2011, and annually thereafter, on its activities under this section to the Joint Legislative Education Oversight Committee. (2010-41, s. 1.)