

GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA

EXTRA SESSION 1994

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HOUSE BILL 181

Short Title: Alternative Schools Required.

(Public)

Sponsors: Representatives Black; Alphin, Bowman, Burton, Cummings, Cunningham, McCrary, Nichols, J. Preston, Russell, Sexton, and Wainwright.

Referred to: Education.

February 14, 1994

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

1 AN ACT TO REQUIRE LOCAL SCHOOL ADMINISTRATIVE UNITS TO
2 ESTABLISH ALTERNATIVE SCHOOL PROGRAMS AND TO APPROPRIATE
3 FUNDS FOR THOSE PROGRAMS.
4

5 Whereas, an escalating number of students are engaging in violent behavior,
6 are unable to make successful transitions from school-to-school and school-to-work,
7 and are dropping out of school; and

8 Whereas, national high school dropout statistics paint a grim picture for the
9 dropouts themselves and for the State; fewer than 50% of dropouts find jobs after
10 leaving school, they earn \$500,000 less than high school graduates over their lifetimes,
11 four out of five dropouts use drugs on a regular basis, 80% of prison inmates are high
12 school dropouts, and 60% of adults on welfare are dropouts; and

13 Whereas, poor attendance, behavior, and achievement among students, the
14 lack of community schools and safe havens for students, the absence of parental
15 involvement, the lack of training and preparation for students entering the work force,
16 minimal support and guidance for students when they make transitions between schools,
17 and the lack of community and family empowerment support all contribute to the
18 inability of young people to succeed in school and lead productive lives; and

19 Whereas, communities can best identify the needs of children within that
20 community and develop strategies to meet those needs; and

21 Whereas, communities recognize the necessity of collaborating within their
22 communities to develop and implement solutions that include the active participation by
23 schools, business leaders, and the community; and

1 community support services, leveraging and coordinating community resources in a
2 nonduplicative, cost-effective, and accountable manner at the program site, and
3 mobilizing public and private resources to support participating students and their
4 families.

5 (b) Each alternative school program should:

6 (1) Collaborate with local law enforcement officials and existing youth
7 service organizations to carry out alternative school activities;

8 (2) Promote character development by:

9 a. Emphasizing to each student that attendance in the alternative
10 school program is a privilege and that an atmosphere in which
11 all students can learn must be maintained at all times;

12 b. Placing increased emphasis on developing self-esteem through
13 personal achievement; and

14 c. Emphasizing citizenship skill training, community service
15 work, responsible decision making, respect for cultural
16 diversity, listening and communication skills, nonviolent
17 methods for resolving conflict, including peer mediation;

18 (3) Emphasize a holistic approach with individualized instruction, flexible
19 scheduling, and personalization, caring, cooperation, and acceptance
20 to each student;

21 (4) Organize the program so there are low student-staff ratios and a low
22 number of participating students;

23 (5) Have staff who volunteered to work at the alternative school and who
24 have participated in staff development activities on children with
25 different learning styles and on training in positive discipline
26 techniques;

27 (6) Increase student and parent involvement in decision making; and

28 (7) Provide training in parenting to the parents of students in the program
29 and to students who have children.

30 **"§ 115C-148.4. Funding for alternative schools.**

31 (a) The allocations of dollar allotments and position allotments for students who
32 participate in alternative schools and the allocations of funds for exceptional children
33 for students who participate in alternative schools shall be used to provide the
34 alternative school program for those children.

35 (b) State funds allocated for drug prevention and dropout prevention may be used
36 to provide the alternative school program.

37 (c) Local departments of social services, health departments, and area mental
38 health, mental retardation, and substance abuse authorities shall use funds within their
39 budgets to collaborate with local boards of education on providing community-based
40 services for students enrolled in alternative schools and their families.

41 (d) Local boards of education shall collaborate with local governmental and
42 nongovernmental agencies that provide services to school-age children, including at a
43 minimum, schools, law enforcement, local government, youth services agencies and
44 organizations, job training organizations, mental health, and health care providers, so as

1 to avoid duplication and effort and expenditure of unnecessary funds. Local boards of
2 education shall also identify community matching funds that may be committed to
3 alternative schools.

4 **"§ 115C-148.5. Evaluation of alternative schools.**

5 (a) Local boards of education shall collect baseline data and on an annual basis
6 that will be used to evaluate the success of alternative schools in achieving performance
7 standards over a five-year period. The baseline data shall include student attendance
8 rates, dropout rates, student test scores, incidences of disruptive behavior in schools,
9 incidences of juvenile crime, and the rate of successful transition from school-to-school
10 and to employment or college.

11 (b) The Department of Public Instruction shall evaluate alternative schools on an
12 annual basis and shall report the results of the evaluation to the Joint Legislative
13 Education Oversight Committee."

14 Sec. 2. There is appropriated from the General Fund to Aid to Local School
15 Administrative Units the sum of twenty-five million dollars (\$25,000,000) for the 1994-
16 95 fiscal year for the operating expenses of alternative schools.

17 Sec. 3. This act becomes effective July 1, 1994.