

GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA  
SESSION 2001

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SENATE BILL 898  
Second Edition Engrossed 4/12/01  
House Committee Substitute Favorable 6/4/01

Short Title: The Student Citizen Act of 2001.

(Public)

Sponsors:

Referred to:

April 5, 2001

1 A BILL TO BE ENTITLED  
2 AN ACT TO ENACT THE STUDENT CITIZEN ACT OF 2001.

3 The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

4 SECTION 1. This act shall be known as the "Student Citizenship Act of  
5 2001".

6 SECTION 2. G.S. 115C-81 reads as rewritten:

7 "§ 115C-81. Basic Education Program.

8 ...

9 (g1) Modifications to the social studies curriculum to instruct students on  
10 participation in the democratic process and to give them hands-on experience in  
11 participating in the democratic process:

12 (1) The State Board of Education shall modify the high school social  
13 studies curriculum to include instruction in civic and citizenship  
14 education. The State Board of Education is strongly encouraged to  
15 include, at a minimum, the following components in the high school  
16 civic and citizenship education curriculum:

17 a. A requirement that students write to a local, State, or federal  
18 elected official about an issue that is important to them;

19 b. Instruction on the importance of voting and otherwise  
20 participating in the democratic process;

21 c. Information about current events and governmental structure;  
22 and

23 d. Information about the democratic process and how laws are  
24 made.

25 (2) The State Board of Education shall modify the middle school social  
26 studies curriculum to include instruction in civic and citizenship  
27 education. The State Board of Education is strongly encouraged to

1 include, at a minimum, the following components in the middle school  
2 civic and citizenship education curriculum:

- 3 a. A tour of representative local government facilities such as the  
4 local jail, the courthouse, or a town hall, to help students  
5 understand the way their community is governed;  
6 b. A requirement that students choose and analyze a community  
7 problem and offer public policy recommendations on the  
8 problem to local officials; and  
9 c. Information about getting involved in community groups.

10 (h) Character Education. – ~~Local boards of education may require the teaching~~  
11 ~~of the following character traits in the public schools.~~Each local board of education  
12 shall develop and implement character education instruction with input from the local  
13 community. The instruction shall be incorporated into the standard curriculum and  
14 should address the following traits:

- 15 (1) Courage. – Having the determination to do the right thing even when  
16 others don't and the strength to follow your conscience rather than the  
17 crowd; and attempting difficult things that are worthwhile.
- 18 (2) Good judgment. – Choosing worthy goals and setting proper priorities;  
19 thinking through the consequences of your actions; and basing  
20 decisions on practical wisdom and good sense.
- 21 (3) Integrity. – Having the inner strength to be truthful, trustworthy, and  
22 honest in all things; acting justly and honorably.
- 23 (4) Kindness. – Being considerate, courteous, helpful, and understanding  
24 of others; showing care, compassion, friendship, and generosity; and  
25 treating others as you would like to be treated.
- 26 (5) Perseverance. – Being persistent in the pursuit of worthy objectives in  
27 spite of difficulty, opposition, or discouragement; and exhibiting  
28 patience and having the fortitude to try again when confronted with  
29 delays, mistakes, or failures.
- 30 (6) Respect. – Showing high regard for authority, for other people, for  
31 self, for property, and for country; and understanding that all people  
32 have value as human beings.
- 33 (7) Responsibility. – Being dependable in carrying out obligations and  
34 duties; showing reliability and consistency in words and conduct;  
35 being accountable for your own actions; and being committed to active  
36 involvement in your community.
- 37 (8) Self-Discipline. – Demonstrating hard work and commitment to  
38 purpose; regulating yourself for improvement and restraining from  
39 inappropriate behaviors; being in proper control of your words,  
40 actions, impulses, and desires; choosing abstinence from premarital  
41 sex, drugs, alcohol, and other harmful substances and behaviors; and  
42 doing your best in all situations.

1        (h1) In addition to the instruction under subsection (h) of this section, local boards  
2 of education are encouraged to include instruction on the following responsibilities:

- 3            (1) Respect for school personnel. – In the school environment, respect  
4 includes holding teachers, school administrators, and all school  
5 personnel in high esteem and demonstrating in words and deeds that  
6 all school personnel deserve to be treated with courtesy and proper  
7 deference.
- 8            (2) Responsibility for school safety. – Helping to create a harmonious  
9 school atmosphere that is free from threats, weapons, and violent or  
10 disruptive behavior; cultivate an orderly learning environment in  
11 which students and school personnel feel safe and secure; and  
12 encourage the resolution of conflicts and disagreements through  
13 peaceful means including peer mediation.
- 14           (3) Service to others. – Engaging in meaningful service to their schools  
15 and their communities. Schools may teach service-learning by (i)  
16 incorporating it into their standard curriculum, or (ii) involving a  
17 classroom of students or some other group of students in one or more  
18 hands-on community-service projects.
- 19           (4) Good citizenship. – Obeying the laws of the nation and this State;  
20 abiding by school rules; and understanding the rights and  
21 responsibilities of a member of a republic."

22        **SECTION 3.** G.S. 115C-391(a) reads as rewritten:

23        "(a) Local boards of education shall adopt policies not inconsistent with the  
24 provisions of the Constitutions of the United States and North Carolina, governing the  
25 conduct of students and establishing procedures to be followed by school officials in  
26 suspending or expelling any student, or in disciplining any student if the offensive  
27 behavior could result in suspension, expulsion, or the administration of corporal  
28 punishment. Local boards of education shall include a reasonable dress code in these  
29 policies.

30        The policies that shall be adopted for the administration of corporal punishment shall  
31 include at a minimum the following conditions:

- 32           (1) Corporal punishment shall not be administered in a classroom with  
33 other children present;
- 34           (2) The student body shall be informed beforehand what general types of  
35 misconduct could result in corporal punishment;
- 36           (3) Only a teacher, substitute teacher, principal, or assistant principal may  
37 administer corporal punishment and may do so only in the presence of  
38 a principal, assistant principal, teacher, substitute teacher, teacher  
39 assistant, or student teacher, who shall be informed beforehand and in  
40 the student's presence of the reason for the punishment; and
- 41           (4) An appropriate school official shall provide the child's parent or  
42 guardian with notification that corporal punishment has been

1 administered, and upon request, the official who administered the  
2 corporal punishment shall provide the child's parent or guardian a  
3 written explanation of the reasons and the name of the second school  
4 official who was present.

5 Each local board shall publish all the policies mandated by this subsection and make  
6 them available to each student and his parent or guardian at the beginning of each  
7 school year.

8 Notwithstanding any policy adopted pursuant to this section, school personnel may  
9 use reasonable force, including corporal punishment, to control behavior or to remove a  
10 person from the scene in those situations when necessary:

- 11 (1) To quell a disturbance threatening injury to others;
- 12 (2) To obtain possession of weapons or other dangerous objects on the  
13 person, or within the control, of a student;
- 14 (3) For self-defense;
- 15 (4) For the protection of persons or property; or
- 16 (5) To maintain order on school property, in the classroom, or at a  
17 school-related activity on or off school property."

18 **SECTION 4.** This act becomes effective July 1, 2001, except that:

- 19 (1) The State Board of Education shall complete the modifications to the  
20 social studies curriculum required by G.S. 115C-81(g1), as enacted in  
21 Section 2 of this act, prior to October 1, 2001. The modified  
22 curriculum shall be implemented beginning with the 2002-2003 school  
23 year.
- 24 (2) Local boards of education shall develop character education  
25 instruction in accordance with G.S. 115C-81(h), as rewritten by  
26 Section 2 of this act, prior to January 1, 2002, and shall implement this  
27 instruction beginning with the 2002-2003 school year. If a local board  
28 determines that it would be an economic hardship to begin to  
29 implement character education instruction by the beginning of the  
30 2002-2003 school year, the board may request an extension of time  
31 from the State Board of Education. The local board shall submit the  
32 request for an extension to the State Board on or before April 1, 2002.  
33 Local boards are encouraged to include in their character education  
34 instruction the responsibilities listed in G.S. 115C-81(h1) of Section 2  
35 of this act.
- 36 (3) Section 3 of this act applies beginning with the 2001-2002 school year.