

GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA
SESSION 2023

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HOUSE BILL 640

Short Title: Career Path Options Transparency Act. (Public)

Sponsors: Representatives Johnson, Winslow, Tyson, and Paré (Primary Sponsors).

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

Referred to: Education - Universities, if favorable, Appropriations, if favorable, Rules, Calendar, and Operations of the House

April 18, 2023

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT TO ENACT THE CAREER PATH OPTIONS TRANSPARENCY ACT.

The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

SECTION 1. G.S. 116-209.16A reads as rewritten:

"§ 116-209.16A. Information on career and major options.

(a) Know Before You Go. – The Authority shall provide information on a ~~Web site,~~ website, under a section entitled "Know Before You Go," to students and parents to assist in selection of major and career options in the State and in each prosperity zone of the State, as provided in this section. The information shall be updated annually.

(a1) Definitions. – The following definitions shall apply in this section:

(1) Private institutions of higher education. – Includes postsecondary institutions that award postsecondary degrees, as defined in G.S. 116-15(a2)(1).

(2) Prosperity zones of the State. – The eight permanent prosperity zones identified in G.S. 143B-28.1.

(3) Public institutions of higher education. – Includes the constituent institutions of The University of North Carolina and the community colleges under the jurisdiction of the State Board of Community Colleges.

(4) Vocational and technical school. – A school licensed as a proprietary school under G.S. 115D-90.

(b) Career Options. – The Authority shall, as data is available, provide information on projected employment needs in the labor ~~economy~~ economy in the State and in each prosperity zone of the State, including highest demand career areas, and associated salary ranges for those areas of employment, college majors which may fulfill those needs, and institutions of higher education that may provide those majors. The Authority may use existing sources of public information, such as the employment projections produced by the federal Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, to develop this information.

(c) Major Options. – The Authority shall, as data is available, provide information based on aggregate data for outcomes of public and private institutions of higher education and vocational and technical schools in North Carolina. Outcome information for each public and private institution of higher education and vocational and technical school shall include, but is not limited to, the following:

(1) Completion rates within the expected number of semesters for the degree sought.

(2) Transfer rates of students to other institutions.



- 1 (2a) Average tuition for public and private institutions of higher education and
 2 vocational and technical schools.
 3 (3) Percentage of students receiving financial aid, by type of aid.
 4 (4) Average and median amount of loan debt upon student graduation, by
 5 major-major, and among graduates from four-year institutions of higher
 6 education, community colleges, and vocational and technical schools.
 7 (4a) Average monthly student loan payment from four-year institutions of higher
 8 education, community colleges, and vocational and technical schools.
 9 (5) Average and median salary, by major-major, and among graduates from
 10 four-year institutions of higher education, community colleges, and vocational
 11 and technical schools.
 12 (6) Percentage of graduates employed within six months of graduation, by
 13 major-major, and among graduates from four-year institutions of higher
 14 education, community colleges, and vocational and technical schools.
 15 (7) Percentage of graduates enrolled in graduate school within six months of
 16 graduation, by major.

17 (d) ~~Public and Private Institutions of Higher Education. — For the purposes of this section,~~
 18 ~~"public institutions of higher education" shall include the constituent institutions of The~~
 19 ~~University of North Carolina and the community colleges under the jurisdiction of the State~~
 20 ~~Board of Community Colleges and "private institutions of higher education" shall include~~
 21 ~~postsecondary institutions that award postsecondary degrees, as defined in G.S. 116-15(a2)(1)."~~

22 **SECTION 2.** G.S. 115C-12 is amended by adding a new subdivision to read:

23 "(41a) To Compile Data for the "Know Before You Go" Program. — The State Board
 24 and the Department of Public Instruction shall collaborate with the
 25 Department of Commerce and the Department of Labor in collecting data for
 26 local boards of education to provide to sophomore students to enable them to
 27 make informed decisions about postsecondary education choices and their
 28 professional futures through the "Know Before You Go" programs under
 29 G.S. 115C-47(34b)."

30 **SECTION 3.** G.S. 115C-47 is amended by adding a new subdivision to read:

31 "(34b) To Provide Sophomores with "Know Before You Go" Information. — Each
 32 local board of education shall provide for a program for students in their
 33 sophomore year of high school with the information contained on the "Know
 34 Before You Go" website pursuant to G.S. 116-209.16A and the information
 35 compiled by the Department of Public Instruction under G.S. 115C-12(41a)
 36 to allow students to make informed decisions about postsecondary education
 37 choices and their professional futures."

38 **SECTION 4.** Through the longitudinal data system established pursuant to Chapter
 39 116E of the General Statutes, the Department of Commerce, the Department of Labor, and the
 40 Department of Public Instruction shall collect and compile data on an annual basis for the "Know
 41 Before You Go" website maintained by the State Education Assistance Authority pursuant to
 42 G.S. 116-209.16A and for the programs operated by local boards of education providing
 43 information to students under G.S. 115C-47(34b). For purposes of this section, the definitions
 44 provided in G.S. 116-209.16A(a1) shall apply. The data compiled shall include at least the
 45 following:

- 46 (1) The most in-demand jobs in the State and in each prosperity zone of the State,
 47 including starting salary and education level required for those jobs.
 48 (2) The breakdown of average cost for all public and private institutions of higher
 49 education and vocational and technical schools in the State, respectively.

- 1 (3) The average three-year student loan default rate for all public and private
2 institutions of higher education and vocational and technical schools in the
3 State.
- 4 (4) The average total student loan debt for in-State graduates of public and private
5 institutions of higher education for four-year degrees and graduate programs.
- 6 (5) The average graduation rate for all public and private institutions of higher
7 education and vocational and technical schools in the State.
- 8 (6) The completion rates for apprenticeship programs, high school credential
9 programs, career and technical education programs, and military first-term
10 enlistments.
- 11 (7) The share of college graduates working in an occupation that does not require
12 a college degree for each major.
- 13 (8) The average starting salary in the State and in each prosperity zone of the State
14 for individuals graduating from public and private institutions of higher
15 education.
- 16 (9) The average starting salary in the State and in each prosperity zone of the State
17 for individuals that have completed an apprenticeship program, high school
18 credential program, or career and technical education program.
- 19 (10) The average starting salary in the State and in each prosperity zone of the State
20 for individuals graduating from a vocational and technical school in the State.

21 **SECTION 5.(a)** Grant Program Established. – From the funds appropriated by
22 subsection (b) of this section, the Department of Public Instruction shall establish the Career Path
23 Options Grant Pilot Program for the 2023-2024 school year for local boards of education to apply
24 for funds to provide students with the information required under G.S. 115C-47(34b), as enacted
25 by this act, to make informed decisions about postsecondary education choices and their
26 professional futures. The Department shall establish application criteria for grants. Grant funds
27 shall be used to promote and distribute program materials, including printing and distribution
28 costs. Funds may also be used for hiring or paying supplemental compensation to career coaches
29 or career development coordinators to support students through the program.

30 **SECTION 5.(b)** Appropriation. – There is appropriated from the General Fund to
31 the Department of Public Instruction the sum of five hundred thousand dollars (\$500,000) in
32 nonrecurring funds for the 2023-2024 fiscal year to implement the grant program established by
33 this section.

34 **SECTION 6.** Sections 1 and 3 of this act become effective January 1, 2024. Section
35 5 of this act becomes effective July 1, 2023. The remainder of this act is effective when it
36 becomes law.