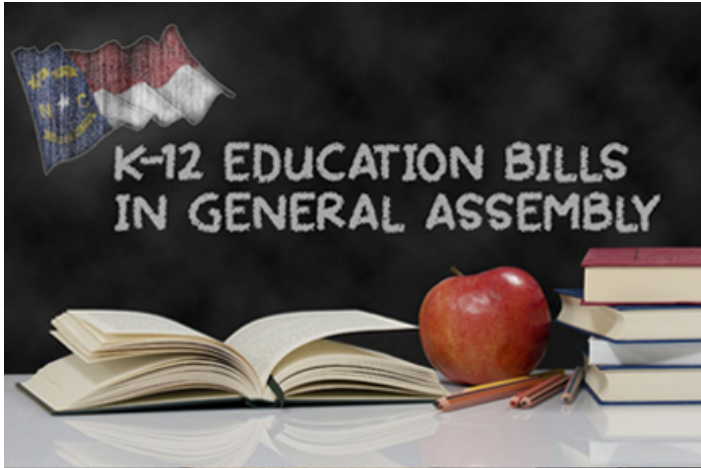


HOUSE K-12 EDUCATION COMMITTEE ADVANCES REMOTE CHARTER ACADEMIES, ARTS DIPLOMA ENDORSEMENT, & SCHOOL CALENDAR FLEXIBILITY BILLS



Posted on March 9, 2023 by Elizabeth Yelverton

This week, the House K-12 Education Committee approved a bill authorizing the creation and oversight of remote charter academies, a bill creating an “arts proficiency” endorsement for high school diplomas, and several bills authorizing greater flexibility in school calendars.

Categories: [Advocacy](#), [Budget and Financial Operations](#), [Curriculum and Instruction](#), [Governance](#), [Legislative Priorities](#), [Personnel Issues and Benefits](#)

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[House Bill 149, Remote Charter Academies](#), introduced by Rep. Jeffrey Elmore (R-Wilkes), is similar to [legislation passed in 2022](#) that created an application system for LEA-operated remote academies, although H149 allows charters to have certain advantages over LEA-operated academies, such as allowing students from surrounding counties to attend “regional” remote charter academies. The bill, as [summarized](#) by legislative staff, would also require the State Board of Education to approve a minimum of two statewide remote charter academies and extend the continually low-performing Virtual Charter School Pilot Program for another year. The NC Association of School Administrators (NCASA) shared some concerns about the

bill with the bill's primary sponsor, but these concerns were not ultimately addressed, and the bill passed through several committees before gaining full House approval, mostly down party lines. H149 will now be sent to the Senate for further discussion and voting.

Another bill sponsored by Rep. Elmore, [House Bill 136, Arts High School Diploma Endorsement](#), also gained full House approval on Thursday and will now be sent to the Senate. H136, as [summarized](#) by legislative staff, would require the State Board of Education (SBE) to establish a high school diploma endorsement in arts proficiency, which students could earn by successfully taking at least 4 arts credits; participating in at least 40 hours of arts-related extraocular activities; and completing any additional criteria to be established by the SBE.

House K-12 Education members also approved three school calendar flexibility bills, which are only the latest calendar flexibility bills to be heard from the dozens filed so far. While [House Bill 86](#), [House Bill 195](#), and [House Bill 239](#) were all approved in the House K-12 Education Committee, only H86, which would provide statewide school calendar flexibility, and H239, limited to Johnston County, were ultimately approved by the full House chamber and will now be sent to the Senate. It remains unlikely, however, that the Senate will schedule any school calendar flexibility bills to be heard.

Other Key Education Bills With Action This Week

In addition to bills approved by the House K-12 Education Committee this week, several other key education bills were either filed or advanced through committees this week.

[H8, Computer Science Graduation Requirement](#)

Status: Passed House Chamber 3/9; sent to Senate

Summary: The latest version of H8, as summarized by legislative staff [here](#), would require the State Board of Education (SBE) to establish a standalone computer science graduation requirement. Unlike in initial versions of the bill, the latest version would maintain the current 22 credits required for graduation by decreasing the number of required elective credits from 6 to 5. The bill retains original requirements that public school units offer computer science instruction to students in middle and high school.

[H131, Protect NC Ed. Savings & Investment Accounts](#)

Status: Passed House 3/2; referred to Senate Rules & Operations Comm.

Summary: The latest edition of H131, as [summarized](#) by legislative staff, would increase protections for funds held in North Carolina Education Savings and Investment Accounts and NC ABLE accounts from claims of creditors and other judgments. The latest version would extend the effective date out to September 1, 2023.

[H314, Public School Ethics Training](#)

Status: Filed 3/8; referred to House K-12 Education Comm.

Summary: The initial version of H314 would require a minimum of two hours of ethics trainings for “all employees of a local school administrative unit involved in the making or administering of contracts.” Prior versions of this legislation, as recommended by the NC School Board’s Association (NCSBA), have been introduced in past legislative sessions.

[S157 \(=H261\), Limited Provisional License Modification](#)

Status: Passed Senate Transportation Committee 3/8; ref. to Senate Commerce and Insurance Comm.

Summary: The second version of S157, as [summarized](#) by legislative staff, would amend the minimum amount of time a teen must hold a Level 1 limited learner’s permit from 12 months to 9 months in order to be eligible to apply for a Level 2 limited provisional license under graduated drivers licensing.

[S187 \(=H280\), Teacher Licensure/Retired Educator Program](#)

Status: Filed in Senate 3/2; Referred to Senate Education/Higher Ed. Comm.

Summary: The initial version of S187 would revive and expand the program allowing retired educators to return to work in high-need schools. While NCASA was instrumental in the creation of the original (now expired) legislation allowing retirees to be rehired to fill high-need vacancies, the program was met with skepticism from the NC Treasurer’s Office, which was unsure as to the possible federal tax repercussions. The Treasurer’s Office has since secured a “private letter ruling” from the IRS on the program, and NCASA will continue to work with bill sponsors to modify the latest version of the program to best meet the needs of districts experiencing critical educator shortages.

For NCASA’s full list of education-related legislation that was filed or advanced in

the past week, please click [HERE](#).