

GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA
SESSION 2005

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SENATE BILL 898

Short Title: Study of Workforce Preparation in Schools. (Public)

Sponsors: Senators Brown; Allran, Berger of Franklin, Bingham, Boseman, Dalton, East, Forrester, Garwood, Goodall, Hoyle, Jacumin, Kinnaird, Pittenger, Presnell, Smith, Snow, Swindell, Thomas, Tillman, and Weinstein.

Referred to: Rules and Operations of the Senate.

March 23, 2005

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT ESTABLISHING A COMMISSION TO STUDY WORKFORCE PREPARATION IN THE PUBLIC SCHOOLS.

Whereas, for today's youth, life after high school holds both the opportunity of getting one of the many well-paying, high-skilled jobs in the global economy and the challenge of getting the education and skills necessary to get and keep one of those jobs; and

Whereas, students must leave high school with a solid grounding in the academic, social, and workplace skills needed for the next step, whether it be postsecondary education, an apprenticeship, or a career; and

Whereas, today's youth, living and working in the 21st century, need solid academic preparation not just for college but for the trades, automotive repair, high-tech manufacturing, and other jobs that provide self-supporting income; and

Whereas, today's youth also need the skills to manage their personal lives, guide their families, and actively exercise the rights and responsibilities of citizenship; and

Whereas, North Carolina must raise the expectations of its young people and use its resources to expand their opportunities; and

Whereas, entirely too many high school students are dropping out of school in North Carolina; and

Whereas, entirely too many high school graduates are not adequately prepared for success in the workforce, community college, or a four-year college; and

Whereas, it is essential that the State assess the quality of high school graduates leaving North Carolina schools, develop strategies for improving student preparedness for the workforce or higher education, and improve upon current strategies regarding vocational training; Now, therefore:

The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

1 **SECTION 1.** There is created the Study Commission on Workforce
2 Preparation in the Public Schools. The Commission shall consist of 10 members as
3 follows:

- 4 (1) One businessperson, one school administrator, and one other educator,
5 appointed by the President Pro Tempore of the Senate;
- 6 (2) One business person, one vocational education teacher, and one other
7 educator, appointed by the Speaker of the House of Representatives;
- 8 (3) Two Senators appointed by the President Pro Tempore of the Senate;
9 and
- 10 (4) Two Representatives appointed by the Speaker of the House of
11 Representatives.

12 The President Pro Tempore of the Senate shall appoint a cochair, and the
13 Speaker of the House of Representatives shall appoint a cochair for the Commission.
14 The Commission may meet at anytime upon the joint call of the cochairs. Vacancies on
15 the Commission shall be filled by the same appointing authority as made the initial
16 appointment.

17 **SECTION 2.** In the course of the study, the Commission shall:

- 18 (1) Consider the State's progress in meeting the student performance
19 benchmarks required by the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001;
- 20 (2) Assess the effectiveness of workforce preparation strategies;
- 21 (3) Assess efficiency within workforce preparation strategies;
- 22 (4) Evaluate the preparedness of North Carolina high school graduates by:
23 a. Studying remediation rates and efforts at the community
24 colleges,
25 b. Studying remediation rates and efforts at the constituent
26 institutions of The University of North Carolina, and
27 c. Surveying representatives of business and industry and of the
28 United States Department of Defense. The survey shall elicit
29 information on how well high school graduates are prepared
30 with regard to basic skills and knowledge, how well high school
31 graduates are prepared with regard to job-oriented skills, and
32 how business, industry, and the military are addressing any
33 deficiencies they encounter; and
- 34 (5) Study any other issues the Commission considers relevant.

35 **SECTION 3.** The Commission, while in the discharge of its official duties,
36 may exercise all powers provided for under G.S. 120-19 and G.S. 120-19.1 through
37 G.S. 120-19.4. The Commission may contract for professional, clerical, or consultant
38 services as provided by G.S. 120-32.02.

39 Subject to the approval of the Legislative Services Commission, the
40 Commission may meet in the Legislative Building or the Legislative Office Building.
41 The Legislative Services Commission, through the Legislative Services Officer, shall
42 assign professional staff to assist the Commission in its work. The House of
43 Representatives' and the Senate's Supervisors of Clerks shall assign clerical support staff
44 to the Commission, and the expenses relating to the clerical employees shall be borne

1 by the Commission. Members of the Commission shall receive subsistence and travel
2 expenses at the rates set forth in G.S. 120-3.1, 138-5, or 138-6, as appropriate.

3 **SECTION 4.** The Commission shall submit a final report to the State Board
4 of Education, the Department of Labor, and the 2006 Regular Session of the 2005
5 General Assembly. The report shall include recommended changes to workforce
6 preparation strategies to ensure efficiency such as (i) strategies for consolidating State
7 worker training programs and (ii) State partnerships with business and industry to
8 support private training programs.

9 The Commission shall terminate upon submission of its final report.

10 **SECTION 5.** This act becomes effective July 1, 2005.