

GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA  
SESSION 2017

**H.B. 837**  
**Apr 11, 2017**  
**HOUSE PRINCIPAL CLERK**

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HOUSE BILL DRH40480-MKa-96 (03/01)

Short Title: Outdoor Learning Center Pilot/Funds. (Public)

Sponsors: Representatives Johnson, Torbett, and Horn (Primary Sponsors).

Referred to:

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT TO APPROPRIATE FUNDS TO PROVIDE FOR AN OUTDOOR LEARNING  
CENTER PILOT PROGRAM THROUGH REAL SCHOOL GARDENS.

The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

**SECTION 1.(a)** There is appropriated from the General Fund to the Department of Public Instruction the sum of six hundred fifty thousand dollars (\$650,000) for the 2017-2018 fiscal year for use by REAL School Gardens to establish a three-year pilot program, beginning with the 2017-2018 school year and ending with the 2019-2020 school year. The purpose of the pilot program is to transform designated outdoor spaces into outdoor learning centers, based on the national model developed by REAL School Gardens, in elementary schools operating a school-wide Title I program in the following local school administrative units: Cabarrus County Schools, Kannapolis City Schools, Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools, Gaston County Schools, and Union County Schools. Based on data from use of the national model developed by REAL School Gardens, the pilot program shall concentrate on improving student academic performance, teacher effectiveness, student engagement, and improving health and behavioral issues of students. Funds made available to REAL School Gardens under this section may be used for teacher training and utilizing REAL School Gardens NC Essential Standards aligned curriculum, focusing on science, math, and literacy skills while providing nutrition education to support healthy eating habits through project-based learning. State funds shall only be used to operate and administer the pilot program.

**SECTION 1.(b)** As used in this section, a school-wide Title I program is a program at a school identified under Part A of Title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, as amended.

**SECTION 1.(c)** The funds appropriated in subsection (a) of this section shall not revert at the end of the each fiscal year but shall remain available for expenditure until the end of the 2019-2020 fiscal year.

**SECTION 1.(d)** By October 1, 2018, and annually thereafter until October 1, 2020, REAL School Gardens shall submit to the Joint Legislative Education Oversight Committee and the Fiscal Research Division of the General Assembly a report on the progress of the pilot program, an accounting of expenditures, and student outcome and teacher effectiveness data related to the operation of the pilot program.

**SECTION 2.** This act becomes effective July 1, 2017.

