

GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA
SESSION 2025

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HOUSE PRINCIPAL CLERK

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HOUSE BILL DRH30338-MTa-71B

Short Title: Strong Public Schools for a Strong NC. (Public)

Sponsors: Representative von Haefen.

Referred to:

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED
AN ACT TO APPROPRIATE FUNDS TO RAISE SALARIES FOR TEACHERS, TO
PROVIDE FUNDS FOR CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES, TO PROVIDE BREAKFAST
AND LUNCH IN PUBLIC SCHOOLS AT NO COST TO STUDENTS THROUGH AN
ALLOCATION BASED ON SCHOOL FOOD AUTHORITY EVALUATIONS, TO
PROVIDE FOR A ONE-TO-ONE DEVICE REFRESH FOR PUBLIC SCHOOLS, AND
TO REVISE THE OPPORTUNITY SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM.

The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

PART I. RAISE TEACHER SALARIES

SECTION 1.(a) The following monthly teacher salary schedule shall apply for the
2025-2026 fiscal year to licensed personnel of the public schools who are classified as teachers.
The salary schedule is based on years of teaching experience.

2025-2026 Teacher Monthly Salary Schedule

Years of Experience	"A" Teachers
0	\$4,450
1	\$4,530
2	\$4,610
3	\$4,690
4	\$4,770
5	\$4,850
6	\$4,930
7	\$5,010
8	\$5,090
9	\$5,170
10	\$5,250
11	\$5,330
12	\$5,410
13	\$5,490
14	\$5,570
15-24	\$5,588
25+	\$5,795

SECTION 1.(b) Salary Supplements for Teachers Paid on This Salary Schedule. –

- (1) Licensed teachers who have NBPTS certification shall receive a salary supplement each month of twelve percent (12%) of their monthly salary on the "A" salary schedule.



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- (2) Licensed teachers who are classified as "M" teachers shall receive a salary supplement each month of ten percent (10%) of their monthly salary on the "A" salary schedule.
- (3) Licensed teachers with licensure based on academic preparation at the six-year degree level shall receive a salary supplement of one hundred twenty-six dollars (\$126.00) per month in addition to the supplement provided to them as "M" teachers.
- (4) Licensed teachers with licensure based on academic preparation at the doctoral degree level shall receive a salary supplement of two hundred fifty-three dollars (\$253.00) per month in addition to the supplement provided to them as "M" teachers.
- (5) Certified school nurses shall receive a salary supplement each month of ten percent (10%) of their monthly salary on the "A" salary schedule.
- (6) School counselors who are licensed as counselors at the master's degree level or higher shall receive a salary supplement of one hundred dollars (\$100.00) per month.

SECTION 1.(c) For school psychologists, school speech pathologists who are licensed as speech pathologists at the master's degree level or higher, and school audiologists who are licensed as audiologists at the master's degree level or higher, the following shall apply:

- (1) The first step of the salary schedule shall be equivalent to the sixth step of the "A" salary schedule.
- (2) These employees shall receive the following salary supplements each month:
 - a. Ten percent (10%) of their monthly salary, excluding the supplement provided pursuant to sub-subdivision b. of this subdivision.
 - b. Five hundred dollars (\$500.00).
- (3) These employees are eligible to receive salary supplements equivalent to those of teachers for academic preparation at the six-year degree level or the doctoral degree level.
- (4) The twenty-sixth step of the salary schedule shall be seven and one-half percent (7.5%) higher than the salary received by these same employees on the twenty-fifth step of the salary schedule.

SECTION 1.(d) Beginning with the 2014-2015 fiscal year, in lieu of providing annual longevity payments to teachers paid on the teacher salary schedule, the amounts of those longevity payments are included in the monthly amounts under the teacher salary schedule.

SECTION 1.(e) A teacher compensated in accordance with this salary schedule for the 2025-2026 school year shall receive an amount equal to the greater of the following:

- (1) The applicable amount on the salary schedule for the applicable school year.
- (2) For teachers who were eligible for longevity for the 2013-2014 school year, the sum of the following:
 - a. The salary the teacher received in the 2013-2014 school year pursuant to Section 35.11 of S.L. 2013-360.
 - b. The longevity that the teacher would have received under the longevity system in effect for the 2013-2014 school year provided in Section 35.11 of S.L. 2013-360 based on the teacher's current years of service.
 - c. The annual bonus provided in Section 9.1(e) of S.L. 2014-100.
- (3) For teachers who were not eligible for longevity for the 2013-2014 school year, the sum of the salary and annual bonus the teacher received in the 2014-2015 school year pursuant to Section 9.1 of S.L. 2014-100.

SECTION 1.(f) As used in this section, the term "teacher" shall also include instructional support personnel.

1 **SECTION 1.(g)** There is appropriated from the General Fund to the Department of
2 Public Instruction for the 2025-2026 fiscal year the sum of four hundred six million three hundred
3 thousand dollars (\$406,300,000) in recurring funds to implement the teacher raises provided in
4 this section.

5
6 **PART II. FUNDS FOR CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES**

7 **SECTION 2.(a)** G.S. 115C-111.05 reads as rewritten:

8 **"§ 115C-111.05. Funding for children with disabilities.**

9 To the extent funds are made available for this purpose, the State Board shall allocate funds
10 for children with disabilities to each local school administrative unit on a per child basis. Each
11 local school administrative unit shall receive funds for the lesser of (i) all children who are
12 identified as children with disabilities or (ii) thirteen percent (13%) of its allocated average daily
13 membership in the local school administrative unit for the current school ~~year-year~~ on the basis
14 of the reported cost of the services provided."

15 **SECTION 2.(b)** There is appropriated from the General Fund to the Department of
16 Public Instruction the sum of eighty-nine million four hundred thousand dollars (\$89,400,000)
17 in recurring funds for the 2025-2026 fiscal year and one hundred nine million two hundred
18 thousand dollars (\$109,200,000) in nonrecurring funds for the 2025-2026 fiscal year to
19 implement the plan for weighted funding for children with disabilities on the basis of the reported
20 cost of services provided developed by the Department of Public Instruction pursuant to Section
21 7.7 of S.L. 2023-134. The Department shall begin distributing funds for children with disabilities
22 based on this model beginning with the 2025-2026 school year. The nonrecurring funds
23 appropriated to the Department by this section shall not revert but shall remain available until the
24 end of the 2027-2028 fiscal year.

25
26 **PART III. PROVIDE BREAKFAST AND LUNCH IN PUBLIC SCHOOLS AT NO COST**
27 **TO STUDENTS THROUGH AN ALLOCATION BASED ON SCHOOL FOOD**
28 **AUTHORITY EVALUATIONS**

29 **SECTION 3.(a)** G.S. 115C-263 reads as rewritten:

30 **"§ 115C-263. School nutrition services.**

31 (a) As a part of the function of the public school system, ~~local boards of education-public~~
32 school units shall have a school food authority to provide to the extent practicable school nutrition
33 services in the schools under their jurisdiction. The school food authority shall offer students two
34 meals per day, breakfast and lunch, at no cost to the student. All school nutrition services made
35 available under this authority shall be provided in accordance with federal guidelines established
36 by the Food and Nutrition Service of the United States Department of Agriculture.

37 (b) ~~The~~ To the extent that funds are made available for the purpose, the State Board of
38 Education shall allocate funds to school food authorities at public school units for the purpose of
39 providing healthy nutrition services at no cost to students. In issuing the allocation, the Board
40 shall do the following:

41 (1) Determine the amount to allocate to each school food authority based on an
42 evaluation of the authority's nutrition services. The Board shall develop the
43 method and criteria for the evaluation, which, at a minimum, shall account for
44 the following:

- 45 a. The size of the schools served by the school food authority as
46 determined by Average Daily Membership.
47 b. The number of students that are eligible for free or reduced-price lunch
48 and the estimated receipts from the National School Lunch Program.
49 c. The funds actually expended in the prior year, which may be waived
50 if the school food authority was not in operation in the year prior.

- d. The extent to which the nutrition services promote health and wellness by providing food that is of high quality and nutrient content.
- e. The extent to which the school food authority uses locally sourced food and products.
- f. Any other information the Board deems relevant to the cost and operation of the nutrition services.
- (2) Ensure the funds are distributed on a fair and equitable basis.
- (3) Issue the allocation at the beginning of each fiscal year, except that the Board may reserve for future allocation a reasonable amount, not to exceed ten percent (10%) of the total funds available for providing nutrition services.
- (c) The State Board of Education may adopt rules regulating the provision of school nutrition that impose additional restrictions that are not inconsistent with the federal guidelines.
- (d) Funds allocated pursuant to this section shall supplement and not supplant funds from any other source provided for the same purpose."

SECTION 3.(b) G.S. 115C-264(a) reads as rewritten:

"(a) Local boards of education operating school nutrition programs shall participate in the federal National School Lunch Program ~~established by the federal government~~ and, if eligible, the Community Eligibility Provision Program. School nutrition programs shall be under the jurisdiction of the Division of School Nutrition of the Department of Public Instruction."

SECTION 3.(c) G.S. 115C-150.14 is amended by adding a new subsection to read:

"(a1) A school governed by this Article shall provide school nutrition services in accordance with G.S. 115C-263 and G.S. 115C-264."

SECTION 3.(d) G.S. 115C-218.75 is amended by adding a new subsection to read:

"(p) A charter school shall provide school nutrition services in accordance with G.S. 115C-263 and G.S. 115C-264."

SECTION 3.(e) G.S. 115C-238.72(b) reads as rewritten:

"(b) ~~Food Nutrition Service.~~ – The local school administrative unit identified by resolution shall ~~provide, to the extent practicable, school food~~ provide school nutrition services to the regional ~~school.~~ school in accordance with G.S. 115C-263 and G.S. 115C-264. For purposes of federal funding through the National School Lunch Program or other federally supported ~~food~~ nutrition service programs, the local school administrative unit identified by resolution shall be permitted to include eligible students enrolled in the regional school. Other participating units shall not include students enrolled in the regional school for purposes of federally supported ~~food~~ nutrition service programs."

SECTION 3.(f) G.S. 116-239.8(b)(4)c. reads as rewritten:

"c. ~~Food Nutrition~~ services. – The laboratory school shall strive to ensure that one hundred percent (100%) muscadine grape juice is made available to students as a part of the school's nutrition program or through the operation of the school's vending facilities. Laboratory schools shall provide school nutrition services in accordance with G.S. 115C-263 and G.S. 115C-264. Upon request, the local school administrative unit in which the laboratory school is located shall administer the National School Lunch Program for the laboratory ~~school in accordance with G.S. 115C-264.~~ school."

SECTION 3.(g) There is appropriated from the General Fund to the Department of Public Instruction the sum of one hundred forty-four million dollars (\$144,000,000) in recurring funds for the 2025-2026 fiscal year to provide nutrition services to students in public school units at no cost to the students in accordance with this section. Should this appropriation not be sufficient to fulfill the provisions of this section for the 2025-2026 fiscal year, the State Board of Education may use funds appropriated to State Aid for Public Schools for this purpose.

SECTION 3.(h) The State Board of Education has authority to adopt temporary rules to enact the provisions of this section until such a time as permanent rules can be adopted.

SECTION 3.(i) This section becomes effective July 1, 2025, and applies beginning with the 2025-2026 school year.

PART IV. PROVIDE FOR A ONE-TO-ONE DEVICE REFRESH

SECTION 4.(a) Part 3A of Article 8 of Chapter 115C is amended by adding a new section to read:

"§ 115C-102.10. Device refresh and replacement program.

(a) The State Board of Education shall adopt by rule standards for a one-to-one electronic device refresh and replacement program. The purpose of this program shall be to provide schools funds to update or replace electronic devices used directly by students and teachers for instruction. At a minimum, the standards shall include:

(1) A statewide schedule for routine replacement of electronic devices, based on the average operating lifecycle of the devices most commonly used.

(2) A description of the lack or impairment of functionality a device must have in order to be eligible for replacement, including how functionality will be verified.

(3) Instructions on how to dispose of devices no longer in use, including whether those devices should be sold or recycled.

(b) Local school administrative units shall administer the one-to-one electronic device refresh and replacement program in accordance with the standards set by the State Board."

SECTION 4.(b) There is appropriated from the General Fund to the Department of Public Instruction the sum of one hundred fifty-two million six hundred twenty thousand dollars (\$152,620,000) in recurring funds for the 2025-2026 fiscal year for the Department to establish the one-to-one device refresh program, as enacted by this act.

PART V. REVISE OPPORTUNITY SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM

SECTION 5.(a) Beginning with the 2025-2026 fiscal year, the State Education Assistance Authority shall not award any scholarship grant funds under Part 2A of Article 39 of Chapter 115C of the General Statutes to new persons who did not receive scholarship grant funds in the prior school year. It is the intent of the General Assembly to eliminate the program for awarding scholarship grants under Part 2A of Article 39 of Chapter 115C of the General Statutes beginning in the 2036-2037 school year or once all current recipients become ineligible for the receipt of scholarship grants.

SECTION 5.(b) G.S. 115C-562.1 reads as rewritten:

"§ 115C-562.1. Definitions.

The following definitions apply in this Part:

...

(3a) Eligible student. – A student residing in North Carolina who has not yet received a high school diploma and who meets all of the following requirements:

a. Is eligible to attend a North Carolina public school pursuant to Article 25 of this Chapter. A child who is the age of 4 on or before April 16 is eligible to attend the following school year if the principal, or equivalent, of the school in which the child seeks to enroll finds that the student meets the requirements established by the Authority pursuant to G.S. 115C-562.2(d) and those findings are submitted to the Authority.

b. Has not been enrolled in a postsecondary institution as a full-time student taking at least 12 hours of academic credit.

- c. Has not been placed in a nonpublic school or facility by a public agency at public expense.
- d. Received a scholarship grant for the school year prior to the school year for which the student is applying.
- e. Resides in a household with an income level between the amount required for the student to qualify for the federal free or reduced-price lunch program and not in excess of two hundred percent (200%) of that amount.

...."

SECTION 5.(c) G.S. 115C-562.2 reads as rewritten:

"§ 115C-562.2. Scholarship grants.

(a) The Authority shall make available no later than February 1 annually applications to eligible students for the award of scholarship grants to attend any nonpublic school on a full- or part-time basis. Information about scholarship grants and the application process shall be made available on the Authority's ~~Web site.~~ website. Beginning March 15, the Authority shall begin awarding scholarship grants to students who have applied by ~~March 1 in the following order:~~ March 1.

- ~~(1) Eligible students who received a scholarship grant for the school year prior to the school year for which the students are applying.~~
- ~~(2) Eligible students qualifying for a scholarship grant in the amount provided under subdivision (1) of subsection (b2) of this section.~~
- ~~(3) Eligible students qualifying for a scholarship grant in the amount provided under subdivision (2) of subsection (b2) of this section.~~
- ~~(4) Eligible students qualifying for a scholarship grant in the amount provided under subdivision (3) of subsection (b2) of this section.~~
- ~~(5) All other students.~~

...

(b2) Scholarship grants shall be awarded to eligible students as follows:

- (1) For students residing in households with an income level not in excess of the amount required for the student to qualify for the federal free or reduced-price lunch program, per year per eligible student, an amount of up to one hundred percent (100%) of the average State per pupil allocation for average daily membership in the prior fiscal year.
- (2) For students residing in households with an income level between the amount required for the student to qualify for the federal free or reduced-price lunch program and not in excess of two hundred percent (200%) of that amount, per year per eligible student, an amount of up to ninety percent (90%) of the average State per pupil allocation for average daily membership in the prior fiscal year.
- ~~(3) For students residing in households with an income level of between two hundred percent (200%) of the amount required for the student to qualify for the federal free or reduced-price lunch program and not in excess of four hundred fifty percent (450%) of that amount, per year per eligible student, an amount of up to sixty percent (60%) of the average State per pupil allocation for average daily membership in the prior fiscal year.~~
- ~~(4) For all students, per year per eligible student, an amount of up to forty five percent (45%) of the average State per pupil allocation for average daily membership in the prior fiscal year, unless the student qualifies for a higher amount under this subsection.~~

(b3) Tuition and fees for a nonpublic school may include tuition and fees for books, transportation, equipment, or other items required by the nonpublic school.

(b4) No scholarship grant shall exceed, per year per eligible student, an amount equal to one hundred percent (100%) of the average State per pupil allocation for average daily membership in the prior fiscal year, and no scholarship grant shall exceed the required tuition and fees for the nonpublic school the eligible student will attend.

(b5) In addition to the amount of the scholarship grant, for any student receiving a scholarship grant in grades three, eight, or 11, the Authority shall provide to the nonpublic school an amount equal to the cost of the nationally standardized test required to be administered as provided in G.S. 115C-562.5.

...."

SECTION 5.(d) G.S. 115C-562.8 reads as rewritten:

"§ 115C-562.8. The Opportunity Scholarship Grant Fund Reserve.

...

(b) ~~The General Assembly finds that, due to the critical need in this State to provide opportunity for school choice for North Carolina students, it is imperative that the State provide an increase of funds for 15 years to the Opportunity Scholarship Grant Fund Reserve. Therefore, there~~ There is appropriated from the General Fund to the Reserve the following amounts for each fiscal year to be used for the purposes set forth in this section:

Fiscal Year	Appropriation
...	
2027-2028	\$700,000,000 \$193,664,793
2028-2029	\$725,000,000 \$168,730,451
2029-2030	\$750,000,000 \$147,006,405
2030-2031	\$775,000,000 \$128,079,330
2031-2032	\$800,000,000 \$111,589,117
<u>2032-2033</u>	<u>\$97,222,018</u>
<u>2033-2034</u>	<u>\$84,704,683</u>
<u>2034-2035</u>	<u>\$73,798,955</u>
<u>2035-2036</u>	<u>\$64,297,340</u>

For the ~~2032-2033-2036-2037~~ fiscal year and each fiscal year thereafter, ~~there is appropriated from the General Fund to the Reserve the sum of eight hundred twenty five million dollars (\$825,000,000) to be used for the purposes set forth in this section. no funds shall be appropriated from the General Fund to the Reserve, and it is the intention of the General Assembly to sunset this award of scholarship funds pursuant to this Part.~~ When developing the base budget, as defined by G.S. 143C-1-1, for each fiscal year specified in this ~~subsection, subsection until the 2036-2037 fiscal year,~~ the Director of the Budget shall include the appropriated amount specified in this subsection for that fiscal year.

...."

SECTION 5.(e) Notwithstanding any other provision of law to the contrary, funds appropriated for the award of opportunity scholarship grants pursuant to Part 2A of Article 39 of Chapter 115C of the General Statutes are reduced as follows:

- (1) Of the recurring funds appropriated to the Board of Governors of The University of North Carolina for the opportunity scholarship program pursuant to S.L. 2021-180, by the sum of thirty million dollars (\$30,000,000) for the 2025-2026 fiscal year.
- (2) Of the funds appropriated to the Opportunity Scholarship Grant Fund Reserve for the 2024-2025 fiscal year and allocated from the Reserve for the award of scholarship grants in the 2025-2026 fiscal year, by the sum of two hundred seventy-seven million one hundred sixty-five thousand four hundred fifty-nine dollars (\$277,165,459) in nonrecurring funds for the 2025-2026 fiscal year.

- (3) Of the funds appropriated to the Opportunity Scholarship Grant Fund Reserve, as follows:
- a. By the sum of three hundred sixty-nine million eight hundred sixty-seven thousand nine hundred six dollars (\$369,867,906) in recurring funds for the 2025-2026 fiscal year.
 - b. By the sum of an additional eighty-two million eight hundred forty-eight thousand two hundred fifty-seven dollars (\$82,848,257) in recurring funds for the 2026-2027 fiscal year.

SECTION 5.(f) This section applies beginning with the 2025-2026 school year.

PART VI. EFFECTIVE DATE

SECTION 6. Except as otherwise provided, this act becomes effective July 1, 2025.