

GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA  
SESSION 2011

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SENATE DRS15079-LEz-16 (01/05)

Short Title: Modify Driver Education Program.

(Public)

Sponsors: Senator Hartsell.

Referred to:

1 A BILL TO BE ENTITLED  
2 AN ACT TO REQUIRE THE DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION TO PROVIDE  
3 ADDITIONAL FISCAL AND TECHNICAL OVERSIGHT OF THE DRIVER  
4 EDUCATION PROGRAM, AS RECOMMENDED BY THE JOINT LEGISLATIVE  
5 PROGRAM EVALUATION OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE.

6 The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

7 SECTION 1. G.S. 115C-215 reads as rewritten:

8 "§ 115C-215. Instruction in driver training and safety education. Administration of driver  
9 education program by the Department of Public Instruction.

10 ~~There shall be organized and administered under the general supervision of the~~  
11 ~~Superintendent of Public Instruction a program of driver training and safety education in the~~  
12 ~~public schools of this State, said courses to be noncredit courses taught by instructors who meet~~  
13 ~~the requirements established by the State Board of Education. Instructors shall not be required~~  
14 ~~to hold teacher certificates.~~

15 (a) In accordance with criteria and standards approved by the State Board of Education,  
16 the State Superintendent of Public Instruction shall organize and administer a standardized  
17 program of driver education to be offered at the public high schools of this State for all  
18 physically and mentally qualified persons who (i) are older than 14 years and six months, (ii)  
19 are approved by the principal of the school, pursuant to rules adopted by the State Board of  
20 Education, (iii) are enrolled in a public or private high school within the State, and (iv) have not  
21 previously enrolled in the program. The State Board of Education shall use for this purpose all  
22 funds appropriated to it for this purpose, and may use all other funds that become available for  
23 its use for this purpose.

24 (b) The driver education curriculum shall include the following:

25 (1) Instruction on the rights and privileges of the handicapped and the signs and  
26 symbols used to assist the handicapped relative to motor vehicles, including  
27 the "international symbol of accessibility" and other symbols and devices as  
28 provided in Article 2A of this Chapter.

29 (2) At least six hours of instruction on the offense of driving while impaired and  
30 related subjects.

31 (3) At least six hours of actual driving experience. To the extent practicable, this  
32 experience may include at least one hour of instruction on the techniques of  
33 defensive driving.

34 (c) The State Board of Education shall establish and implement a strategic plan for the  
35 driver education program. At a minimum, the strategic plan shall consist of goals and



1 performance indicators, including the number of program participants as compared to the  
2 number of persons eligible to participate in the program, the implementation of a standard  
3 curriculum for the program, expenditures for the program, and the success rate of program  
4 participants in receiving a drivers license.

5 (d) The State Board of Education shall adopt a salary range for driver education  
6 instructors who are public school employees and who do not hold teacher certificates.

7 Driver education instructors who are public school employees and who hold teacher  
8 certificates shall be paid on the teacher salary schedule. A day of employment for driver  
9 education instructors who hold teacher certificates shall be the same number of hours required  
10 of all regular classroom teachers as established by the local board of education.

11 (e) The State Board of Education shall adopt rules to permit local boards of education  
12 to enter contracts with public or private entities to provide a program of driver education at  
13 public high schools. All driver education instructors shall meet the requirements established by  
14 the State Board of Education; provided, however, driver education instructors shall not be  
15 required to hold teacher certificates."

16 **SECTION 2.** G.S. 115C-216 reads as rewritten:

17 **"§ 115C-216. Boards of education required to provide courses in operation of motor**  
18 **vehicles.**

19 (a) ~~Course of Training and Instruction Required in Public High Schools. – The State~~  
20 ~~Board of Education and local~~ Local boards of education are required to provide as a part of the  
21 program of the public high schools in this State a course of training and instruction in the  
22 operation of motor vehicles, in accordance with G.S. 20-88.1, shall offer noncredit driver  
23 education courses in high schools using the standardized curriculum provided by the  
24 Department of Public Instruction.

25 (b) ~~Inclusion of Expense in Budget. – The local boards of education of every local~~  
26 ~~school administrative unit are hereby authorized to~~ shall include as an item of instructional  
27 service and as a part of the current expense fund of the budget of the several high schools under  
28 their supervision, the expense necessary to install and maintain such a course of training and  
29 instructing eligible persons in such schools in the operation of motor vehicles to offer the driver  
30 education course.

31 (c) ~~to (f) Repealed by Session Laws 1991, c. 689, s. 32(c)."~~

32 **SECTION 3.** G.S. 20-88.1 reads as rewritten:

33 **"§ 20-88.1. Driver education.**

34 (a) ~~In accordance with criteria and standards approved by the State Board of Education,~~  
35 ~~the State Superintendent of Public Instruction shall organize and administer a program of driver~~  
36 ~~education to be offered at the public high schools of this State for all physically and mentally~~  
37 ~~qualified persons who (i) are older than 14 years and six months, (ii) are approved by the~~  
38 ~~principal of the school, pursuant to rules adopted by the State Board of Education, (iii) are~~  
39 ~~enrolled in a public or private high school within the State, and (iv) have not previously~~  
40 ~~enrolled in the program. The State Board of Education shall use for such purpose all funds~~  
41 ~~appropriated to it for said purpose, and may use all other funds that become available for its use~~  
42 ~~for said purpose.~~

43 ~~The driver education program established pursuant to this section must include the~~  
44 ~~following:~~

- 45 (1) ~~Instruction on the rights and privileges of the handicapped and the signs and~~  
46 ~~symbols used to assist the handicapped relative to motor vehicles, including~~  
47 ~~the "international symbol of accessibility" and other symbols and devices as~~  
48 ~~provided in Article 2A of this Chapter.~~
- 49 (2) ~~At least six hours of instruction on the offense of driving while impaired and~~  
50 ~~related subjects.~~

1           (3) ~~At least six hours of actual driving experience. To the extent practicable, this~~  
2           ~~experience may include at least one hour of instruction on the techniques of~~  
3           ~~defensive driving.~~

4           ~~(b) The State Board of Education shall adopt a salary range for driver education~~  
5           ~~instructors who are public school employees and who do not hold teacher certificates.~~

6           ~~Driver education instructors who are public school employees and who hold teacher~~  
7           ~~certificates shall be paid on the teacher salary schedule. A day of employment for driver~~  
8           ~~education instructors who hold teacher certificates shall be the same number of hours required~~  
9           ~~of all regular classroom teachers as established by the local board of education.~~

10          ~~(b1) The State Board of Education shall adopt rules to permit local boards of education~~  
11          ~~to enter contracts with public or private entities to provide a program of driver education at~~  
12          ~~public high schools. All driver education instructors shall meet the requirements established by~~  
13          ~~the State Board of Education; provided, however, driver education instructors shall not be~~  
14          ~~required to hold teacher certificates.~~

15          ~~(e)(a) All expenses incurred by the State in carrying out the provisions of this section~~  
16          ~~the driver education program administered by the Department of Public Instruction in accordance~~  
17          ~~with G.S. 115C-215 shall be paid out of the Highway Fund.~~

18          ~~(d)(b) The Division shall prepare a driver license handbook that explains the traffic laws of~~  
19          ~~the State and shall periodically revise the handbook to reflect changes in these laws. At the~~  
20          ~~request of the Department of Education, Public Instruction, the Division shall provide free~~  
21          ~~copies of the handbook to that Department for use in the program of driver education offered at~~  
22          ~~public high schools."~~

23           **SECTION 4.(a)** The State Board of Education shall report to the Joint Legislative  
24           Program Evaluation Oversight Committee by July 15, 2011, on the status of the  
25           implementation of Section 7.12 of S.L. 2010-31, which mandates the creation of a standard  
26           curriculum to be used for the driver education program in the Department of Public Instruction.

27           **SECTION 4.(b)** For the 2011-2012 school year, no State funds shall be used for  
28           driver education programs that do not use the standard driver education curriculum created in  
29           accordance with Section 7.12 of S.L. 2010-31.

30           **SECTION 5.** The State Board of Education shall establish a pilot program to  
31           deliver driver education by electronic means. At least five local school administrative units  
32           shall participate in the pilot program. Funds appropriated for driver education shall be used to  
33           implement the pilot program. The State Board shall report on the implementation of the pilot  
34           program to the Joint Education Oversight Committee and the Joint Legislative Program  
35           Evaluation Oversight Committee by February 15, 2012. The report shall include the cost per  
36           student of delivering the instruction and the success rate of program participants in receiving a  
37           drivers license.

38           **SECTION 6.** The State Board of Education shall report to the Joint Legislative  
39           Education Oversight Committee and to the Joint Legislative Program Evaluation Oversight  
40           Committee by February 15, 2012, on the following:

41           (1) The most cost-effective method of delivering driver education in the short-  
42           and long-term. In making this determination, the State Board of Education  
43           shall consider the results of the pilot program implemented pursuant to  
44           Section 5 of this act.

45           (2) The strategic plan adopted by the State Board of Education in accordance  
46           with G.S. 115C-215.

47           **SECTION 7.** This act is effective when it becomes law.