

GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA
SESSION 2021

H.B. 516
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HOUSE PRINCIPAL CLERK

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HOUSE BILL DRH30244-MT-23

Short Title: Raise Dropout Age to 18.

(Public)

Sponsors: Representative A. Baker.

Referred to:

1 A BILL TO BE ENTITLED
2 AN ACT TO RAISE THE COMPULSORY SCHOOL ATTENDANCE AGE TO EIGHTEEN
3 YEARS OLD.

4 The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

5 **SECTION 1.** G.S. 115C-378(a) reads as rewritten:

6 "(a) Every parent, ~~guardian-guardian,~~ or custodian in this State having charge or control
7 of a child between the ages of seven and ~~16-18~~ years shall cause the child to attend school
8 continuously for a period equal to the time which the public school to which the child is assigned
9 shall be in ~~session-session,~~ unless the child graduates from high school. Every parent, guardian,
10 or custodian in this State having charge or control of a child under age seven who is enrolled in
11 a public school in grades kindergarten through two shall also cause the child to attend school
12 continuously for a period equal to the time which the public school to which the child is assigned
13 shall be in session unless the child has withdrawn from school."

14 **SECTION 2.** G.S. 115C-238.66(3) reads as rewritten:

15 "(3) School attendance. – Every parent, guardian, or other person in this State
16 having charge or control of a child who is enrolled in the regional school and
17 who is less than ~~16-18~~ years of age shall cause such child to attend school
18 continuously for a period equal to the time that the regional school shall be in
19 ~~session-session,~~ unless the child graduates from high school. No person shall
20 encourage, entice, or counsel any child to be unlawfully absent from the
21 regional school. Any person who aids or abets a student's unlawful absence
22 from the regional school shall, upon conviction, be guilty of a Class 1
23 misdemeanor. The principal shall be responsible for implementing such
24 additional policies concerning compulsory attendance as shall be adopted by
25 the board of directors, including regulations concerning lawful and unlawful
26 absences, permissible excuses for temporary absences, maintenance of
27 attendance records, and attendance counseling."

28 **SECTION 3.** G.S. 116-235(b)(2) reads as rewritten:

29 "(2) School Attendance. – Every parent, guardian, or other person in this State
30 having charge or control of a child who is enrolled in the School and who is
31 less than ~~16-18~~ years of age shall cause such child to attend school
32 continuously for a period equal to the time which the School shall be in
33 ~~session-session,~~ unless the child graduates from high school. No person shall
34 encourage, entice, or counsel any child to be unlawfully absent from the
35 School. Any person who aids or abets a student's unlawful absence from the
36 School shall, upon conviction, be guilty of a Class 1 misdemeanor. The



1 Chancellor of the School shall be responsible for implementing such
2 additional policies concerning compulsory attendance as shall be adopted by
3 the Board of Trustees, including regulations concerning lawful and unlawful
4 absences, permissible excuses for temporary absences, maintenance of
5 attendance records, and attendance counseling."

6 **SECTION 4.** G.S. 116-239.8(b)(5) reads as rewritten:

7 "(5) School attendance. – Every parent, guardian, or other person in this State
8 having charge or control of a child who is enrolled in the laboratory school
9 and who is less than ~~16-18~~ years of age shall cause such child to attend school
10 continuously for a period equal to the time that the laboratory school shall be
11 in ~~session-~~session, unless the child graduates from high school. No person
12 shall encourage, entice, or counsel any child to be unlawfully absent from the
13 laboratory school. Any person who aids or abets a student's unlawful absence
14 from the laboratory school shall, upon conviction, be guilty of a Class 1
15 misdemeanor. The principal shall be responsible for implementing such
16 additional policies concerning compulsory attendance as shall be adopted by
17 the chancellor, including regulations concerning lawful and unlawful
18 absences, permissible excuses for temporary absences, maintenance of
19 attendance records, and attendance counseling."

20 **SECTION 5.** G.S. 7B-1501(27) reads as rewritten:

21 "(27) Undisciplined juvenile. –

22 a. A juvenile who, while less than ~~16-18~~ years of age but at least 6 years
23 of age, is unlawfully absent from school; or is regularly disobedient to
24 and beyond the disciplinary control of the juvenile's parent, guardian,
25 or custodian; or is regularly found in places where it is unlawful for a
26 juvenile to be; or has run away from home for a period of more than
27 24 ~~hours;~~ or hours.

28 b. ~~A juvenile who is 16 or 17 years of age and who is regularly~~
29 ~~disobedient to and beyond the disciplinary control of the juvenile's~~
30 ~~parent, guardian, or custodian; or is regularly found in places where it~~
31 ~~is unlawful for a juvenile to be; or has run away from home for a period~~
32 ~~of more than 24 hours."~~

33 **SECTION 6.** G.S. 143B-805(20) reads as rewritten:

34 "(20) Undisciplined juvenile. –

35 a. A juvenile who, while less than ~~16-18~~ years of age but at least 6 years
36 of age, is unlawfully absent from school; or is regularly disobedient to
37 and beyond the disciplinary control of the juvenile's parent, guardian,
38 or custodian; or is regularly found in places where it is unlawful for a
39 juvenile to be; or has run away from home for a period of more than
40 24 ~~hours;~~ or hours.

41 b. ~~A juvenile who is 16 or 17 years of age and who is regularly~~
42 ~~disobedient to and beyond the disciplinary control of the juvenile's~~
43 ~~parent, guardian, or custodian; or is regularly found in places where it~~
44 ~~is unlawful for a juvenile to be; or has run away from home for a period~~
45 ~~of more than 24 hours."~~

46 **SECTION 7.** Section 8.21 of S.L. 2016-94 is repealed.

47 **SECTION 8.** This act is effective when it becomes law and applies beginning with
48 the 2021-2022 school year.