

GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA
SESSION 2025

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HOUSE BILL 947

Short Title: Every Child Reads. (Public)

Sponsors: Representatives Cotham, Biggs, and Brockman (Primary Sponsors).
For a complete list of sponsors, refer to the North Carolina General Assembly web site.

Referred to: Education - K-12, if favorable, Rules, Calendar, and Operations of the House

April 14, 2025

1 A BILL TO BE ENTITLED
2 AN ACT TO PROVIDE FOR DYSLEXIA SCREENING AND INTERVENTIONS IN
3 SCHOOLS, TO REQUIRE DYSLEXIA TRAINING FOR TEACHERS, TO REQUIRE
4 LITERACY INSTRUCTION IN MIDDLE SCHOOLS BE ALIGNED WITH THE
5 SCIENCE OF READING, AND TO TRANSFER THE NC PRE-K PROGRAM TO THE
6 DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION.

7 The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

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9 **PART I. DYSLEXIA SCREENINGS AND INTERVENTIONS**

10 **SECTION 1.(a)** Chapter 115C of the General Statutes is amended by adding a new
11 Article to read:

12 "Article 9D.

13 "Students with Dyslexia.

14 **"§ 115C-150.20. Purpose.**

15 It is the intent of the General Assembly that all students with dyslexia receive the necessary
16 and appropriate screenings, assessments, and special education services providing interventions
17 for learning difficulties with language, reading, and writing. To provide a common set of
18 professional standards and guidelines for the identification of and intervention for students with
19 dyslexia, the State Board of Education and local boards of education shall implement a screening
20 process, comprehensive assessment, and intervention strategies for these students in accordance
21 with the provisions of this Article and Article 9 of this Chapter.

22 **"§ 115C-150.21. Definitions.**

23 The following definitions apply in this Article:

24 (1) Disability. – As defined in G.S. 115C-106.3(2).

25 (2) Dyslexia. – A disorder in one or more of the basic psychological processes
26 involved in the understanding or in using language, spoken or written,
27 characterized by difficulty with accurate or fluent word recognition, or both,
28 and by difficulty with spelling and decoding.

29 (3) Individualized education program or IEP. – As defined in
30 G.S. 115C-106.3(6).

31 (4) Science of Reading. – As defined in G.S. 115C-83.3(7a).

32 (5) Special education. – As defined in G.S. 115C-106.3(20).

33 **"§ 115C-150.22. Screening, assessment, and intervention.**

34 (a) The State Board of Education shall provide informational materials and screening
35 instruments developed in accordance with G.S. 115C-12(50) to local boards of education to



1 identify students who exhibit potential indicators of dyslexia. Each local board of education shall
2 provide informational materials related to dyslexia to parents of students who exhibit potential
3 indicators of dyslexia on an annual basis.

4 (b) Local school administrative units shall screen every student in grades kindergarten
5 through three, grade six, and grade nine for dyslexia using the screening instrument adopted by
6 the State Board.

7 (c) If a screening instrument indicates that a student exhibits potential indicators of
8 dyslexia, the local school administrative unit shall administer a comprehensive assessment
9 adopted by the State Board to determine whether the student has dyslexia. A student identified
10 as having dyslexia shall be provided appropriate intervention strategies grounded in the Science
11 of Reading through the student's individualized education program in accordance with the rules
12 adopted by the State Board.

13 **"§ 115C-150.23. Training for school personnel.**

14 (a) All grades kindergarten through three, grade six, and grade nine teachers shall be
15 trained to administer the screening instruments provided by the State Board pursuant to
16 G.S. 115C-150.22.

17 (b) Ongoing professional development opportunities shall be made available to teachers
18 and other school personnel on the identification of and intervention strategies for students with
19 dyslexia."

20 **SECTION 1.(b)** G.S. 115C-12 is amended by adding a new subdivision to read:

21 "(50) Informational Materials and Screening for Dyslexia. – The State Board of
22 Education shall develop informational materials to be shared with parents
23 regarding dyslexia. The State Board of Education shall adopt age-appropriate
24 screening instruments, a comprehensive assessment for students who exhibit
25 potential indicators for dyslexia, and appropriate intervention strategies
26 grounded in the Science of Reading for use by local boards of education."

27 **SECTION 1.(c)** G.S. 115C-83.10(b) reads as rewritten:

28 "(b) Each local board of education shall report annually in writing to the State Board of
29 Education by September 1 of each year the following information on the prior school year:

30 (1) A description of all literacy interventions provided to students who have been
31 retained under G.S. 115C-83.7(a).

32 (1a) A description of the literacy interventions provided to (i) students who exhibit
33 potential indicators of dyslexia and (ii) students with dyslexia.

34 (2) The number of first and second grade students attending a reading camp
35 offered by the local board.

36 (3) The license area or areas, years of licensed teaching experience, grade level
37 assignment, and any other specific subject-area assignments of each teacher
38 providing instruction at a reading camp.

39 (4) The number and percentage of teachers providing instruction at a reading
40 camp who were paid a reading performance bonus during the school year
41 immediately preceding the reading camp and the grade level on which the
42 bonus was based.

43 (5) The number of kindergarten through third grade students with an Individual
44 Reading Plan."

45 **SECTION 1.(d)** G.S. 115C-83.6A(a) reads as rewritten:

46 "(a) Each local school administrative unit shall submit to the Department of Public
47 Instruction a plan for the literacy interventions it will offer, including reading camps, in the
48 following school year no later than October 1. The plan shall include information about the
49 specific literacy interventions and literacy curricula that will be used with (i) students who exhibit
50 potential indicators of dyslexia and (ii) students with dyslexia. The plan shall include information
51 about the local school administrative unit's efforts to staff reading camps with the most qualified

teachers possible, including the unit's efforts to attract teachers associated with high growth in reading based on EVAAS data and teachers who have earned a reading bonus. The plan shall incorporate any feedback received from the Department on the previous year's plan. As part of their plans, local school administrative units are encouraged to partner with other local school administrative units and with community organizations to enhance literacy interventions."

SECTION 1.(e) G.S. 115C-83.6B(a) reads as rewritten:

"(a) An Individual Reading Plan (IRP) shall be developed for any student in kindergarten through third grade demonstrating difficulty with reading development based on the results of either (i) the first diagnostic or formative assessment of the school year or (ii) the first diagnostic or formative assessment of the second semester of the school year. The IRP shall be continually adjusted based on multiple data sources as prescribed by the Department of Public Instruction, including the results of any dyslexia screening performed in accordance with G.S. 115C-150.22, indicating that the student is not progressing toward grade-level standards in one or more major reading areas. Based on the most recently collected data, the IRP shall include the following information, specific to the identified student:

- (1) The specific reading skill deficiencies identified by assessment data.
- (2) Goals and benchmarks for growth.
- (3) The means by which progress will be monitored and evaluated.
- (4) The specific additional literacy interventions the student will receive.
- (5) The Science of Reading-based instructional programming the teacher will implement.
- (6) Any additional services the teacher deems appropriate to accelerate the student's reading skill and development."

SECTION 1.(f) Each local board of education shall report to the State Board of Education on the following information by September 15, 2026:

- (1) A description of the literacy interventions provided to students who exhibit potential indicators of dyslexia, which includes difficulty with accurate or fluent word recognition, or both, and difficulty with spelling and decoding.
- (2) A description of the literacy interventions provided to students with dyslexia.
- (3) A list and description of any literacy curricula being used with students with dyslexia.
- (4) A list and description of the professional development offered to teachers in the local school administrative unit that includes instruction on identifying and providing interventions for students with dyslexia. This shall include the number of teachers who have participated in the professional development.

The State Board of Education shall report the information provided by the local boards of education, with an executive summary and disaggregated by local school administrative units, to the Joint Legislative Education Oversight Committee by November 15, 2026.

SECTION 1.(g) This section is effective when it becomes law. Subsections (a), (b), and (e) of this section apply beginning with the 2026-2027 school year. Subsection (c) of this section applies beginning with the report submitted by September 1, 2027. Subsection (d) of this section applies beginning with literacy intervention plans submitted by October 1, 2026.

PART II. EARLY LITERACY PROGRAM

SECTION 2. G.S. 115C-83.4B(b) reads as rewritten:

"(b) As part of the Early Literacy Program, the Department of Public Instruction shall focus on at least the following components:

- (1) Provide a training program to educators and administrators working with children in the NC Pre-K program to ensure developmentally appropriate instruction grounded in the Science of Reading and outcomes promoting

- reading achievement in students. The Department of Public Instruction shall utilize a third-party independent teacher training program to deliver professional development that demonstrates evidence-based success with educators and administrators in establishing deep knowledge of literacy instruction.
- (2) Provide integration of age-appropriate resources, including digital and technological resources, in the NC Pre-K program for children to meet reading achievement goals.
- (3) Ensure administration of a formative assessment to children at the conclusion of their participation in the NC Pre-K program to determine their kindergarten readiness and the alignment of their literacy instruction with the Science of Reading. The Department shall also ensure that the results of each child's formative assessment are shared with the child's kindergarten teacher at the beginning of the next school year.
- (4) Ensure administration of a dyslexia screening instrument to every student participating in the NC Pre-K program. The Department shall ensure that the results of each child's screening are shared with the child's kindergarten teacher at the beginning of the next school year.
- (5) Provide training to educators and administrators working with children in the NC Pre-K program to ensure appropriate instruction and intervention strategies are used with students who exhibit potential indicators of dyslexia."

PART III. EDUCATOR PREPARATION AND CONTINUING LICENSURE

SECTION 3.(a) G.S. 115C-269.20(a)(3) reads as rewritten:

- "(3) EPPs providing training for elementary and special education general curriculum teachers shall ensure that students receive instruction in early literacy intervention strategies and practices that are aligned with the Science of Reading and State and national reading standards and shall include the following:
- a. Instruction in the teaching of reading, including a substantive understanding of reading as a process involving oral language, phonological and phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension. Instruction shall include appropriate application of literacy interventions to ensure reading proficiency for all students.
 - b. Instruction in evidence-based assessment and diagnosis of specific areas of difficulty with reading development and of reading deficiencies.
 - c. Instruction in appropriate application of literacy interventions to ensure reading proficiency for all students.
 - d. Instruction in the identification of and intervention strategies for students with dyslexia."

SECTION 3.(b) G.S. 115C-269.20(a)(4) reads as rewritten:

- "(4) EPPs providing training for middle and high school teachers shall include the following:
- a. Adequate coursework in the relevant content area. For clinical residency programs, students may instead demonstrate mastery of the relevant content area through the passage of the relevant content area examination approved by the State Board.
 - b. Adequate coursework in the teaching of the relevant content area.
 - c. For EPPs providing training for science teachers, adequate preparation in issues related to science laboratory safety.

d. Instruction in the identification of and intervention strategies for students with dyslexia."

SECTION 3.(c) G.S. 115C-270.30(b)(2) reads as rewritten:

"(2) For elementary school ~~teachers,~~ teachers and middle school teachers teaching under a Middle Grades license, at least three continuing education credits related to literacy. Literacy renewal credits shall include evidence-based assessment, diagnosis, and intervention strategies for students not demonstrating reading proficiency, grounded in the Science of Reading, as defined in G.S. 115C-83.3. At least one credit shall include instruction in the identification of and intervention strategies for students with dyslexia."

PART IV. MIDDLE SCHOOL LITERACY INSTRUCTION

SECTION 4. Article 8 of Chapter 115C of the General Statutes is amended by adding a new section to read:

"§ 115C-81.37. Literacy instruction in middle schools.

To the extent literacy instruction is provided, all literacy instruction in middle schools shall be aligned with the Science of Reading, as defined in G.S. 115C-83.3."

PART V. RELOCATE NC PRE-K FROM DHHS TO DPI

SECTION 5.(a) The NC Prekindergarten (NC Pre-K) program is transferred from the Department of Health and Human Services to the Department of Public Instruction effective July 1, 2025. This transfer shall have all of the elements of a Type I transfer, as defined in G.S. 143A-6(a). All duties and requirements associated with NC Pre-K are now the duty and responsibility of the Department of Public Instruction to fulfill.

SECTION 5.(b) G.S. 143B-168.10A reads as rewritten:

"§ 143B-168.10A. NC Pre-K Reports.

~~The Division of Child Development and Early Education~~ Department of Public Instruction shall submit an annual report no later than March 15 of each year to the Joint Legislative Commission on Governmental Operations, ~~the Joint Legislative Oversight Committee on Health and Human Services, the Senate Appropriations Committee on Health and Human Services, the House of Representatives Appropriations Subcommittee on Health and Human Services, the Office of State Budget and Management,~~ the Joint Legislative Education Oversight Committee, and the Fiscal Research Division. The report shall include the following:

- (1) The number of children participating in the NC Pre-K program.
- (2) The number of children participating in the NC Pre-K program who have never been served in other early education programs, such as child care, public or private preschool, Head Start, Early Head Start, or early intervention programs.
- (3) The expected NC Pre-K expenditures for the programs and the source of the local contributions.
- (4) The results of an annual evaluation of the NC Pre-K program."

SECTION 5.(c) G.S. 143B-168.10F(a) reads as rewritten:

"(a) ~~The Division of Childhood Development and Early Education of the Department of Health and Human Services~~ Department of Public Instruction shall post the following information on its website:

- (1) The educational opportunities for kindergarten offered by local school administrative units.
- (2) The educational opportunities for kindergarten offered by charter schools.
- (3) Scholarships for enrollment in nonpublic schools provided pursuant to Part 2A of Article 39 of Chapter 115C of the General Statutes, or any successor program.

This information shall be indexed or searchable by county, and the ~~Division-Department~~ shall update the information on June 1 each year."

SECTION 5.(d) NC Pre-K Program. – The Department of Public Instruction shall comply with the following provisions:

- (1) Eligibility. – The Department of Public Instruction shall continue implementing the NC Prekindergarten (NC Pre-K) program. The NC Pre-K program shall serve children who are 4 years of age on or before August 31 of the program year. In determining eligibility, the Department shall establish income eligibility requirements for the program not to exceed seventy-five percent (75%) of the State median income. Up to twenty percent (20%) of children enrolled may have family incomes in excess of seventy-five percent (75%) of median income if those children have other designated risk factors. Furthermore, any age-eligible child who is a child of either of the following shall be eligible for the program: (i) an active duty member of the Armed Forces of the United States, including the North Carolina National Guard, State military forces, or a reserve component of the Armed Forces who was ordered to active duty by the proper authority within the last 18 months or is expected to be ordered within the next 18 months, or (ii) a member of the Armed Forces of the United States, including the North Carolina National Guard, State military forces, or a reserve component of the Armed Forces who was injured or killed while serving on active duty. Eligibility determinations for NC Pre-K participants may continue through local education agencies and local North Carolina Partnership for Children, Inc., partnerships. Other than developmental disabilities or other chronic health issues, the Department shall not consider the health of a child as a factor in determining eligibility for participation in the NC Pre-K program.
- (2) Staff-to-child ratio and class size. – The classroom shall not exceed a maximum staff-to-child ratio of one to 10 with a maximum class size of 20 children, with at least one teacher and one teacher assistant per classroom. A classroom of 10 children or less shall have at least one teacher. The Child Care Commission shall adopt any rules, and the Department of Public Instruction shall revise any rules or policies necessary to implement the provisions of this subdivision.
- (3) Multiyear contracts. – The Department of Public Instruction shall require the NC Pre-K contractor to issue multiyear contracts for licensed private child care centers providing NC Pre-K classrooms.
- (4) Building standards. – Notwithstanding G.S. 110-91(4), private child care facilities and public schools operating NC Pre-K classrooms shall meet the building standards for preschool students as provided in G.S. 115C-521.1.
- (5) Programmatic standards. – Except as provided in subdivision (3) of this subsection, entities operating NC Pre-K classrooms shall adhere to all of the policies prescribed by the Department of Public Instruction regarding programmatic standards and classroom requirements.
- (6) NC Pre-K committees. – Local NC Pre-K committees shall use the standard decision-making process developed by the Department of Public Instruction in awarding NC Pre-K classroom slots and student selection.
- (7) Reporting. – The Department of Public Instruction shall submit an annual report no later than March 15 of each year to the Joint Legislative Education Oversight Committee, the Office of State Budget and Management, and the Fiscal Research Division. The report shall include the following:

- a. The number of children participating in the NC Pre-K program by county.
 - b. The number of children participating in the NC Pre-K program who have never been served in other early education programs such as child care, public or private preschool, Head Start, Early Head Start, or early intervention programs.
 - c. The expected NC Pre-K expenditures for the programs and the source of the local contributions.
 - d. The results of an annual evaluation of the NC Pre-K program.
- (8) Audits. – The administration of the NC Pre-K program by local partnerships shall be subject to the financial and compliance audits authorized under G.S. 143B-168.14(b).

PART VI. EFFECTIVE DATE

SECTION 6. This act is effective when it becomes law and applies beginning with the 2025-2026 school year.