



NORTH CAROLINA DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION

Catherine Truitt, *Superintendent of Public Instruction*

www.dpi.nc.gov

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Colleagues,

As you are all aware, the North Carolina General Assembly passed several education bills into law on Wednesday, August 16. The Parents' Bill of Rights (SL 2023-106) is one of those bills that will have a direct impact on the daily operations of your schools. This new law brings many preexisting statutes and some new ones together under one umbrella to make it easier for parents to navigate, now Chapter 114A of our General Statutes.

I know that newly enacted laws, especially ones that occur right before the start of a new school year, can cause some anxiety, but I want to assure you that we will provide you as much assistance as possible as we transition and implement these new policies statewide.

Attached to this email is a [PDF of the new law](#), along with the [bill summary](#). I have also included [a chart](#) that clearly shows what pieces of the legislation currently exist and what pieces are new. I would strongly encourage you and your local attorneys to review these documents to understand what the new requirements are for your public school units.

There are several portions of the law that I would like to bring to your attention, as they will most likely be the items front and center for you throughout the school year:

- 1) The Department of Public Instruction, through the State Board of Education, will develop a parent's guide to student achievement that will include the minimum requirements for public school units about what parents need to know about their child's education progress and how they can help their child succeed in school.
 - a. These requirements can be found starting on page 4 of the Session Law.
 - b. DPI and the SBE will be working on this parent's guide over the next several weeks.
 - c. Once adopted by the SBE, the framework will be sent out to your teams.
- 2) Governing bodies of PSUs shall develop and adopt policies to promote parental involvement and empowerment inside their schools. (Page 5)
 - a. This is to be done in consultation with parents, teachers, administrators, and community partners.
 - b. I would assume that many of you, if not all, already have similar policies in place.
 - c. When you are refining your policies, please make sure they include everything included in this new General Statute 115C-76.35.
- 3) There are now mandatory timelines for school administrators to respond to parents (page 6, 115C-76.40).
 - a. Please review these timelines, and make sure your principals and local board of education know their roles as it pertains to timely responses.



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- 4) If parental concerns have not been resolved within 30 days following the notification by a parent, a parent may petition the State Board of Education to intervene or bring an action to the courts (page 8).
 - a. DPI and the SBE will provide further information on these procedures, as well as what is and isn't permissible for parents to appeal in the coming days.
 - b. Our hope is that this avenue is very seldom used by parents because you and your administrators will be able to resolve parental concerns at the local level.

- 5) Parental rights to opt-in to protected information surveys (bottom of Page 8):
 - a. Going forward, any survey that you administer inside the school building must be shared with parents at least 10 days prior.
 - b. No student shall be permitted to participate in a protected information survey without written consent from the parent/guardian.

- 6) Reporting requirements:
 - a. Annually, each PSU shall submit a report of the most current version of policies and procedures pertaining to this new law.
 - b. Also, PSUs shall submit certain information that is listed out in 115C-76.70 found on page 9 of the law.
 - c. There is a requirement for this information to be submitted by September 15 each year. I have notified the SBE that we will waive this requirement next month, as we are working with the General Assembly to push out the date of the initial reporting requirement. We will provide more information once we receive it.

There are other sections in this law that I did not cover here but are just as important for you to review with your teams at the local level.

We recognize and sympathize that the turnaround time for this legislation is less than ideal. However, I believe it is in the best interest for all of us, our students, their parents, and for lawmakers, that we spend the necessary time setting up these policies and procedures in a methodical manner.

We will continue to update you as we receive more information.

All the best,

Catherine Truitt, Superintendent