

2016 PENC Legislative Summary

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The NC General Assembly wrapped up their 2016 legislative “short session” on July 1st shortly after midnight. Tensions ran high towards the end of the three month session as the House and Senate sparred over various policy issues. Ultimately things came to a head the last day of session and the Senate abruptly adjourned, effectively killing several impactful pieces of legislation.

A large portion of the session was focused on education reform. Governor McCrory and legislative leaders prioritized increasing teacher pay. In fact, it was the focal point of the session. However, the House and Senate differed on a large amount of the other education issues; that coupled with the shorter duration of this year’s session led to the demise of several pieces of legislations.

The 2017 “long session” is scheduled to begin in January and there is potential to see many of these bills reappear at that time. Between now and the beginning of next year’s session several legislative study committees will meet to review policy matters, including some education issues.

House Bill 1030: The Budget

- Increases the average educator pay from \$47,783 to \$54,224 over the next two years, amounting to an approximate six and a half percent average increase. It also phases out the tiered payment system.

Monthly Salary Schedule	FY 2015-16	FY 2016-17	FY 2018-19
1	\$3,500	\$3,575	\$3,600
2	\$3,500	\$3,600	\$3,700
3	\$3,500	\$3,625	\$3,800
4	\$3,500	\$3,675	\$3,900
5	\$3,650	\$3,725	\$4,000
6	\$3,650	\$3,800	\$4,100
7	\$3,650	\$3,850	\$4,200
8	\$3,650	\$3,900	\$4,300
9	\$3,650	\$3,950	\$4,400
10	\$4,000	\$4,025	\$4,500
11	\$4,000	\$4,100	\$4,600
12	\$4,000	\$4,175	\$4,700
13	\$4,000	\$4,250	\$4,800
14	\$4,000	\$4,325	\$4,900
15-19	\$4,350	\$4,525	\$5,000
20-24	\$4,650	\$4,800	\$5,000
25+	\$5,000	\$5,100	\$5,100

- Uses \$57.3 million more in state lottery funds to pay the salaries of public school clerical workers, custodians and support staff, on top of the \$315 million in lottery funds for non-instructional personnel already appropriated for the coming year.
- Allocates \$5 million more for North Carolina Educational Endowment Fund, designed to give bonuses to public school teachers.
- Preserves driver education program funds that would otherwise end as of December 31, 2017.

- Creates a three year pilot to develop advanced teaching roles and organizational models that link teacher performance and professional growth to salary increases.
- Allocates \$4.9 million for a two-year pilot program to give teachers \$25 or \$50 bonuses for each student that receives good grades on Advanced Placement and International Baccalaureate course tests or on career and technical credentialing tests.

- Changes the school performance scale:

Grade	Scale
A	100-85
B	84-70
C	69-55
D	54-40
F	39-below

- Allocates \$2.5 million more for instructional supplies, materials and equipment, bringing the total to \$47 million.
- Raises textbook and digital materials spending by \$10 million to \$71.5 million.
- Allocates \$4.7 million to the state's digital learning plan.
- Creates a tuition reimbursement program for 25 teacher assistants in five counties pursuing a college degree and teacher's license.
- Reduces funding for the Department of Public Instruction by 0.5%.

- Adjusts class sizes for K-3:

Grade	Number of Students per Teacher
Kindergarten	18
First	16
Second	17
Third	17

- Creates a Joint Legislative Study Committee on School-Based Administrator Pay. The committee will study the feasibility of revising the school-based administrator salary schedule, including principal and assistant principal pay and the process of recruiting and retaining the most qualified principals in North Carolina.
- Allocates \$10 million for a pilot program to provide performance-based bonuses of up to \$6,800 for third-grade reading teachers. The bonuses would be awarded to teachers based on EVAAS growth scores.
- Establishes an opportunity scholarship grant fund reserve of \$34.8 million to award more need-based scholarships to children from working families and provides forward funding to add 20,000 children to the program over the next ten years.

[Click Here to Read House Bill 1030](#)

House Bill 657: Math Standards

Legislation that would require high schools to offer two different tracks of math courses was not enacted after the House and Senate were unable to reach an agreement. The bill would have allowed students to opt between integrated math and traditional math courses. If the legislation had passed LEAs would have begun implementing the plan for the 2018-19 school year. An amendment adopted on the Senate floor required local school boards to notify parents of the changes and inform them of the student's options.

[Click Here to Read House Bill 657](#)

H960: Retirement Creditable Service Charter Schools

The legislature proposed a bill that allows a member of the Teachers' and State Employees' Retirement System (TSERS) to purchase up to five years of creditable service for employment in a charter school. The bill extends the benefits of TSERS to educators and staff at nontraditional public schools. The member will have the option to buy into the system, which helps contribute to the system while also expanding the benefits to the charter school employees.

[Click Here to Read House Bill 960](#)

H1080: Achievement School Districts:

The General Assembly approved legislation that creates an Achievement School District (ASD), a State-level and statewide school administrative unit for low-performing schools from across the State. The legislation creates pilot projects aimed at turning around schools where students consistently show little academic improvement and post low scores on state tests. The bill also allows the creation of innovation zones for local school administrative units that transfer a qualifying school into the ASD.

[Click Here to Read House Bill 1080](#)

Senate Bill 867: Protect Students in Schools

A bill that would have authorized the State Board of Education, local boards of education, regional school boards of directors, and charter school boards of directors to require an applicant for teacher licensure or personnel position to be checked for a criminal history stalled in the House on the last night of session. According to the legislation, the State Board of Education and the Department of Public Instruction would have been permitted to charge a fee that cannot exceed the actual cost of the service. Unless the fee was covered by the local board of education, it would have had to be paid by the applicant. The purpose of the legislation is to create a more comprehensive, statewide background check policy for educators. All of the background checks would have been compared against the State and National Repositories of Criminal Histories. This bill received several amendments in the House on the final night of session. However the bill died when the Senate decided to adjourn earlier than the House.

[Click Here to Read Senate Bill 867](#)