

**GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA
SESSION 2003**

**SENATE BILL 503
RATIFIED BILL**

AN ACT TO UPDATE THE LAWS RELATING TO THE ATTENDANCE AGES
AND ELIGIBILITY OF STUDENTS FOR NORTH CAROLINA SCHOOLS FOR
THE DEAF.

The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

SECTION 1. G.S. 143B-216.41 reads as rewritten:

"§ 143B-216.41. Pupils admitted; education.

~~The Department of Health and Human Services shall according to such reasonable regulations as the Board of Directors may prescribe, on application, receive into the schools for the purposes of education all deaf children resident of the State who are from age five through age 20 years: Provided, that the Department of Health and Human Services may admit students who are not within the age limits set forth above when in its judgment, such admission will be in the best interests of the applicant and the facilities of the school permit such admission. Only those who are bona fide citizens or residents of North Carolina shall be eligible to and entitled to receive free tuition and maintenance. The Department may fix charges and the Board of Directors may prescribe rules whereby nonresident deaf children may be admitted, but in no event shall the admission of nonresidents in any way prevent the attendance of any eligible deaf child, resident of North Carolina. The Department shall provide for the instruction of all pupils in the branches of study now prescribed by law for the public schools of the State and in such other branches as may be of special benefit to the deaf.~~

~~The Department shall encourage the State to provide the classrooms with modern auditory training equipment, audiovisual media equipment, and any other special equipment to provide the best educational conditions for the deaf. The Department shall provide a teacher training program in the State. The Department shall provide for a comprehensive vocational and technical training program for boys and girls as may be useful to them in making themselves self-supporting.~~

(a) The Department of Health and Human Services may consider for admission all deaf and deaf/multidisabled children into the schools for the deaf who meet the following criteria and in accordance with federal and State law and rules adopted by the Office of Education Services:

- (1) The child has been referred by the child's local education agency and an admission is deemed appropriate by the child's Individualized Education Program (IEP) Team.
- (2) The child is a resident of this State, except as provided in subsection (b) of this section.
- (3) The child is at least five years of age but not older than 21 years of age.

(b) Nonresident deaf or deaf/multidisabled children may be admitted to the schools for the deaf in accordance with rules adopted by the Office of Education Services if the admission does not prevent the attendance of any deaf or deaf/multidisabled child who is a resident of the State. Only children who are residents of North Carolina are entitled to free tuition and room and board.

(c) The Department, through the Office of Education Services, shall provide unique instructional programs to meet the needs of all students admitted to the schools

for the deaf. The Department shall encourage the State to provide classrooms with modern auditory training equipment, audiovisual media equipment, and any other special equipment to provide the best educational conditions for the deaf and deaf/multidisabled.

(d) The Department, through the Office of Education Services, shall do the following:

- (1) Maintain a collaborative relationship with institutions of higher education to provide teacher-training opportunities.
- (2) Provide for a comprehensive vocational and technical training program as directed in the transition component of the Individualized Education Programs of students."

SECTION 2. This act is effective when it becomes law.

In the General Assembly read three times and ratified this the 17th day of June, 2003.

Beverly E. Perdue
President of the Senate

James B. Black
Speaker of the House of Representatives

Michael F. Easley
Governor

Approved _____ .m. this _____ day of _____, 2003