

**GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA  
SESSION 2015**

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**HOUSE BILL 660**

Short Title: Transition to Personalized Digital Learning. (Public)

Sponsors: Representatives Horn, Saine, Jeter, and Fraley (Primary Sponsors).  
*For a complete list of Sponsors, refer to the North Carolina General Assembly Web Site.*

Referred to: Education - K-12.

April 14, 2015

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED  
AN ACT TO FURTHER THE TRANSITION TO PERSONALIZED DIGITAL LEARNING  
IN ALL NORTH CAROLINA K-12 PUBLIC SCHOOLS; TO TRANSITION FROM  
TEXTBOOKS TO DIGITAL MATERIALS FOR ALL LEARNERS; AND TO REQUIRE  
THE STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION TO DEVELOP AND IMPLEMENT DIGITAL  
TEACHING AND LEARNING STANDARDS FOR TEACHERS AND SCHOOL  
ADMINISTRATORS.

Whereas, the State of North Carolina has contracted with the Friday Institute for Educational Innovation to develop a statewide K-12 Digital Learning Plan; and

Whereas, the analyses of relevant data, input from many stakeholders, and information obtained through visits to selected local school administrative units have led to the findings that contribute to this act; and

Whereas, digital learning innovations are driven at the local school administrative unit level and will take different forms and proceed at different speeds across units so that different units will need varying levels of guidance and support from the State and regional organizations; and

Whereas, the roles of the State include, but are not limited to, (i) providing statewide infrastructure and resources, (ii) leveraging federal E-Rate funding and economies of scale through statewide procurement, and (iii) providing models, guidance, and capacity-building programs to local school administrative units and regional organizations; and

Whereas, digital learning requires that all teachers and students have ready access to digital devices and reliable wireless connectivity; and

Whereas, the State's role is critical in putting into place the networking infrastructure required to provide equitable connectivity to all K-12 public schools; and

Whereas, North Carolina educators require tools to expand the use of digital education resources, to further collaboration and sharing of curriculum resources across schools and local school administrative units, and to allow for statewide coordination of teacher preparation and professional development programs; and

Whereas, the transition to digital learning requires that the State's K-12 education workforce update their knowledge and skills to lead, plan, manage, teach, evaluate, and communicate with digital awareness; and

Whereas, less than thirty percent (30%) of teachers in most local school administrative units report that they are sufficiently trained to fully utilize instructional technology; and



1           Whereas, investments in infrastructure, digital content, and educator capacity  
2 development will be required and will yield long-term returns on investments in terms of  
3 educational outcomes, increased graduation rates, and college and career readiness; Now,  
4 therefore,

5 The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

6           **SECTION 1.** Intent. – The intent of this act is to create programs that advance and  
7 accelerate the statewide transition to and effective implementation of digital learning by  
8 supporting statewide technology infrastructure, exemplary implementation models, ancillary  
9 services and programs, and leadership capacity in all K-12 public schools in the State. The  
10 transition to using digital tools in the education system to fully harness the power of modern  
11 technology will impact all aspects of education, including course content, teaching methods,  
12 where and when learning takes place, what resources are required, and how success is defined  
13 and measured.

14           **SECTION 2.** Expand School Connectivity Initiative. – The State Board of  
15 Education shall expand the School Connectivity Initiative to support internal wired and  
16 wireless infrastructure and ancillary services and programs in all K-12 public school buildings.

17           **SECTION 3.** Establish Collaborative Procurement. – The State Board of Education  
18 shall establish a collaborative procurement service. This service shall function to coordinate  
19 acquisition of technology infrastructure, devices, content, and professional services in order to  
20 capitalize on economies of scale and reduce burdens on individual local school administrative  
21 units while complying with E-Rate regulations of the Federal Communications Commission.

22           **SECTION 4.** Expand Access to Digital Learning Resources. – The State Board of  
23 Education shall provide access to digital learning resources for all K-12 public schools to  
24 enable them to meet the requirements set forth in S.L. 2013-12 regarding the use of digital  
25 resources as primary curriculum materials by 2017. This access shall include open education  
26 resources developed in North Carolina and elsewhere, the provision of banks of formative and  
27 benchmarked test items aligned to State curriculum standards, and other resources to meet the  
28 needs of students and teachers.

29           **SECTION 5.** Provide Professional Development for Education Leaders. – The  
30 State Board of Education shall support professional learning for education leaders in each local  
31 school administrative unit, including superintendents, principals, and others responsible for  
32 leading digital learning initiatives and providing coaching and support for teachers as they  
33 transition to digital learning practices in the classroom.

34           **SECTION 6.** Support Model Digital Learning Innovations. – The State Board of  
35 Education shall establish a grant program to support the development and dissemination of  
36 innovative local school administrative unit digital learning models. This program shall provide  
37 grants to local school administrative units for the development of innovative initiatives that  
38 incorporate technological elements into the learning model, including competency-based  
39 learning, personalized learning, anytime and anywhere learning opportunities, and assessments  
40 integrated into learning activities, along with innovative models of professional development,  
41 strategic staffing, equity of access, and other approaches to digital learning. Each grant  
42 agreement shall have a provision encouraging recipients to collaborate across local school  
43 administrative units and collaborate with charter schools, community colleges, universities, and  
44 other partners. The State Board shall provide for flexibility waivers for grant recipients to  
45 address potential barriers to planned innovations. Each grant agreement shall have a provision  
46 requiring recipients to do each of the following:

- 47           (1) To evaluate, document, and disseminate chosen approaches and results.
- 48           (2) To host visits by teams from other local school administrative units.
- 49           (3) To support partner local school administrative units in planning and  
50 implementing digital learning.

- 1 (4) To share what they have learned during regional or State summits on digital  
2 learning.

3 **SECTION 7.(a)** Establish the North Carolina Digital Learning Initiative. – The  
4 State Board of Education shall contract with the Friday Institute for Educational Innovation, as  
5 part of North Carolina State University, to establish the North Carolina Digital Learning  
6 Initiative (NCDLI) to support the implementation of the activities required by this act and other  
7 activities related to furthering the use of digital learning in K-12 public schools and public  
8 charter schools in the State. NCDLI shall have a director, appropriate staff, and an advisory  
9 board comprised of representatives of organizations and stakeholders involved in K-12 digital  
10 learning. NCDLI shall be responsible for, and shall be charged with, engaging selected  
11 organizations and educators from throughout North Carolina to contribute to fulfilling, all of  
12 the following functions:

- 13 (1) Leveraging the capacities and expertise of the North Carolina Center for the  
14 Advancement of Teaching, MCNC, State agencies, local school  
15 administrative units, public charter schools, colleges, universities, regional  
16 education service agencies, professional organizations, nonprofit  
17 organizations, private sector organizations, and other appropriate entities to  
18 further the effective use of digital learning in K-12 public schools and public  
19 charter schools in all regions of the State.
- 20 (2) Working with relevant State agencies to implement the collaborative  
21 procurement system required by Section 3 of this act.
- 22 (3) Coordinating teams of educators and other stakeholders to establish  
23 standards and review procedures and to conduct the review, evaluation,  
24 development, and organization processes for the selection of digital  
25 education content.
- 26 (4) Developing the request for proposals, defining the criteria, selecting the  
27 reviewers, organizing the review process, and monitoring recipients'  
28 progress for the grant initiatives.
- 29 (5) Providing professional development programs for school and local school  
30 administrative unit leaders, instructional technology facilitators, library  
31 media specialists, lead teachers, information technology staff, and others  
32 involved in planning and implementing K-12 digital learning initiatives.
- 33 (6) Furthering the development of capacities and providing resources to support  
34 K-12 digital learning in all regions of the State.
- 35 (7) Managing any funds made available to NCDLI, including State funds or  
36 funds from other sources, for supporting the purposes set forth in this act.

37 **SECTION 7.(b)** Reporting. - By January 1, 2016, and annually thereafter, NCDLI  
38 shall report to the State Board of Education, Special Committee on Digital Learning, on the  
39 activities set forth in this section.

40 **SECTION 8.** The provisions of this act are subject to the availability of funds for  
41 these purposes.

42 **SECTION 9.** This act is effective when it becomes law.