



NORTH CAROLINA
State Board of Education
Department of Public Instruction

Report to the North Carolina General Assembly

Fifth Grade Career Awareness Program
§115C-157

Date Due: November 15, 2023
DPI Chronological Schedule, 2022-2023

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OVERVIEW

The report was prepared in accordance with requirements of G.S. 115C-157.

§ 115C-157. Responsibility of local boards of education:

- (a) Each local school administrative unit shall provide free appropriate career and technical education instruction, activities, and services in accordance with the provisions of this Part for all youth, with priority given to youth in grades eight through 12, who elect the instruction and shall have responsibility for administering the instruction, activities, and services in accordance with federal and State law and State Board of Education policies.
- (b) Each local school administrative unit shall offer as part of its career and technical education program at least two work-based learning opportunities that are related to career and technical education instruction. A work-based learning opportunity shall consist of on-the-job training through an internship, cooperative education, or an apprenticeship program meeting the requirements of Chapter 115D of the General Statutes.
- (c) Each local board of education is encouraged to implement a career awareness program for students in grade five to educate students on the career and technical education programs offered in the local school administrative unit. A local board of education that adopts a career awareness program for fifth grade students shall report on program activities and student outcomes from the prior school year to the State Board of Education by October 1 of each year. By November 15 of each year, the State Board shall submit a consolidated report to the Joint Legislative Education Oversight Committee on program outcomes and any legislative recommendations based on local board of education reports.
(1977, c. 490, s. 2; 1981, c. 423, s. 1; 1993, c. 180, s. 3; 2004-124, s. 7.15(c); 2017-57, s. 7.23H(e).)

PART 1: ACTIVITIES

The CTE Division developed and released a survey tool to all districts to collect data on activities completed during the 2022-23 school year. The survey asked, "How did your district participate in the following fifth Grade Career Awareness Activities", and included the following items:

1. Middle School Tours
2. High School Tours
3. Career Related Field Trips / Business Tours
4. Job Shadowing Opportunities
5. Guest Speakers
6. Career Fairs
7. Career Interest Inventories
8. Other Career Awareness Activities / Events

Survey Response: Though participation in the program is not required, we were pleased this year, the sixth year of the program, to have achieved a 100% response rate with 116 districts providing feedback. This is the second consecutive year with a 100% response rate, an increase from 98% for the 2020-2021 reporting period. These numbers represent a large contrast to the 46% response rate during the first year of reporting (2017-2018).

PART II: STUDENT OUTCOMES

NCDPI CTE is pleased that the results of the Fifth Grade Career Awareness survey indicated approximately 213,756 fifth grade students were exposed to career awareness related to the CTE programs offered in their respective districts during the 2022-23 school year. This number does include some duplicative data between different career awareness event types. This is an increase from 163,075 reported for the 2021-22 school year and 79,320 in 2020-21.

The reported data from all districts reflect the following information:

Career Awareness Event Type	Number of Fifth Grade Students Participating	Number of Districts Participating
Middle School Tours	53,244	89
High School Tours	5,291	26
Career-Related Field Trips / Business Tours	16,119	49
Job Shadowing Opportunities	1,849	14
Guest Speakers	64,770	83
Career Fairs	31,836	61
Career Interest Inventories	26,838	69
Other Career Awareness Activities / Events	12,809	48

The Office of Career and Technical Education is increasing efforts to generate tools and resources for fifth grade educators in North Carolina as well as engaging School Counselors, CTE Directors, Career Development Coordinators, and other NC educators in working with fifth grade students.

Some efforts by the NCDPI CTE staff are as follows: conducting sessions at the annual CTE Summer Conference sharing best practices and data collected on Career Awareness Programs; generating publications to serve all NC educators as resources for increasing fifth grade career awareness education; encouraging districts to share their Career Awareness Programs and/or resources used at the local level with other districts by way of online resources hosted by the NCDPI CTE staff; hosting webinars, panels, and “Collaboration Stations” for local CTE staff, such as Career Development Coordinators and CTE Directors, to increase awareness on fifth grade career awareness education; and generating professional development opportunities for any North Carolina educators interested in attending to learn more about increasing fifth grade career awareness education.

PART III: LEGISLATIVE RECOMMENDATIONS

Due to the emphasis being placed on Work Based Learning at the state and federal levels, we anticipate this program will continue to grow and expand across the state. The implementation of The Strengthening Career and Technical Education for the 21st Century Act (Perkins V) beginning with the 2020-21 school year continues to support the adoption and implementation of career awareness programs in Grade 5. The recommendation is to continue with the current legislation.