

# North Carolina May Drop Math Graduation Requirement in Response to Low Scores

*Citing low passing rates and a lack of need for high level math, the N.C. House passed a bill to drop Math 3 as a graduation requirement.*

RALEIGH, NC, UNITED STATES, May 14, 2025 /EINPresswire.com/ -- In a blow to public schools, a majority of North Carolina's House members voted last week to lower the high school

mathematics graduation requirements for all public schools. Because the new, lower standards fall below the minimum admissions requirements for University of North Carolina system schools, the bill also directs the UNC Board of Governors to lower its admissions standards to align with the new high school graduation requirements.



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We are limiting our students' options for post-graduation by changing this...We are not setting our kids up for success.”

*Representative Julie von Haefen*

House Bill 415 “[Modify Math & Social Studies Grad. Req.](#)” removes Math 3 as a graduation requirement and replaces it with a computer science course. Under this bill, mathematics graduation requirements will include four “math” courses: 1) NC Math 1, 2) NC Math 2, 3) Computer Science, and 4) a fourth mathematics course aligned with the student’s career development plan.

[Current mathematics high school graduation requirements](#)

are NC Math 1, 2, and 3 and a fourth mathematics course aligned with the student’s post high school plans.

The current Math 1, 2, and 3 content standards loosely align with traditional Algebra 1, Algebra 2, and Geometry courses, but they integrate the three content threads throughout the full Math 1-3 sequence. As a result, completing the full Math 1-3 sequence is needed to meet college admissions requirements for Algebra 1, 2, and Geometry.

During House debate on Wednesday, Rep. von Haefen pointed out that when legislators added a computer science course to the high school graduation requirements last year, they specifically

chose to keep it an elective course instead of labeling it as a mathematics course. For college admissions purposes, computer science is often not considered a mathematics course, so students who complete high school in North Carolina with just the required courses will have completed only three traditional math courses, one short of the minimum required by many colleges and universities.

House Bill 415 also directs educators to enroll students in “Foundations of Math 1” instead of Math 1 if they did not pass (i.e., score Level 3 or higher) the eighth grade end-of-grade mathematics test. Students who don’t pass Math 1 are to be enrolled in “Foundations of Math 2” instead of Math 2. Both foundations courses are year-long courses.

The bill sponsor, Rep. David Willis, gave [two primary reasons](#) for the mathematics changes: 1) too many students are not succeeding in high school math, and 2) higher level math courses are not needed for many postsecondary career options, so students should not be required to take them.

The bill does not include investments in the teacher pipeline, instructional support, tutoring, counseling, or other widely researched effective strategies for supporting student success.

House Bill 415 directs public schools to encourage all students to complete additional math courses beyond the required courses. In addition, public schools must continue to make “NC Math III and all other math courses existing on the effective date of this act” available to all high school students.

However, many students do not decide on their post-secondary path until well into their high school careers or even after graduation. If House Bill 415 becomes law, some students may find that even though they’ve met all high school graduation requirements, they have not met the minimum standard for college entrance. Although the bill requires the UNC system schools to lower their admission standards, the lowered graduation standards puts North Carolina graduates at a clear disadvantage if they move out of state.

To address challenges in finding enough computer science teachers, House Bill 415 directs the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction to create a pathway for any licensed teacher—regardless of licensure area—to teach computer science if a school district determines the teacher “possesses the necessary content knowledge to effectively teach the course.”

The bill now goes to the North Carolina Senate where its fate will be decided in the coming weeks.

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