


# PUBLIC SCHOOLS OF NORTH CAROLINA

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION | June St. Clair Atkinson, Ed.D., *State Superintendent*

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August 14, 2015

**TO:** Directors, Exceptional Children Programs  
Lead Administrators, Charter Schools

**FROM:** William J. Hussey, Director   
Exceptional Children Division

**RE:** Changes to the Future Ready Occupational Course of Study Pathway Work Hours

The State Board of Education has approved changes to the Future Ready Occupational Course of Study (FR-OCS) Pathway work hours requirement for eligible students entering 9<sup>th</sup> grade for the first time in the 2014-2015 school year. The new requirements reflect recommended changes based on input from multiple stakeholders and work groups. The requirements are as follows: 150 hours of school-based training with work activities and experiences that align with the student's post school goals; 225 hours of community-based training, and 225 hours of paid employment or 225 hours of unpaid vocational training, unpaid internships, paid employment at community rehabilitation facilities, and volunteer and/or community service hours. All paid employment, unpaid vocational training hours, internship hours, volunteer and/or community service hours will be conducted in accordance with the Fair Labor Standards Act and applicable state and federal child labor laws.

The expectation is that all LEAs will secure the 225 paid employment hours as the first option for students; and, consider the 225 hours of unpaid vocational training, unpaid internships, paid employment at community rehabilitation facilities, and volunteer and/or community service hours as the second option and only when paid employment is not attainable. LEAs are required to maintain documentation of their attempts to help the student secure paid employment hours through referrals to the North Carolina Division of Vocational Rehabilitation, Division of Services for the Blind, Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) funded programs, and other appropriate adult employment service agencies.

Students currently enrolled in the OCS Pathway and following the previous graduation requirements rule, will continue to have the option to substitute the required 360 paid employment hours for 360 hours of unpaid vocational training, unpaid internships, paid employment at community rehabilitation facilities, and volunteer and/or community service hours. The expectation is that all LEAs will secure the 360 paid employment hours as the first option for students; and, consider the 360 hours of unpaid vocational training, unpaid internships, paid employment at community rehabilitation facilities, and volunteer and/or community service hours as the second option and only when paid employment is not attainable. LEAs are required to maintain documentation of their attempts to help the student secure paid employment hours through referrals to the North Carolina Division of Vocational Rehabilitation, Division of Services for the Blind, Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) funded programs, and other appropriate adult employment service agencies.

If you have any questions or concerns, please email [Beverly.Colwell@dpi.nc.gov](mailto:Beverly.Colwell@dpi.nc.gov).

WJH/DM/bc

## EXCEPTIONAL CHILDREN DIVISION

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