

Senate Bill 34

By: Senators Moody of the 56th, Weber of the 40th, Johnson of the 1st, Williams of the 19th, Thomas of the 54th and others

AS PASSED SENATE

**A BILL TO BE ENTITLED
AN ACT**

1 To amend Article 6 of Chapter 2 of Title 20 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, the
2 "Quality Basic Education Act," so as to provide for legislative findings; to provide for the
3 establishment of the "Georgia Master Teacher Program"; to provide for the establishment of
4 criteria for Master Teacher Certification; to provide for the establishment of rules and
5 regulations by the Professional Standards Commission; to provide for the establishment of
6 the "Academic Coach Program"; to provide for the establishment of rules and regulations
7 by the State Board of Education; to provide for the employment of an academic coach by a
8 public school in accordance with a school improvement plan; to provide for monetary and
9 other incentives for academic coaches; to provide for the establishment of a Master Teacher
10 and Academic Coach Implementation Committee; to provide for the composition, duties, and
11 duration of the committee; to provide for automatic repeal; to provide for related matters; to
12 provide an effective date; to repeal conflicting laws; and for other purposes.

13 **BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF GEORGIA:**

14 **SECTION 1.**

15 Article 6 of Chapter 2 of Title 20 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, the "Quality
16 Basic Education Act," is amended by inserting a new Code section after Code Section
17 20-2-204 to be designated Code Section 20-2-205 to read as follows:

18 "20-2-205.

19 (a) The General Assembly finds that excellent public school teachers deserve recognition
20 for the extraordinary learning opportunity they provide to Georgia students.

21 (b) The Professional Standards Commission is authorized and directed to establish the
22 'Georgia Master Teacher Program' to provide recognition to certificated public school
23 teachers who exhibit excellence in the classroom.

24 (c) The Professional Standards Commission shall establish criteria for a Master Teacher
25 Certification. Such criteria shall include, at a minimum, evidence of student achievement,
26 which must include student progress. A public school teacher with three or more years of

1 teaching experience in Georgia may submit an application to the Professional Standards
2 Commission for a Master Teacher Certification. The Professional Standards Commission
3 shall review each application and determine whether a teacher meets the criteria for a
4 Master Teacher Certification. If the Professional Standards Commission finds that a
5 teacher's application meets the criteria, the teacher will be given a Master Teacher
6 Certification, and that teacher will be known as and may be called a Master Teacher for a
7 term to be determined pursuant to rules and regulations of the Professional Standards
8 Commission, but in no event longer than seven years. The Professional Standards
9 Commission is authorized to develop rules and regulations governing the Master Teacher
10 Certification.

11 (d) This Code section shall be repealed on June 30, 2009."

12 SECTION 2.

13 Said article is further amended by inserting new Code sections after Code Section 20-2-212.4
14 to be designated Code Sections 20-2-212.5 and 20-2-212.6 to read as follows:

15 "20-2-212.5.

16 (a) The General Assembly finds that many teachers wish to spend their entire career
17 teaching in a classroom setting. However, the current salary structure offers few financial
18 incentives for public school teachers to continue in the classroom throughout their careers.
19 The General Assembly finds that new opportunities for career advancement must be
20 developed to encourage excellent public school teachers to continue teaching students and
21 to contribute to the development of other teachers.

22 (b) The State Board of Education is authorized and directed to establish the 'Academic
23 Coach Program' to provide certificated public school teachers who exhibit excellence in
24 the classroom with salary supplements or bonuses in exchange for mentoring other public
25 school teachers. The state board is authorized to develop rules and regulations for such
26 program, including requiring reports, data, or other measures of accountability.

27 (c) A local school system desiring the expertise and competency of an academic coach in
28 one or more of its schools shall develop a school improvement plan for each such school
29 which identifies the academic strengths and the areas which need improvement in each
30 such school and which identifies areas where the expertise and competency of an academic
31 coach could lead to improved academic performance of its students. A local school system
32 desiring an academic coach in one or more of its schools shall submit such plan or plans
33 on behalf of the school or schools in its district to the Department of Education which will
34 certify that the plan or plans includes identified deficiencies in school performance that an
35 academic coach can address. Once such certification is obtained, the school system may
36 employ an academic coach or coaches according to the terms of the school improvement

1 plan to be a classroom teacher for one or more segments per day or to perform other duties
2 commensurate with the school improvement plan.

3 (d) Prior to working as an academic coach in a school, an academic coach must receive a
4 Master Teacher Certification from the Professional Standards Commission, as provided for
5 in Code Section 20-2-205, and participate in professional learning relative to performing
6 duties as an academic coach and to the teaching and learning needs identified in the school
7 improvement plan as described in subsection (c) of this Code section.

8 (e) As part of its review of a school improvement plan, the school council at each school
9 is authorized to request and receive data from the school relative to the school's utilization
10 of an academic coach and whether such use of an academic coach has led to increased
11 academic performance.

12 (f) The state board is authorized, subject to appropriations by the General Assembly, to:

13 (1) Provide funds to local school systems that release academic coaches from the regular
14 classroom for one or more segments per day;

15 (2) Compensate academic coaches with salary supplements if they serve schools that
16 have received an unacceptable rating for a period of two or more consecutive years; and

17 (3) Compensate academic coaches and other teachers or personnel participating or
18 involved in the program with bonuses based on demonstrated school-wide gains in
19 student achievement.

20 Nothing shall prohibit local boards of education from providing additional salary
21 supplements and bonuses to any teacher serving as an academic coach.

22 (g) This Code section shall be repealed on June 30, 2009.

23 20-2-212.6.

24 The Governor shall appoint a Master Teacher and Academic Coach Implementation
25 Committee to advise the Professional Standards Commission and the State Board of
26 Education on the development of such rules governing the Georgia Master Teacher
27 Program, in accordance with Code Section 20-2-205, and the Academic Coach Program,
28 in accordance with this Code section. Such committee shall include at a minimum, two
29 Department of Education staff members, two State Board of Education members, two
30 Professional Standards Commission staff members, two Professional Standards
31 Commission members, four teachers, one local school superintendent, one principal, one
32 local school board member, two parents of public school students, the director of the Office
33 of Student Achievement or his or her designee, one staff member from Georgia's
34 Leadership Institute for School Improvement, the chair of the Senate Education Committee
35 or his or her designee, the chair of the House Committee on Education or his or her
36 designee, and the director of the Office of Planning and Budget. The implementation

1 committee shall hold public hearings across the state for the purpose of receiving input
2 from parents, teachers, and other educators. In addition to developing recommendations
3 for rules governing the designation of Master Teachers, the implementation committee
4 shall develop recommendations for guidelines designed to provide information to
5 principals on hiring and utilizing the services of an academic coach. The Master Teacher
6 and Academic Coach Implementation Committee shall make its recommendations to the
7 Professional Standards Commission and the State Board of Education no later than
8 December 31, 2005. The implementation committee shall be disbanded on December 31,
9 2005. This Code section shall be repealed on December 31, 2005."

10 **SECTION 3.**

11 This Act shall become effective upon its approval by the Governor or upon its becoming law
12 without such approval.

13 **SECTION 4.**

14 All laws and parts of laws in conflict with this Act are repealed.