

House Bill 661

By: Representatives Reese of the 98<sup>th</sup>, Burmeister of the 119<sup>th</sup>, Burkhalter of the 50<sup>th</sup>, Brooks of the 63<sup>rd</sup>, Cummings of the 16<sup>th</sup>, and others

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED  
AN ACT

1 To amend Chapter 2 of Title 20 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, relating to  
2 elementary and secondary education, so as to provide for adoption of policies and procedures  
3 by local boards of education to provide information regarding school clubs and organizations  
4 to parents and legal guardians and to provide an opportunity to withhold permission to  
5 participate; to provide for legislative intent; to provide for definitions; to provide for annual  
6 notification by local school systems to parents and legal guardians; to require annual written  
7 parental or legal guardian permission for membership or participation in a school club or  
8 organization; to provide for related matters; to repeal conflicting laws; and for other  
9 purposes.

10 BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF GEORGIA:

11 **SECTION 1.**

12 Chapter 2 of Title 20 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, relating to elementary and  
13 secondary education, is amended in Article 16, relating to students, by inserting a new part  
14 to be designated Part 5 to read as follows:

15 "Part 5

16 20-2-785.

17 (a) The General Assembly finds that increased participation and support of parents in their  
18 children's schools is critical to the achievement of students and success of the schools.  
19 Parental involvement is also one of the major tenets of the federal Elementary and  
20 Secondary Education Act, as amended by the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (P. L.  
21 107-110), which encourages participation of parents in regular, two-way, and meaningful  
22 communication involving student academic learning and other school activities. Therefore,  
23 it is the intent of the General Assembly that parents should be actively encouraged to be  
24 involved in their children's learning and school activities.

- 1 (b) As used in this Code section, the term:
- 2 (1) 'Clubs and organizations' means clubs and organizations comprised of students who  
3 wish to organize and meet for common goals, objectives, or purposes and which is  
4 directly under the sponsorship, direction, and control of the school. This term shall  
5 include any activities reasonably related to such clubs and organizations, but shall not  
6 include competitive interscholastic activities or events.
- 7 (2) 'Competitive interscholastic activity' means functions held under the auspices or  
8 sponsorship of a school that involves its students in competition between individuals or  
9 groups representing two or more schools. This term shall include cheerleading, band, and  
10 chorus.
- 11 (c) Each local board of education shall adopt policies and procedures for notifying parents  
12 or legal guardians of students regarding school clubs and organizations and for providing  
13 an opportunity for parents or legal guardians to withhold permission for a child to join or  
14 participate in clubs and organizations.
- 15 (d) An annual notification utilizing the student handbook or other appropriate method  
16 regarding school clubs and organizations shall include without limitation the name of the  
17 club or organization, mission or purpose of the club or organization, name of the club's or  
18 organization's faculty advisor, and a description of past or planned activities. Similar  
19 notification shall also be provided for clubs and organizations created or started during the  
20 school year.
- 21 (e) Beginning with the 2005-2006 school year, each local school system shall obtain  
22 written parental or legal guardian permission for a student to participate in or be a member  
23 of a school club or organization. Each local school system shall obtain this permission at  
24 the beginning of each school year, or during the school year for clubs and organizations  
25 that are created or started after the beginning of the school year. Each local school system  
26 shall comply with the written notification from a parent or legal guardian who has withheld  
27 permission for a child to join a club or participate in a related activity and shall not allow  
28 a child to join or participate in a club or organization in contravention of written  
29 notification from the child's parent or legal guardian forbidding such membership or  
30 participation."

31 **SECTION 2.**

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