

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,
2 relating to the "Quality Basic Education Act," so as to enact the "Building Resourceful
3 Individuals to Develop Georgia's Economy Act" to implement programs to improve
4 graduation rates and to improve the preparedness of students for postsecondary education and
5 careers; to provide for definitions; to provide for the development of focused programs of
6 study in high schools; to provide for model programs for students at risk of dropping out of
7 high school; to train guidance counselors and graduation coaches to provide for educational
8 counseling and career awareness programs for students; to require local school systems to
9 establish comprehensive high schools; to provide for teacher-adviser systems; to provide for
10 an individual graduation plan for each student; to provide for high school completion rate
11 goals in the state accountability system; to provide for duties of guidance counselors and
12 graduation coaches; to provide for involvement of parents and guardians; to provide for
13 extended day funding; to provide for education and career guidance training in colleges of
14 education; to provide for rules and regulations; to provide for exemptions from certain
15 portions of the high school graduation test and end-of-course assessments; to provide for
16 related matters; to repeal conflicting laws; and for other purposes.

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

SECTION 1.

18 Article 6 of Chapter 2 of Title 20 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, relating to the
19 "Quality Basic Education Act," is amended by adding a new part to read as follows:
20

"Part 16

1
2 20-2-325.

3 This part shall be known and may be cited as the 'Building Resourceful Individuals to
4 Develop Georgia's Economy Act.'

5 20-2-326.

6 For purposes of this part, the term:

7 (1) 'Choice technical high school' means a high school, other than the high school to
8 which a student is assigned by virtue of his or her residence and attendance zone, which
9 is designed to prepare a high school student for postsecondary education and for
10 employment in a career field. A choice technical high school may be operated by a local
11 school system or a technical school or college. A choice technical high school may also
12 be operated as a charter school under a governance board composed of parents,
13 employers, and representatives from the local board of education.

14 (2) 'Comprehensive high school' means a high school that offers at least six focused
15 programs of study, including at least two in academic areas and at least four in high
16 demand career fields, as determined by the State Board of Education. Focused programs
17 of study within a comprehensive high school may be provided through one or more small
18 learning communities or shared time career academies.

19 (3) 'Focused program of study' means a rigorous academic core combined with either a
20 focus in mathematics and science; a focus in humanities, fine arts, and foreign language;
21 or a coherent sequence of career/technical courses that is aligned with graduation
22 requirements established by the State Board of Education and curriculum requirements
23 established pursuant to Part 2 of this article, that prepares a student for postsecondary
24 education or immediate employment after high school graduation, and that is in
25 accordance with the requirements of paragraph (3) of subsection (a) of Code Section
26 20-2-328.

27 (4) 'Graduation plan' means a student specific plan developed in accordance with Code
28 Section 20-2-329.1 detailing the courses necessary for a high school student to graduate
29 from high school and to successfully transition to postsecondary education and the work
30 force.

31 (5) 'Shared time career academy' means a small learning community where a student
32 receives academic instruction at his or her assigned high school combined with
33 work-based learning opportunities at an industry center or technical school or college.

34 (6) 'Small learning community' means an autonomous or semiautonomous small learning
35 environment within a large high school which is made up of a subset of students and

1 teachers for a two, three, or four-year period. The goal of a small learning community
 2 is to achieve greater personalization of learning with each community led by a principal
 3 or instructional leader. A small learning community blends academic studies around a
 4 broad career or academic theme where teachers have common planning time to connect
 5 teacher assignments and assessments to college and career readiness standards. Students
 6 voluntarily apply for enrollment in a small learning community but must be accepted and
 7 such enrollment must be approved by the student's parent or guardian. A small learning
 8 community also includes a career academy organized around a specific career theme
 9 which integrates academic and career instruction, provides work-based learning
 10 opportunities, and prepares students for postsecondary education and employment, with
 11 support through partnerships with local employers, community organizations, and
 12 postsecondary institutions.

13 (7) 'Technical school or college' means a school, college, institution, or other branch of
 14 the Department of Technical and Adult Education.

15 20-2-327.

16 (a) The Department of Education shall develop a curriculum, aligned with state content
 17 standards, that provides students with both strong academics and real world problem
 18 solving skills. Students shall be provided individualized educational, academic, and career
 19 oriented choices and exposure to career and educational information and opportunities.
 20 This shall include the involvement and cooperative effort of parents or guardians, teachers,
 21 and guidance personnel in assisting students in making these choices, in setting career and
 22 educational goals, and in developing individual graduation plans to achieve such goals.

23 (b)(1) No later than July 1, 2009, the Department of Education shall develop and the
 24 State Board of Education shall approve state models and prototypes for individual
 25 graduation plans and curriculum frameworks for focused programs of study.

26 (2) Focused programs of study that are in high demand academic and career fields shall
 27 be given priority and may include, but are not limited to:

- 28 (A) Aerospace;
- 29 (B) Health care and elderly care;
- 30 (C) Agribusiness;
- 31 (D) Life science;
- 32 (E) Energy and environmental;
- 33 (F) Logistics and transportation;
- 34 (G) Information and technology;
- 35 (H) Teacher education training;
- 36 (I) Technology and engineering;

1 (J) Science and mathematics; and

2 (K) Humanities and fine arts.

3 (3) The department shall include in the state models and prototypes for individual
4 graduation plans and curriculum frameworks the flexibility for a student to develop a
5 personalized individual graduation plan for a focused program of study, utilizing courses
6 offered within a career or academic focus area at the school of attendance, at a technical
7 school or college, at a public four-year college, at a work site under an apprenticeship
8 cooperative education program, and at other settings approved by the State Board of
9 Education, as appropriate.

10 (4) For each focused program of study identified pursuant to this subsection, the
11 department shall convene a panel which includes high school teachers; representatives
12 from the Board of Regents of the University System of Georgia, the Department of
13 Technical and Adult Education, and employers; and others as deemed appropriate by the
14 department. These panels shall develop and recommend a curriculum framework for the
15 focused program of study which blends academic and technical content with real world
16 problems and projects for students. At least once every four years, the department shall
17 convene such panels to review and update the focused programs of study and the State
18 Board of Education shall approve updated state models and prototypes for individual
19 graduation plans and curriculum frameworks for focused programs of study.

20 (5)(A) The department shall include in the state models developed pursuant to this
21 subsection an evidence based model program for addressing at-risk students.

22 (B) The at-risk model program shall include various programs and curricula proven to
23 be effective for at-risk students and shall focus on:

24 (i) Identification of students at risk for being poorly prepared for the next grade level
25 or for dropping out of school;

26 (ii) Strengthening retention of ninth grade students in school and reducing high
27 failure rates;

28 (iii) Improving more student performance to grade level standards in reading and
29 mathematics by the end of ninth grade;

30 (iv) Assisting students and their parents or guardians in setting an outcome career and
31 educational goal and identifying a focused program of study to achieve such goal;

32 (v) Assisting students in learning and applying study skills, coping skills, and other
33 habits that produce successful students and adults; and

34 (vi) Assisting over-age students in earning a high school diploma and a recognized
35 credential that has value in the workplace.

36 The model program shall include diagnostic assessments to identify strengths and
37 weaknesses in the core academic areas. The process for identifying these students shall

1 be closely monitored by the Department of Education in collaboration with local school
2 systems to ensure that students are being properly identified and provided timely,
3 appropriate guidance and assistance and to ensure that no group is disproportionately
4 represented. The model program shall also include an evaluation component in each
5 high school to ensure the programs are providing students an opportunity to graduate
6 with a high school diploma.

7 (C) The at-risk model program shall include various components designed to result in
8 more students facilitating a successful start in high school and passing the ninth grade
9 and shall include:

- 10 (i) Utilizing a flexible schedule that increases students' time in core language
11 arts/reading and mathematics studies designed to eliminate academic deficiencies;
- 12 (ii) Maintaining a student-teacher ratio in ninth grade that is no higher than any other
13 grade level ratio in high school;
- 14 (iii) Utilizing the most experienced and effective teachers as leaders for teacher teams
15 in ninth grade to improve instructional planning, delivery, and re-teaching strategies;
- 16 (iv) Assigning students to a teacher mentor who will meet with them frequently to
17 provide planned lessons on study skills and other habits of success that help students
18 become independent learners and who will help them receive the assistance they need
19 to successfully pass the ninth grade; and
- 20 (v) Including ninth grade career courses which incorporate a series of miniprojects
21 throughout the school year that require the application of ninth grade level reading,
22 mathematics, and science skills to complete while students learn to use a range of
23 technology. Such courses shall also help students explore a range of educational and
24 career options that will assist them in formulating post high school goals that will give
25 them a reason to stay in school and work toward achieving their stated goals.

26 (c) No later than July 1, 2009, the State Board of Education shall promulgate rules and
27 regulations for high schools that are chronically low-performing with graduation rates
28 below the state average as determined in accordance with the methodology established by
29 the National Center for Educational Statistics, to make the high schools more relevant to
30 and effective for all students. Such rules shall encourage high schools to implement a
31 comprehensive school reform research based model, such as the *High Schools That Work*
32 organizational model, that focuses on:

- 33 (1) Setting high expectations for all students;
- 34 (2) Personalizing graduation plans for students;
- 35 (3) Developing small learning communities or career academies with a rigorous
36 academic foundation and emphasis in broad career fields of study;

1 (4) Using project based instruction embedded with strong academics to improve
2 relevancy in learning;

3 (5) Fostering collaboration among academic and career/technical teachers;

4 (6) Implementing nontraditional scheduling in ninth grade for students behind in their
5 grade level;

6 (7) Promoting parental involvement; and

7 (8) Training teachers to work with low-performing students and their parents or
8 guardians.

9 (d) No later than July 1, 2009, the Department of Education shall begin implementing a
10 plan for training guidance counselors and graduation coaches about high demand and high
11 wage opportunities for bachelor's degrees, associate degrees, and certificates, how a
12 combination of rigorous academic and technical courses can prepare students for these
13 fields, and how to organize a teacher adviser system that engages teachers in working with
14 a core group of students and their parents or guardians in setting goals, identifying
15 individual programs of study, and establishing individual graduation plans to achieve those
16 goals. The plan shall include strategies for guidance counselors, graduation coaches, and
17 teacher advisers to effectively involve parents or guardians in the educational and career
18 guidance process and in the development of individual graduation plans.

19 (e) No later than July 1, 2010, the State Board of Education, in consultation with the
20 Board of Regents of the University System of Georgia and the State Board of Technical
21 and Adult Education with regard to their respective admissions requirements and remedial
22 education course work standards, shall determine minimum college and career readiness
23 standards in reading, writing, and mathematics with the goal of reducing the number of
24 remedial classes taken by college freshmen. This shall include a method on assessing the
25 college and career readiness of eleventh grade students planning on pursuing postsecondary
26 studies. The State Board of Education shall create an English course and a mathematics
27 course to offer students in the twelfth grade who have been identified in the eleventh grade
28 assessment as not meeting college and career readiness standards, to be taken in lieu of the
29 regular twelfth grade English and mathematics courses. The State Board of Education shall
30 provide for the training of teachers in the administration of the eleventh grade readiness
31 assessment and shall annually evaluate the results of the assessments and twelfth grade
32 remediation courses with a focus on continuous improvement.

33 (f) No later than July 1, 2010, the State Board of Education, in collaboration with the State
34 Board of Technical and Adult Education, shall establish a process for certifying all
35 career/technical programs of study receiving state funds by using national certifying
36 agencies where they exist and developing state industry-certifying panels in
37 career/technical fields where no national certifying agency exists. The certification process

1 shall, at a minimum, validate that a program of study's curriculum meets industry
 2 standards, that its teachers hold current industry certification, and that its facilities,
 3 equipment, and software are adequate to teach the curriculum. The certification process
 4 shall require evidence that the career/technical program of study is preparing high school
 5 graduates who can meet industry standards for employment. By the 2012-2013 school
 6 year, at least one-half of career/technical programs of study offered to high school students
 7 by local school systems and through technical schools and colleges shall hold certification
 8 from either national certifying agencies or state industry-certifying panels. By the
 9 2014-2015 school year, all career/technical programs of study receiving state funds shall
 10 be industry certified in accordance with the established process. The State Board of
 11 Education shall also establish a schedule and process for recertification for all
 12 career/technical programs of study serving high school students.

13 20-2-328.

14 (a)(1) Beginning in the 2009-2010 school year, each local school system shall provide
 15 that each of its high schools is established or reconfigured as a comprehensive high
 16 school selecting and implementing, with technical assistance from the Department of
 17 Education, one of the following options:

18 (A) Adopting and implementing high-quality national programs of career study with
 19 well-developed and proven course materials, training for teachers, and end-of-course
 20 assessments. Such national programs may include, but are not limited to, the National
 21 Academy Foundation's Academy of Finance and Academy of Information Technology
 22 and Project Lead The Way's high school pre-engineering and biomedical sciences
 23 programs;

24 (B) Jointly developing with a technical school or college focused programs of study
 25 or choice technical high schools which offer high school students access to a coherent
 26 and structured system of high quality academic and career/technical studies in high
 27 demand career fields. The Department of Education shall provide incentives for local
 28 school systems that form agreements with technical schools and colleges, employers,
 29 and other entities to create programs of academic and career/technical studies aimed at
 30 preparing students for employment and for postsecondary studies; or

31 (C) Where local technical schools and colleges lack the capacity to provide preparation
 32 for high school students in high demand and high wage career fields, local school
 33 systems shall establish comprehensive high schools with high quality focused programs
 34 of study for high demand fields through creating small learning communities or shared
 35 time career academies with a career focus or through developing choice technical high
 36 school programs of study with a career focus.

1 (2) Local school systems, particularly those that have only one high school, may meet
2 the requirements of this subsection by establishing regional comprehensive high schools
3 with neighboring school systems. Where one or more facilities are made available by the
4 Department of Technical and Adult Education or one of its institutions, local school
5 systems shall utilize such facility or facilities to meet the requirements of this subsection
6 where practicable and cost effective, particularly for local school systems that have only
7 one high school. A comprehensive high school shall not be required to offer every
8 focused program of study in high demand academic and career fields as identified by the
9 State Board of Education pursuant to subsection (b) of Code Section 20-2-327. To the
10 largest extent practicable, local school systems shall align the focused programs of study
11 offered in its high schools with the work force development needs of the region in which
12 it is located and the state.

13 (3) The comprehensive high schools established pursuant to this subsection shall be
14 designed to provide a well-rounded education for students by fostering artistic creativity,
15 critical thinking, and self-discipline through the teaching of academic content,
16 knowledge, and skills that students will use in the workplace, further education, and life.
17 The focused programs of study within the schools shall be aligned with graduation
18 requirements established by the State Board of Education and curriculum requirements
19 established pursuant to Part 2 of this article and shall:

20 (A) Include a sequence of rigorous academic core studies, including at a minimum:

21 (i) Four years of mathematics, Algebra I and higher;

22 (ii) Four years of English, with an emphasis on developing reading and writing skills
23 to meet college and career readiness standards;

24 (iii) Four college-preparatory level science courses, with one science credit for
25 successful completion of a sequence of career/technical courses with embedded
26 science content and skills that meet guidelines established by the State Board of
27 Education;

28 (iv) Three college-preparatory level social studies courses; and

29 (v) One computer course; and

30 (B) Include completion of:

31 (i) Focused course work in mathematics and science or in humanities, fine arts, and
32 foreign language;

33 (ii) Four sequenced career/technical courses that contain embedded academic
34 content, at a minimum, leading to an employer certification and other postsecondary
35 credentials; or

36 (iii) Both.

1 A focused program of study shall include opportunities for academic and career/technical
2 teachers to collaboratively plan integrated lessons to advance academic and technical
3 achievement. All career/technical courses shall lead to industry certification or
4 postsecondary credit linked directly to the career theme of the course. At least 50 percent
5 of the students enrolled in a combined sequence of at least four career/technical courses
6 must achieve industry certification or postsecondary credit during the third year such
7 sequence of courses is offered in order for the sequence to be offered a fourth year. At
8 least 66 percent of students enrolled in such a sequence of courses must achieve industry
9 certification or postsecondary credit during the fourth year such sequence of courses is
10 offered in order for it to be offered a fifth year and thereafter.

11 (b) Beginning in the 2009-2010 school year, high schools shall implement a teacher
12 adviser system where an individual professional educator in the school assists a small
13 group of students and their parents or guardians throughout the students' high school
14 careers to set postsecondary goals and help them prepare programs of study, utilizing
15 assessments and other data to track academic progress on a regular basis; communicates
16 frequently with parents or guardians; and provides extensive counseling, support, and
17 encouragement as needed.

18 (c) Beginning in the 2009-2010 school year, all career/technical teachers teaching high
19 school students shall receive training, in accordance with State Board of Education
20 guidelines, from local school systems or from the Department of Technical and Adult
21 Education to teach the embedded reading, mathematics, and science knowledge and skills
22 contained in the projects, problems, and tasks students are assigned and to use project and
23 problem based instruction to improve high school students' reading, mathematics, and
24 science knowledge and skills. All career/technical teachers teaching high school students
25 shall, by the 2013-2014 school year, provide evidence that through their courses, students'
26 academic achievement is enhanced, as defined by guidelines established by the State Board
27 of Education developed in collaboration with the State Board of Technical and Adult
28 Education, and shall receive an endorsement for teaching embedded reading, mathematics,
29 and science knowledge and skills in career/technical courses by the Professional Standards
30 Commission.

31 (d) Beginning in the 2009-2010 school year, local school systems shall provide students
32 in the eighth through twelfth grades information on educational programs offered in high
33 school, in technical and community colleges, in colleges and universities, and through
34 apprenticeship programs and how these programs can lead to a variety of career fields.
35 Local school systems shall provide opportunities for field trips, speakers, educational and
36 career information centers, job shadowing, and classroom centers to assist students and
37 their parents or guardians, with guidance from school counselors and teacher advisers, in

1 developing a tentative individual high school graduation plan as provided for in Code
2 Section 20-2-329.1 by the end of the student's eighth grade school year. Such individual
3 graduation plan shall be reviewed annually, and revised, if appropriate, upon approval by
4 the student, the student's guidance counselor or teacher adviser, and the student's parent
5 or guardian.

6 (e) Beginning in the 2010-2011 school year, each public high school shall implement a
7 career guidance program model or prototype as developed or approved by the Department
8 of Education. At least annually after that, guidance personnel and teacher advisers shall
9 counsel students during the ninth and tenth grades to further define their educational and
10 career goals and individual graduation plans, and before the end of the second semester of
11 the tenth grade, tenth grade students with their parents or guardians shall have adopted a
12 detailed individual graduation plan. Throughout high school, students shall be provided
13 guidance activities and educational and career awareness programs that combine
14 counseling on educational and career options and experiential learning with academic
15 planning to assist students in fulfilling their individual graduation plans. A student may
16 transfer to another high school within the local school system offering that student's
17 career/technical concentration if not offered by the high school in his or her attendance
18 zone.

19 (f) Beginning in the 2010-2011 school year, local school systems shall enroll students in
20 tenth grade into one of the following options for earning a high school diploma and
21 preparing students for postsecondary education and a career:

22 (1) A structured program of academic study with in-depth studies in mathematics and
23 science or in humanities, fine arts, and foreign language;

24 (2) A structured program of academic study with in-depth studies in a career/technical
25 focused area that leads to passing an employer certification exam in a high demand career
26 field; or

27 (3) For over-age students, a program of study that leads to earning a general educational
28 development (GED) diploma and passing an employer certification exam in a high
29 demand career field.

30 (g) Beginning in the 2011-2012 school year, each public high school shall have a guidance
31 personnel-student ratio of 1 to 300. Guidance personnel shall include guidance counselors
32 and graduation coaches.

33 20-2-329.

34 No later than July 1, 2009, the Office of Student Achievement shall include in the
35 accountability system provided for in Part 3 of Article 2 of Chapter 14 of this title emphasis
36 on improving student achievement and increasing high school graduation rates, with the

1 goal of having all public high schools in Georgia reach at least a 90 percent high school
 2 completion rate by July 1, 2019, with annual incremental targets. The state accountability
 3 system shall encourage local school systems to develop proven programs for eighth and
 4 ninth graders who have failed one or more grades and who are failing to meet state
 5 standards in reading and mathematics. The intent of the accountability system shall be to
 6 develop programs that:

7 (1) Accelerate, at a minimum, language arts/reading, mathematics, and science
 8 achievement in one year so that more students can successfully complete tenth grade
 9 level work in high school;

10 (2) Assist students in developing study skills and other skills and habits of success that
 11 help students become independent learners and successful adults;

12 (3) Engage students in exploring the options with regard to educational programs offered
 13 in high school, in technical and community colleges, in colleges and universities, and
 14 through apprenticeship programs;

15 (4) Include training for teachers and other school personnel on how to create a positive
 16 learning situation for at-risk students, on how to work together as a professional team,
 17 and on how to work and support parents of low-income students;

18 (5) Include parents and guardians as partners in the effort to improve student
 19 achievement and high school graduation rates; and

20 (6) Provide continuing support to help students successfully complete high school.

21 20-2-329.1.

22 (a) An individual graduation plan shall:

23 (1) Include a focused program of study composed of:

24 (A) A sequence of rigorous academic core subjects in accordance with paragraph (3)
 25 of subsection (a) of Code Section 20-2-328; and

26 (B)(i) Focused course work in mathematics and science or in humanities, fine arts,
 27 and foreign language; or

28 (ii) Sequenced career/technical courses leading to an employer certification and other
 29 postsecondary credentials;

30 (2) Incorporate provisions of a student's Individualized Education Program (IEP), when
 31 appropriate;

32 (3) Align educational and broad career goals and a student's course of study;

33 (4) Be based on the student's selected academic and career focus area as approved by the
 34 student's parent or guardian;

1 (5) Include experience based, career oriented learning experiences which may include,
 2 but not be limited to, internships, apprenticeships, mentoring, co-op education, and
 3 service learning;

4 (6) Be flexible to allow change in the course of study but be sufficiently structured to
 5 meet graduation requirements and qualify the student for admission to postsecondary
 6 education; and

7 (7) Be approved by the student, the student’s guidance counselor or teacher adviser, and
 8 the student’s parent or guardian.

9 (b) An individual graduation plan shall be reviewed annually, and revised, if appropriate,
 10 upon approval by the student, the student’s guidance counselor or teacher adviser, and the
 11 student’s parent or guardian.

12 (c) An individual graduation plan may be changed at any time throughout a student’s high
 13 school career upon approval by the student, the student’s guidance counselor or teacher
 14 adviser, and the student’s parent or guardian.

15 20-2-329.2.

16 An individual employed as a guidance counselor or graduation coach pursuant to Code
 17 Section 20-2-328 by a local school system to provide educational and career services shall
 18 work to ensure the coordination, accountability, and delivery of educational and career
 19 awareness, development, and exploration to students in ninth through twelfth grade and
 20 shall:

21 (1) Coordinate and present professional development workshops in educational and
 22 career development and guidance for teachers, guidance counselors, and work based
 23 constituents;

24 (2) Assist schools in promoting the goals of quality career guidance to students and
 25 parents in ninth through twelfth grade;

26 (3) Assist guidance counselors and students in identifying and accessing educational and
 27 career information and resource material;

28 (4) Provide educators, parents or guardians, and students with information on educational
 29 programs offered in high school, in technical and community colleges, in colleges and
 30 universities, and through apprenticeship programs;

31 (5) Support students in the exploration of educational and career options in the selection
 32 of an area of academic or career focus;

33 (6) Learn and become familiar with ways to improve and promote educational and career
 34 opportunities within the local school system;

35 (7) Attend continuing education programs on education and career development in high
 36 demand and high wage fields;

- 1 (8) Assist with the selection, administration, and evaluation of education and career
2 interest inventories;
- 3 (9) Assist with the implementation of students' individual graduation plans;
- 4 (10) Assist schools in planning and developing parent and student conferences and
5 provide information on educational and career opportunities;
- 6 (11) Coordinate with guidance counselors and administration educational and career
7 events, career exploration classes and units, and creation of a career and educational
8 information center within the school;
- 9 (12) Coordinate community resources and citizens representing diverse occupations in
10 activities for parents and students;
- 11 (13) Assist with the usage of computer assisted career guidance systems; and
- 12 (14) Perform other related functions.

13 20-2-329.3.

14 Involvement of parents and guardians shall be an integral component of the focused
15 programs of study system. Beginning with students in the ninth grade and continuing
16 through high school, schools shall schedule annual conferences to assist parents or
17 guardians and their children in setting educational and career goals and creating individual
18 graduation plans. These conferences shall include, but are not limited to, assisting the
19 student in identifying educational and career interests and goals, selecting a career and
20 academic focus area, and developing an individual graduation plan. In order to protect the
21 interests of every student, a mediation process that includes advocates for parents and
22 guardians shall be developed, explained, and made available for conferences upon request
23 of the student or the student's parent or guardian.

24 20-2-329.4.

25 (a) In addition to the extended day program provided for in Code Section 20-2-259, the
26 State Board of Education shall establish an extended day program for students in grades
27 seven and eight. Subject to appropriation by the General Assembly, funding for extended
28 day services shall be provided to local school systems for extended day, extended week,
29 and summer instruction for purposes of:

- 30 (1) Ensuring that seventh and eighth grade students are ready for high school in reading
31 and mathematics;
- 32 (2) Reducing failure rates in ninth grade and preparing more students to meet grade-level
33 standards in reading and mathematics; and
- 34 (3) Providing re-teaching opportunities throughout high school to keep students on track
35 to graduate with their peers.

1 (b) The state board shall annually request appropriations sufficient to provide for
2 implementation of the program under this Code section.

3 (c) The state board shall develop guidelines for the program provided for in this Code
4 section and shall annually evaluate program results and continue refining the use of funds
5 toward proven practices.

6 20-2-329.5.

7 Beginning with the 2009-2010 academic year, colleges of education of the University
8 System of Georgia shall include in their training of teachers, guidance counselors, and
9 administrators the following: educational and career guidance, the planning of a rigorous
10 program of academic studies coupled with a focus in an academic area, career/technical
11 area, or combination of the two and individual graduation plans, learning styles, career
12 guidance model elements, cooperative learning, and character education. The Board of
13 Regents of the University System of Georgia, in collaboration with the State Board of
14 Education, shall develop performance based standards in these areas and include them as
15 criteria for teacher program approval.

16 20-2-329.6.

17 The State Board of Education shall promulgate rules and regulations necessary to carry out
18 the provisions of this part."

19 **SECTION 2.**

20 Said article is further amended in Code Section 20-2-281, relating to assessment of
21 effectiveness of educational programs, by adding a new subsection to read as follows:

22 "(q) The State Board of Education shall provide that a student who passes an employer or
23 industry certification examination or a state licensure examination, which are approved by
24 the State Board of Education, shall be exempt from the high school graduation test
25 provided for in subsection (a) of this Code section except for the reading, writing, and
26 mathematics portions and from end-of-course assessments as provided for in subsection
27 (f) of this Code section except for tests in the areas of mathematics, English, reading, and
28 writing."

29 **SECTION 3.**

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