

House Bill 939

By: Representatives Oliver of the 83rd, Benfield of the 85th, Ashe of the 56th, Porter of the 143rd, Smyre of the 132nd, and others

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED
AN ACT

1 To amend Article 1 of Chapter 1A of Title 20 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated,
2 relating to general provisions relative to early care and learning, so as to establish a program
3 to expand Georgia's Pre-K Program to three-year-olds; to provide for an annual report to the
4 General Assembly; to provide for legislative intent with regard to funding the program; to
5 establish a program to incentivize and acknowledge quality pre-k programs; to provide for
6 an annual report to the General Assembly; to provide for legislative intent with regard to
7 funding the program; to amend Code Section 50-27-3 of the Official Code of Georgia
8 Annotated, relating to definitions relative to the lottery for education, so as to add a definition
9 for the term "pre-kindergarten"; to provide for related matters; to repeal conflicting laws;
10 and for other purposes.

11 BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF GEORGIA:

12 style="text-align:center">**SECTION 1.**

13 Article 1 of Chapter 1A of Title 20 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, relating to
14 general provisions relative to early care and learning, is amended by inserting new Code
15 sections to read as follows:

16 "20-1A-18.

17 (a) No later than July 1, 2008, and subject to appropriations, the board shall establish a
18 program to expand Georgia's Pre-K Program to children who attain the age of three by
19 September 1. Such program shall provide services in a manner similar to those currently
20 provided under such program, except as otherwise deemed age-appropriate by the
21 department for three-year-old children and shall include an ongoing long-term method of
22 longitudinal evaluation as conducted by the board. The board shall establish criteria for
23 the selection of sites, which shall all be voluntary, and shall approve sites in accordance
24 with such criteria.

25 (b) The board shall provide an annual report on the program established pursuant to this
26 Code section to the General Assembly no later than December 1 following each fiscal year

1 in which funds are appropriated by the General Assembly to conduct such program and
 2 said report shall include, at a minimum, the method of evaluation as required in
 3 subsection (a) of this Code section.

4 (c) It is the intent of the General Assembly that the program established pursuant to this
 5 Code section be funded with lottery proceeds appropriated from the Lottery for Education
 6 Account.

7 20-1A-19.

8 (a) No later than July 1, 2008, and subject to appropriations, the board shall establish a
 9 program to acknowledge and support existing exemplary pre-k programs and to incentivize
 10 improvement in quality in underperforming pre-k programs. Such program shall be
 11 designed to provide grants in three tiers, as follows:

12 (1) Pre-k programs that have or receive accreditation by the National Association for the
 13 Education of Young Children;

14 (2) Pre-k programs that have received a Certificate of Distinction from the department;
 15 and

16 (3) Pre-k programs which are determined by the department to be in need of
 17 improvement in order to be an exemplary program.

18 The board shall develop criteria for the establishment of the program and for eligibility of
 19 pre-k programs which shall include an ongoing long-term method of longitudinal
 20 evaluation as conducted by the board.

21 (b) The board shall provide an annual report on the program established pursuant to this
 22 Code section to the General Assembly no later than December 1 following each fiscal year
 23 in which funds are appropriated by the General Assembly to conduct such program and
 24 said report shall include, at a minimum, the method of evaluation as required in
 25 subsection (a) of this Code section.

26 (c) It is the intent of the General Assembly that the program established pursuant to this
 27 Code section be funded with lottery proceeds appropriated from the Lottery for Education
 28 Account."

29 SECTION 2.

30 Code Section 50-27-3 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, relating to definitions
 31 relative to the lottery for education, is amended by adding a new paragraph to read as
 32 follows:

33 "(17.1) 'Pre-kindergarten' means a class or program preceding kindergarten for children
 34 ages three years or older."

- 1 **SECTION 3.**
- 2 All laws and parts of laws in conflict with this Act are repealed.