

The Senate Education and Youth Committee offered the following substitute to HB 400:

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 develop programs to improve graduation
4 rates and to improve the preparedness of students for postsecondary education and careers;
5 to provide for definitions; to provide for the development of focused programs of study; to
6 provide for individual graduation plans; to provide for training for school counselors and
7 graduation coaches to provide educational counseling and career awareness programs for
8 students; to establish a reform grant program; to provide that the grant program is subject to
9 appropriations; to require local school systems which receive a reform grant to comply with
10 certain requirements; to provide for high school completion rate goals in the state
11 accountability system; to provide for rules and regulations; to provide for exemptions from
12 certain portions of the high school graduation test and end-of-course assessments; to provide
13 for related matters; to provide for an effective date; to repeal conflicting laws; and for other
14 purposes.

15 BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF GEORGIA:

SECTION 1.

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

"Part 16

19
20 20-2-325.

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

23 20-2-326.

24 For purposes of this part, the term:

25 (1) 'Articulation' means agreement between a high school and a postsecondary institution
26 regarding the awarding of both secondary and postsecondary credit for a dual enrollment
27 course.

28 (2) 'Career academy' means a specialized charter school established by a partnership
29 between one or more local boards of education and a technical school or college and
30 approved by the State Board of Education in accordance with Article 31 of this chapter
31 or the Georgia Charter Schools Commission in accordance with Article 31A of this
32 chapter. This term also includes a small learning community where a student receives
33 academic instruction at his or her assigned high school combined with work based
34 learning opportunities at an industry center or technical school or college.

35 (3) 'Choice technical high school' means a high school, other than the high school to
36 which a student is assigned by virtue of his or her residence and attendance zone, which
37 is designed to prepare a high school student for postsecondary education and for
38 employment in a career field. A choice technical high school may be operated by a local
39 school system or a technical school or college. A choice technical high school may also
40 be operated as a charter school under a governance board composed of parents,
41 employers, and representatives from the local board of education.

42 (4) 'Chronically low-performing high school' means a public high school in this state that
43 has a graduation rate of less than 60 percent for three consecutive years, as determined
44 in accordance with methodology established by the National Governors Association's
45 Compact on High School Graduation Data, or that has not made adequate yearly progress
46 for three consecutive years, as defined by the Office of Student Achievement.

47 (5) 'Focused program of study' means a rigorous academic core combined with a focus
48 in mathematics and science; a focus in humanities, fine arts, and foreign language; or a
49 coherent sequence of career pathway courses that is aligned with graduation requirements
50 established by the State Board of Education and curriculum requirements established
51 pursuant to Part 2 of this article that prepares a student for postsecondary education or
52 immediate employment after high school graduation.

53 (6) 'Graduation plan' means a student specific plan developed in accordance with
54 subsection (d) of Code Section 20-2-327 detailing the courses necessary for a high school
55 student to graduate from high school and to successfully transition to postsecondary
56 education and the work force.

57 (7) 'Industry certification' means a process of program evaluation that ensures that
58 individual programs meet industry standards in the areas of curriculum, teacher
59 qualification, lab specifications, equipment, and industry involvement.

60 (8) 'Public college or university' means a two-year or four-year college, university, or
 61 other institution under the auspices of the Board of Regents of the University System of
 62 Georgia.

63 (9) 'Small learning community' means an autonomous or semiautonomous small learning
 64 environment within a large high school which is made up of a subset of students and
 65 teachers for a two, three, or four-year period. The goal of a small learning community
 66 is to achieve greater personalization of learning with each community led by a principal
 67 or instructional leader. A small learning community blends academic studies around a
 68 broad career or academic theme where teachers have common planning time to connect
 69 teacher assignments and assessments to college and career readiness standards. Students
 70 voluntarily apply for enrollment in a small learning community but must be accepted, and
 71 such enrollment must be approved by the student's parent or guardian. A small learning
 72 community also includes a career academy organized around a specific career theme
 73 which integrates academic and career instruction, provides work-based learning
 74 opportunities, and prepares students for postsecondary education and employment, with
 75 support through partnerships with local employers, community organizations, and
 76 postsecondary institutions.

77 (10) 'Teacher adviser system' means a system where an individual professional educator
 78 in the school assists a small group of students and their parents or guardians throughout
 79 the students' high school careers to set postsecondary goals and help them prepare
 80 programs of study, utilizing assessments and other data to track academic progress on a
 81 regular basis; communicates frequently with parents or guardians; and provides
 82 advisement, support, and encouragement as needed.

83 (11) 'Technical school or college' means a school, college, institution, or other branch of
 84 the Technical College System of Georgia.

85 20-2-327.

86 (a)(1) The Department of Education shall develop focused programs of study in high
 87 demand, high skill, and high wage academic and career fields in accordance with a
 88 phase-in schedule as determined by the state board. Focused programs of study may
 89 include, but are not limited to:

- 90 (A) Aerospace;
- 91 (B) Health care and elderly care;
- 92 (C) Agribusiness;
- 93 (D) Life science;
- 94 (E) Energy and environmental;
- 95 (F) Logistics and transportation;

- 96 (G) Information and technology;
97 (H) Teacher education training;
98 (I) Technology and engineering;
99 (J) Science and mathematics; and
100 (K) Humanities and fine arts.

101 (2) The department shall include in the focused programs of study the flexibility for a
102 student to pursue courses at the school of attendance, at a technical school or college, at
103 a public college or university, at a work site under an apprenticeship cooperative
104 education program, and at other settings approved by the State Board of Education, as
105 appropriate.

106 (3) For each focused program of study identified pursuant to this subsection, the
107 department shall convene a committee which includes high school teachers; school
108 counselors; representatives from the Board of Regents of the University System of
109 Georgia, the Technical College System of Georgia, the Governor's Office of Workforce
110 Development, and employers; and others as deemed appropriate by the department.
111 These committees shall develop and recommend a focused program of study which
112 blends academic and technical content developed around college and career readiness
113 standards with real world problems and projects for students. Recommendations shall
114 include state-wide articulation and dual enrollment courses between local school systems
115 and postsecondary institutions to provide seamless pathways for adequately prepared high
116 school students to move directly into postsecondary education. The committees shall
117 develop measures to certify equivalency in content and rigor for all state-wide articulation
118 and dual enrollment courses and shall follow related policies and procedures established
119 by the Department of Education, the Board of Regents of the University System of
120 Georgia, and the State Board of Technical and Adult Education for awarding articulation
121 and dual enrollment credit which shall be based on students qualifying to enroll in credit
122 bearing postsecondary courses.

123 (4) The State Board of Education, in collaboration with the Technical College System
124 of Georgia and the Board of Regents of the University System of Georgia, shall establish
125 a process for certifying all focused programs of study receiving state funds by using
126 national certifying agencies where they exist and developing state industry-certifying
127 panels in career pathways where no national certifying agency exists. The certification
128 process shall, at a minimum, validate that a focused program of study curriculum meets
129 industry standards where applicable, that its teachers hold current industry certification
130 where applicable, and that its facilities, equipment, and software are adequate to teach the
131 curriculum. The State Board of Education shall establish a schedule so that the
132 requirements of this paragraph are met over a five-year period so that by June 30, 2015,

133 the requirements of this paragraph relating to industry standards and certification and to
134 facilities, equipment, and software are fully implemented.

135 (b) Student performance at the advanced proficiency/honors level on any assessments
136 required for purposes of high school graduation shall be recognized as:

137 (1) Meeting postsecondary entrance test requirements, and

138 (2) Qualifying students to enroll in credit-bearing postsecondary course work in
139 accordance with policies and requirements established by the State Board of Education,
140 the Board of Regents of the University System of Georgia, and the State Board of
141 Technical and Adult Education.

142 (c) Secondary and postsecondary credit shall be awarded immediately upon successful
143 completion of any articulated or dual enrollment course in accordance with policies and
144 requirements established by the State Board of Education, the Board of Regents of the
145 University System of Georgia, and the State Board of Technical and Adult Education.

146 (d) Beginning with the 2010-2011 school year, students in the sixth, seventh, and eighth
147 grades shall be provided counseling, advisement, career awareness, career interest
148 inventories, and information to assist them in evaluating their academic skills and career
149 interests. Before the end of the second semester of the eighth grade, students shall select
150 a preferred focused program of study and develop an individual graduation plan in
151 consultation with their parents, guardians, or individuals appointed by the parents or
152 guardians to serve as their designee. High school students shall be provided guidance,
153 advisement, and counseling annually that will enable them to successfully complete their
154 individual graduation plans, preparing them for a seamless transition to postsecondary
155 study, further training, or employment. An individual graduation plan shall:

156 (1) Include rigorous academic core subjects and focused course work in mathematics and
157 science or in humanities, fine arts, and foreign language or sequenced career pathway
158 course work;

159 (2) Incorporate provisions of a student's Individualized Education Program (IEP), where
160 applicable;

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

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

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

167 (6) Include opportunities for postsecondary studies through articulation, dual enrollment,
168 and joint enrollment;

169 (7) Be flexible to allow change in the course of study but be sufficiently structured to
 170 meet graduation requirements and qualify the student for admission to postsecondary
 171 education; and

172 (8) Be approved by the student and the student's parent or guardian with guidance from
 173 the student's school counselor or teacher adviser.

174 An individual graduation plan shall be reviewed annually, and revised, if appropriate, upon
 175 approval by the student and the student's parent or guardian with guidance from the
 176 student's school counselor or teacher adviser. An individual graduation plan may be
 177 changed at any time throughout a student's high school career upon approval by the student
 178 and the student's parent or guardian with guidance from the student's school counselor or
 179 teacher adviser.

180 (e) The Department of Education shall make available training for school counselors and
 181 graduation coaches about high demand, high skill, and high wage opportunities for
 182 bachelor's degrees, associate's degrees, and certificates, how a combination of rigorous
 183 academic and technical courses can prepare students for these fields, and how to organize
 184 a teacher adviser system that engages teachers in working with a core group of students and
 185 their parents or guardians in setting goals, identifying individual programs of study, and
 186 establishing individual graduation plans to achieve those goals. The training shall include
 187 strategies for school counselors, graduation coaches, and teacher advisers to effectively
 188 involve parents or guardians in the educational and career guidance process and in the
 189 development of individual graduation plans. Upon request by any local school system,
 190 training may be given to school counselors and graduation coaches in any middle or high
 191 school.

192 20-2-328.

193 (a) Subject to appropriations by the General Assembly, the State Board of Education shall
 194 establish a competitive grant program for local school systems to implement school reform
 195 measures in selected high schools. The state board shall establish program requirements
 196 in accordance with the provisions of this Code section and shall establish grant criteria,
 197 which shall include that priority for reform grants shall be given to chronically
 198 low-performing high schools.

199 (b)(1) The State Board of Education shall develop an evidence based model program for
 200 chronically low-performing high schools receiving a reform grant pursuant to this Code
 201 section for addressing at-risk students, which shall include various programs and
 202 curricula that have proven to be effective for at-risk students focusing on:

203 (A) Identification of students at risk for being poorly prepared for the next grade level
 204 or for dropping out of school;

- 205 (B) Strengthening retention of ninth grade students in school and reducing high failure
206 rates;
- 207 (C) Improving more students' performances to grade level standards in reading and
208 mathematics by the end of ninth grade;
- 209 (D) Assisting students and their parents or guardians in setting an outcome career and
210 educational goal and identifying a focused program of study to achieve such goal; and
211 (E) Assisting students in learning and applying study skills, coping skills, and other
212 habits that produce successful students and adults.
- 213 (2) The at-risk model program shall include:
- 214 (A) Diagnostic assessments to identify strengths and weaknesses in the core academic
215 areas;
- 216 (B) A process for identifying at-risk students, closely monitored by the Department of
217 Education in collaboration with local school systems to ensure that students are being
218 properly identified and provided timely, appropriate guidance and assistance and to
219 ensure that no group is disproportionately represented; and
- 220 (C) An evaluation component in each high school to ensure the programs are providing
221 students an opportunity to graduate with a high school diploma.
- 222 (3) The at-risk model program may include various components designed to result in
223 more students facilitating a successful start in high school and passing ninth grade such
224 as:
- 225 (A) Utilizing a flexible schedule that increases students' time in core language
226 arts/reading and mathematics studies designed to eliminate academic deficiencies;
- 227 (B) Maintaining a student-teacher ratio in ninth grade that is no higher than any other
228 grade level ratio in high school;
- 229 (C) Utilizing experienced and effective teachers as leaders for teacher teams in ninth
230 grade to improve instructional planning, delivery, and reteaching strategies;
- 231 (D) Assigning students to a teacher mentor who will meet with them frequently to
232 provide planned lessons on study skills and other habits of success that help students
233 become independent learners and who will help them receive the assistance they need
234 to successfully pass ninth grade; and
- 235 (E) Including ninth grade career courses which incorporate a series of miniprojects
236 throughout the school year that require the application of ninth grade level reading,
237 mathematics, and science skills to complete while students learn to use a range of
238 technology and help students explore a range of educational and career options that will
239 assist them in formulating post high school goals and give them a reason to stay in
240 school and work toward achieving their stated goals.

241 (c) The State Board of Education shall promulgate rules and regulations for chronically
 242 low-performing high schools receiving a reform grant pursuant to this Code section to
 243 make the high schools more relevant to and effective for all students. Such rules shall
 244 encourage high schools to implement a comprehensive school reform research based model
 245 that focuses on:

- 246 (1) Setting high expectations for all students;
 247 (2) Personalizing graduation plans for students;
 248 (3) Developing small learning communities or career academies with a rigorous
 249 academic foundation and emphasis in broad career fields of study;
 250 (4) Using project based instruction embedded with strong academics to improve
 251 relevancy in learning;
 252 (5) Fostering collaboration among academic and career/technical teachers;
 253 (6) Implementing nontraditional scheduling in ninth grade for students behind in their
 254 grade level;
 255 (7) Promoting parental involvement; and
 256 (8) Training teachers to work with low-performing students and their parents or
 257 guardians.

258 (d) This Code section shall be subject to appropriations by the General Assembly.

259 20-2-329.

260 High schools that receive a reform grant pursuant to Code Section 20-2-328 shall:

- 261 (1) Provide focused programs of study which are designed to provide a well-rounded
 262 education for students by fostering artistic creativity, critical thinking, and self-discipline
 263 through the teaching of academic content, knowledge, and skills that students will use in
 264 the workplace, further education, and life. The focused programs of study, whether
 265 provided at a choice technical high school, a career academy, a traditional high school,
 266 or on site at a technical school or college or a public college or university, shall be
 267 aligned with graduation requirements established by the State Board of Education and
 268 curriculum requirements established pursuant to Part 2 of this article, including, at a
 269 minimum, four years of mathematics, Algebra I and higher, and four years of English,
 270 with an emphasis on developing reading and writing skills to meet college and career
 271 readiness standards;
 272 (2) Implement a teacher adviser system;
 273 (3) Provide students in the ninth through twelfth grades information on educational
 274 programs offered in high school, in technical and community colleges, in colleges and
 275 universities, and through apprenticeship programs and how these programs can lead to
 276 a variety of career fields. Local school systems shall provide opportunities for field trips.

277 speakers, educational and career information centers, job shadowing, and classroom
 278 centers to assist students and their parents or guardians, with guidance from school
 279 counselors and teacher advisers, in revising, if appropriate, the individual graduation plan
 280 developed pursuant to subsection (d) of Code Section 20-2-327;

281 (4) Enroll students no later than ninth grade into one of the following options for earning
 282 a high school diploma and preparing students for postsecondary education and a career
 283 which will include a structured program of academic study with in-depth studies in:

284 (A) Mathematics and science;

285 (B) Humanities, fine arts, and foreign language; or

286 (C) A career pathway that leads to passing an employer certification exam in a high
 287 demand, high skill, or high wage career field or to an associate's degree or bachelor's
 288 degree.

289 The awarding of a special education diploma to any disabled student who has not
 290 completed all of the requirements for a high school diploma, but who has completed his
 291 or her Individualized Education Program (IEP) shall be deemed to meet the requirements
 292 of this paragraph;

293 (5) Implement the at-risk model program developed by the State Board of Education
 294 pursuant to subsection (b) of Code Section 20-2-328;

295 (6) Comply with the rules and regulations promulgated by the State Board of Education
 296 for chronically low-performing high schools pursuant to subsection (c) of Code Section
 297 20-2-328; and

298 (7) Schedule annual conferences to assist students and their parents or guardians in
 299 setting educational and career goals and creating individual graduation plans beginning
 300 with students in the eighth grade and continuing through high school. These conferences
 301 shall include, but are not limited to, assisting the student in identifying educational and
 302 career interests and goals, selecting a career and academic focus area, and developing an
 303 individual graduation plan.

304 20-2-329.1.

305 No later than July 1, 2011, the Office of Student Achievement shall include in the
 306 accountability system provided for in Part 3 of Article 2 of Chapter 14 of this title emphasis
 307 on improving student achievement and increasing high school graduation rates, with the
 308 goal of having all public high schools in Georgia reach at least a 90 percent high school
 309 completion rate, which shall include completion by the end of the summer following a
 310 student's senior year, by July 1, 2021, with annual incremental targets.

311 20-2-329.2.
312 The State Board of Education shall promulgate rules and regulations necessary to carry out
313 the provisions of this part."

314 **SECTION 2.**

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

317 "(q) The State Board of Education shall consider the passage by a student of an employer
318 or industry certification examination or a state licensure examination which is approved by
319 the State Board of Education when considering whether to grant such student a variance
320 for one or more portions of the high school graduation test required by the State Board of
321 Education pursuant to subsection (a) of this Code section in order to obtain a Georgia high
322 school diploma; provided, however, that the state board shall not grant a variance to a
323 student unless the student has attempted and failed to pass the relevant portion of the high
324 school graduation test at least three times."

325 **SECTION 3.**

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

328 **SECTION 4.**

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