

House Bill 281

By: Representatives Walker of the 107<sup>th</sup>, Casas of the 103<sup>rd</sup>, Coan of the 101<sup>st</sup>, Reese of the 98<sup>th</sup>, and Cox of the 102<sup>nd</sup>

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED  
AN ACT

1 To amend Part 14 of Article 6 of Chapter 2 of Title 20 of the Official Code of Georgia  
2 Annotated, relating to other educational programs under the "Quality Basic Education Act,"  
3 so as to enact the "Georgia Virtual School Opportunity and Enrichment Act"; to provide for  
4 legislative findings; to provide for a definition; to require a local school system to allow  
5 virtual students in grades six through 12 to participate in extracurricular activities; to provide  
6 for academic requirements; to provide for ineligibility; to provide that the virtual student is  
7 subject to all rules, regulations, and codes of conduct as would apply to other students; to  
8 provide for ineligibility; to prohibit certain memberships; to provide for rules and  
9 regulations; to provide for related matters; to repeal conflicting laws; and for other purposes.

10 BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF GEORGIA:

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

12 This Act shall be known and may be cited as the "Georgia Virtual School Opportunity and  
13 Enrichment Act."

14 style="text-align:center">**SECTION 2.**

15 The General Assembly finds that extracurricular student activities are an important  
16 complement to the academic curriculum and that participation in extracurricular activities  
17 contributes to student development of the social and intellectual skills necessary to become  
18 a well-rounded adult. Further, the General Assembly finds that the state has an investment  
19 in every child in this state and his or her education, regardless of where that child is being  
20 educated.

21 style="text-align:center">**SECTION 3.**

22 Part 14 of Article 6 of Chapter 2 of Title 20 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated,  
23 relating to other educational programs under the "Quality Basic Education Act," is amended  
24 by adding a new Code section to read as follows:

25 "20-2-319.3.

26 (a) As used in this Code section, the term 'virtual student' means a student in Georgia  
27 enrolled in one or more courses in the Georgia Virtual School established pursuant to Code  
28 Section 20-2-319.1 or in a virtual charter school approved by the State Board of Education  
29 through a program which meets the requirements of subsection (c) of Code Section  
30 20-2-690.

31 (b) A local school system shall allow a virtual student in grades six through 12 to  
32 participate in any and all extracurricular activities offered or conducted by the school in  
33 which such child would be enrolled by virtue of his or her residence in the same manner  
34 as any student currently attending the school as a public school student. If a virtual student  
35 wishes to participate in an extracurricular activity, he or she shall register with the principal  
36 of the school, or his or her designee, of such intent to participate in extracurricular activities  
37 of the school in accordance with rules and regulations established by the State Board of  
38 Education. A virtual student shall be required to complete any related forms required by  
39 the school system or required pursuant to state board rules.

40 (c) In order to be eligible to participate pursuant to this Code section, a virtual student shall  
41 achieve a satisfactory score as defined by the state board on a standardized, noncurriculum  
42 based test as approved by the state board. It shall be the responsibility of the virtual student  
43 and his or her parent or guardian to make all arrangements to take the test required pursuant  
44 to this subsection and to provide the principal of the school, or his or her designee, with the  
45 results of such test prior to participation in any extracurricular activity.

46 (d) A virtual student who does not meet the requirements contained in subsection (c) of  
47 this Code section shall be ineligible to participate in any extracurricular activity of the  
48 school for the remainder of the current semester and each succeeding semester until he or  
49 she meets the requirements in subsection (c) of this Code section.

50 (e) A virtual student shall comply with the same rules and requirements for participation  
51 that apply to any student's participation in the same activity and shall be subject to the same  
52 code of conduct as would apply to other students participating in the same activity.

53 (f) A student who drops out of a public school during the school year shall be ineligible  
54 to participate as a virtual student in extracurricular activities pursuant to this Code section  
55 for the remainder of the current school year in addition to the following school year. The  
56 public school principal may grant a waiver of this provision in the event of an extraordinary  
57 health related issue.

58 (g) Public schools shall be prohibited from membership in any organization or entity  
59 which regulates or governs interscholastic extracurricular activities that discriminates  
60 against virtual students.

61 (h) The State Board of Education shall establish rules and regulations to implement the  
62 provisions of this Code section."

63 **SECTION 4.**

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