

The House Committee on Education offers the following substitute to HB 281:

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 nonacademic rules, regulations, and codes of conduct as would apply to other  
8 students; to 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 **SECTION 1.**

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

14 **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 **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:

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25 "20-2-319.3.

26 (a) As used in this Code section, the term 'virtual student' means a student enrolled full  
27 time in a virtual charter school approved by the State Board of Education.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

62

**SECTION 4.**

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