

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 revise certain provisions relating to
3 organization of schools, middle school programs, and scheduling; to provide for related
4 matters; to provide for an effective date; to repeal conflicting laws; and for other purposes.

5 BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF GEORGIA:

SECTION 1.

6 Article 6 of Chapter 2 of Title 20 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, relating to the
7 "Quality Basic Education Act," is amended by revising Code Section 20-2-290, relating to
8 the organization of schools, middle school programs, and scheduling, as follows:
9

10 "20-2-290.

11 (a)(1) The board of education of any local school system is authorized to organize or
12 reorganize the schools and fix the grade levels to be taught at each school in its
13 jurisdiction. ~~Local school systems which have organized their schools in such a manner~~
14 ~~that facilities~~ Schools which house grades six, seven, ~~and eight or grades seven and or~~
15 ~~eight, or any combination thereof,~~ shall qualify for the middle school program for
16 students ~~in grade levels so housed. A school which houses grades other than six, seven,~~
17 ~~or eight shall only be eligible if it has a full-time principal for grades seven and eight or~~
18 ~~six, seven, and eight and another full-time principal for grades above or below the middle~~
19 ~~school grades; provided, however, that such schools also meet all other provisions of this~~
20 ~~Code section and criteria and standards prescribed by the State Board of Education.~~
21 ~~Schools with students in the sixth grade shall not be eligible for the middle school~~
22 ~~program if the sixth grades are not housed in middle schools which also contain both~~
23 ~~grades seven and eight.~~ Further, two or more adjacent local school systems shall qualify
24 for the middle school program if through their contractual arrangement they jointly meet
25 the requirements of this Code section and the criteria and standards prescribed by the
26 state board.

27 (2) The board of education of any local school system shall be authorized to employ
 28 school administrative managers in lieu of or in addition to assistant principals. Such
 29 school administrative managers shall not be required to be certificated by the Professional
 30 Standards Commission but shall have such qualifications as determined by the local
 31 board with a minimum requirement of a bachelor's degree. The duties of school
 32 administrative managers shall be to oversee and manage the financial and business affairs
 33 of the school. The principal shall retain authority over the curriculum and instructional
 34 areas. The school administrative manager shall report directly to the principal. In the
 35 event that a local board considers hiring or utilizing school administrative managers
 36 pursuant to this subsection, it shall receive and give all due consideration to
 37 recommendations by the school council as to whether or not to utilize such position and
 38 as to selection of the manager. Existing employees of the local board shall be eligible
 39 to serve as school administrative managers if they meet other qualifications and
 40 requirements established by the local board for such position. For purposes of earning
 41 funds for such positions, school administrative managers shall be treated in all respects
 42 the same as assistant principals.

43 ~~(b) Except as otherwise provided in subsection (c) of this Code section, local~~ Local boards
 44 of education shall schedule each middle school so as to provide the following:

45 (1) A minimum of five hours of instruction in English and language arts, reading,
 46 mathematics, science, social studies, and such other academic subjects as the State Board
 47 of Education shall prescribe. ~~For students not performing on grade level, as defined by~~
 48 ~~the Office of Student Achievement, the minimum of five hours shall include such~~
 49 ~~remedial academic instruction in English and language arts, reading, mathematics,~~
 50 ~~science, or social studies as required to bring such students to grade level performance~~
 51 ~~with the priority for such remediation being placed on reading and mathematics or as~~
 52 ~~otherwise determined by the student's team of academic teachers; provided that, in~~
 53 ~~making such a determination the team shall consider the student's performance on the~~
 54 ~~criterion-referenced assessments authorized in Code Section 20-2-181;~~

55 (2) Beyond the minimum of five hours of academic instruction, the local board shall
 56 have the authority to schedule for the remainder of the day such academic or exploratory
 57 classes as the State Board of Education shall prescribe; provided, however, that a student
 58 shall be allowed to take additional academic classes instead of exploratory classes if the
 59 parent or guardian of such a student requests such assignment, subject to availability; and

60 (3) An interdisciplinary team of academic teachers with common planning time of a
 61 minimum of 55 minutes.

62 ~~(c) Local schools may apply to the state board for an exception to the schedule set out in~~
 63 ~~subsection (b) of this Code section in order to schedule a minimum of 4.5 hours of~~

64 ~~academic instruction. If the local school has achieved an acceptable rating for the~~
65 ~~preceding year, the state board shall grant the application for an exception.~~

66 ~~(d)~~(c) Local school systems shall comply with subsection (b) ~~or (c)~~ of this Code section
67 in order to qualify for the middle school program.

68 ~~(e)~~(d) If a local school system has a combination of qualified and nonqualified schools, it
69 shall qualify for the middle school program only for those students counted in the full-time
70 equivalent count for the middle school program in qualified middle schools."

71 **SECTION 2.**

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

74 **SECTION 3.**

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