

House Bill 186 (AS PASSED HOUSE AND SENATE)

By: Representatives Nix of the 69th, Davis of the 109th, Coleman of the 97th, Carter of the 175th, Clark of the 104th, and others

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED
AN ACT

1 To amend Chapter 2 of Title 20 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, relating to
2 elementary and secondary education, so as to provide and expand career pathway options for
3 high school students to ensure their career and college readiness; to provide for legislative
4 findings; to provide for coordination between the State Board of Education, the Board of
5 Regents of the University System of Georgia, and the Board of Technical and Adult
6 Education; to provide for focused programs of study; to provide measures to minimize the
7 need for remedial course work for students in postsecondary institutions; to require academic
8 core standards to be embedded in career, technical, and agricultural education courses; to
9 provide for end-of-course assessments; to provide for course credit for demonstrated
10 proficiency; to provide for certain requirements relating to dual credit courses; to provide for
11 enrollment counts for students in dual credit programs; to repeal a Code section relating to
12 enrollment in postsecondary courses; to provide that certain provisions relating to individual
13 graduation plans may not be waived; to amend Chapter 14 of Title 34 of the Official Code
14 of Georgia Annotated, relating to the Georgia Workforce Investment Board, so as to provide
15 for the establishment of soft skills certification by the Governor's Office of Workforce
16 Development; to provide for collaboration with the Department of Education to enable high
17 school students to attain soft skills certification; to provide for related matters; to provide for
18 an effective date; to repeal conflicting laws; and for other purposes.

19 **BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF GEORGIA:**

20 **SECTION 1.**

21 The General Assembly finds:

- 22 (1) Our state's long-term prosperity depends on supporting an education system that is
23 designed to prepare our students for a global economy;
- 24 (2) High school students and parents must understand that they have options for career
25 pathway programs of study that join a college-ready academic core with quality career,
26 technical, and agricultural education studies that result in a high school diploma and

- 27 preparation for success in advanced training, an associate's degree, a baccalaureate degree,
 28 and a career;
- 29 (3) Local school systems must provide every student with choices that are academically
 30 rigorous and aligned to opportunities in high-demand, high-skill, high-wage career fields
 31 and to postsecondary career and technical pathways leading to advanced credentials or
 32 degrees;
- 33 (4) The State Board of Education, the Board of Regents of the University System of
 34 Georgia, and the Board of Technical and Adult Education must work together so that
 35 academic courses that are embedded within career, technical, and agricultural education
 36 courses (CTAE) are given appropriate academic credit at the high school level and
 37 recognized at the postsecondary level;
- 38 (5) Teachers should be provided with professional development opportunities that enforce
 39 the academically rigorous standards in relevant, project based coursework;
- 40 (6) High school students should clearly understand the options for dual high school and
 41 postsecondary credit, and the state should properly fund these options;
- 42 (7) Every state education agency, postsecondary institution, and local school system
 43 should provide all high school students with opportunities for accelerated learning through
 44 dual credit coursework leading to at least six postsecondary credits and have as a collective
 45 goal to graduate every student with postsecondary credit;
- 46 (8) Georgia's strategic industries must be partners in our public education system
 47 (secondary and postsecondary) so that they are assured that our high school graduates are
 48 prepared for success in the workforce;
- 49 (9) Georgia's public education system must incorporate many different types of
 50 assessments and certificates into their programs so that a student's skill level is assessed
 51 and that it also has meaning to them for postsecondary and career success; and
- 52 (10) Georgia's students must understand that a high school diploma and some form of
 53 postsecondary credential are key to success in the workforce and earning a family living
 54 wage.

55 SECTION 2.

56 Chapter 2 of Title 20 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, relating to elementary and
 57 secondary education, is amended by revising subsection (e) of Code Section 20-2-82, relating
 58 to contract terms for local school systems requesting flexibility, as follows:

59 "(e) The state board shall be authorized to approve a waiver or variance request of
 60 specifically identified state rules, regulations, policies, and procedures or provisions of this
 61 chapter upon the inclusion of such request in the local school system's proposed contract
 62 and in accordance with subsection (b) of Code Section 20-2-84. The goal for each waiver

63 and variance shall be improvement of student performance. The state board shall not be
 64 authorized to waive or approve variances on any federal, state, and local rules, regulations,
 65 court orders, and statutes relating to civil rights; insurance; the protection of the physical
 66 health and safety of school students, employees, and visitors; conflicting interest
 67 transactions; the prevention of unlawful conduct; any laws relating to unlawful conduct in
 68 or near a public school; any reporting requirements pursuant to Code Section 20-2-320 or
 69 Chapter 14 of this title; ~~or the requirements of Code Section 20-2-211.1;~~ or the
 70 requirements in subsection (c) of Code Section 20-2-327. A local school system that has
 71 received a waiver or variance shall remain subject to the provisions of Part 3 of Article 2
 72 of Chapter 14 of this title, the requirement that it shall not charge tuition or fees to its
 73 students except as may be authorized for local boards by Code Section 20-2-133, and shall
 74 remain open to enrollment in the same manner as before the waiver request."

75

SECTION 3.

76 Said chapter is further amended by revising Code Section 20-2-140, relating to the
 77 establishment of competencies and a uniformly sequenced core curriculum, as follows:

78 "20-2-140.

79 (a) The State Board of Education shall establish competencies that each student is
 80 expected to master prior to completion of the student's public school education. The state
 81 board shall also establish competencies for which each student should be provided
 82 opportunities, at the discretion of the student and the student's parents, to master. Based
 83 upon these foregoing competencies, the state board shall adopt a uniformly sequenced core
 84 curriculum for grades kindergarten through 12. Each local unit of administration shall
 85 include this uniformly sequenced core curriculum as the basis for its own curriculum,
 86 although each local unit may sequence, expand, and enrich this curriculum to the extent it
 87 deems necessary and appropriate for its students and communities.

88 (b) The State Board of Education, working with the Board of Regents of the University
 89 System of Georgia and the Board of Technical and Adult Education, shall establish college
 90 and career readiness competency standards in reading, writing, and mathematics aligned
 91 with the core curriculum adopted by the state board pursuant to subsection (a) of this Code
 92 section with the level of performance necessary to meet college-readiness standards in the
 93 state's technical colleges, community colleges, state colleges, and universities and in other
 94 advanced training programs.

95 (c) The Board of Technical and Adult Education shall require its institutions to accept core
 96 curriculum coursework completed by high school students for purposes of admission into
 97 its institutions. This Code section shall apply beginning with students entering such
 98 postsecondary institutions in the fall of 2012."

99

SECTION 4.

100 Said chapter is further amended by revising subsection (a) of Code Section 20-2-157, relating
 101 to the uniform reporting system for certain purposes, as follows:

102 "(a) It is the intent of the General Assembly to establish a uniform reporting system to be
 103 used as one of the criteria to determine eligibility of students seeking ~~enrollment in~~
 104 ~~postsecondary courses pursuant to Code Section 20-2-161.1 or seeking~~ educational
 105 scholarships, grants, or loan assistance administered by the Georgia Student Finance
 106 Commission pursuant to Article 7 of Chapter 3 of this title."

107

SECTION 5.

108 Said chapter is further amended by adding new Code sections to read as follows:

109 "20-2-159.1.

110 No later than July 1, 2012, the Department of Education shall develop, and the State Board
 111 of Education shall approve, state models and curriculum framework for the following
 112 focused programs of study, as defined in Code Section 20-2-326, including, but not limited
 113 to:

- 114 (1) Agriculture, food, and natural resources;
- 115 (2) Architecture and construction;
- 116 (3) Arts, audio-video technology, and communications;
- 117 (4) Business, management, and administration;
- 118 (5) Education and training;
- 119 (6) Finance;
- 120 (7) Health science;
- 121 (8) Hospitality and tourism;
- 122 (9) Human services;
- 123 (10) Information technology;
- 124 (11) Law, public safety, and security;
- 125 (12) Manufacturing;
- 126 (13) Government and public administration;
- 127 (14) Marketing, sales, and service;
- 128 (15) Science, technology, engineering, and mathematics; and
- 129 (16) Transportation, distribution, and logistics.

130 Such focused programs of study may be combined around these and other related clusters.

131 20-2-159.2.

132 Stronger coordination between high schools and institutions of higher education is
 133 necessary to prepare students for more challenging postsecondary endeavors and to lessen

134 the need for academic remediation in college, thereby reducing the costs of higher
 135 education for students, families, and the state. To this end, the State Board of Education,
 136 the Board of Regents of the University System of Georgia, and the Board of Technical and
 137 Adult Education shall:

138 (1) Develop policies to ensure that students who complete the core curriculum
 139 established pursuant to Code Section 20-2-140 will meet the requirements for purposes
 140 of admission into a postsecondary institution, such as grade point average and readiness
 141 levels in reading, writing, and mathematics, without having to take remedial coursework.

142 Such policies shall:

143 (A) Establish the benchmarks for college readiness and the method in which students
 144 can demonstrate readiness in reading, writing, and mathematics for postsecondary
 145 coursework upon completing the core curriculum; and

146 (B) Set the conditions for ensuring college readiness;

147 (2) Define college-readiness standards in reading, writing, and mathematics needed for
 148 success in advanced training, certificate programs, and programs leading to an associate's
 149 or bachelor's degree;

150 (3) Identify one or more state-wide common assessments to determine postsecondary
 151 readiness in reading, writing, and mathematics and inform students of their performance
 152 on such assessments no later than the end of tenth grade;

153 (4) Develop transitional courses in reading, writing, and mathematics with common
 154 standards, syllabus, and instruction materials for eleventh and twelfth grade students who
 155 fail to meet readiness standards; and

156 (5) Ensure dual credit courses reflect postsecondary coursework.

157 20-2-159.3.

158 (a) The competencies and curricula established for career, technical, and agricultural
 159 education courses pursuant to Code Section 20-2-140 shall include embedded standards in
 160 academic core subject areas, as appropriate. In establishing such competencies and
 161 curricula, the state board shall work to ensure that the coursework meets postsecondary
 162 requirements for acceptance of credit for such coursework at the postsecondary level. Such
 163 courses shall be taught by a highly qualified teacher in the academic content and trained
 164 or experienced in contextualized learning using project based methods; by a highly
 165 qualified career, technical, and agricultural education teacher who has completed a
 166 state-approved training program to strengthen academic content and has passed a
 167 state-approved exam for demonstrating mastery of academic content; or by a team made
 168 up of a highly qualified teacher in the academic content and a highly qualified career,
 169 technical, and agricultural education teacher working together to teach the course.

170 (b) Local school systems and individual charter schools may develop and implement
171 career, technical, and agricultural courses with embedded standards in academic core
172 subjects areas, including, but not limited to, English, language arts, science, social studies,
173 and mathematics.

174 (c) For an academic core subject area for which an end-of-course assessment has been
175 adopted pursuant to Code Section 20-2-281, students shall be given the opportunity to take
176 such end-of-course assessment upon completion of the career, technical, and agricultural
177 education course that includes embedded standards in such academic core subject area,
178 unless such student has already passed such end-of-course assessment.

179 (d) Students who successfully complete a course in career, technical, and agricultural
180 education that includes embedded standards in academic core subject areas, as adopted or
181 approved by the state board, shall receive course credit for both the career, technical, and
182 agricultural education course as well as for the academic core coursework embedded in
183 such course.

184 (e) The guidelines shall limit the number of academic credits earned through career,
185 technical, and agricultural education courses for any student to three credits and shall
186 ensure acceptance of such credits for purposes of admission into a postsecondary
187 institution. Further, such a credit shall count only once toward high school diploma
188 requirements unless the course requires expanded time to cover the academic and career,
189 technical, and agricultural education content found in both the academic and the career,
190 technical, and agricultural education course.

191 20-2-159.4.

192 (a) The State Board of Education, in consultation with the Board of Regents of the
193 University System of Georgia and the Board of Technical and Adult Education, shall adopt
194 policies and establish guidelines for awarding units of high school credit to students based
195 on a demonstration of subject area competency, instead of or in combination with
196 completion of courses of classroom instruction. Such policies and guidelines shall clearly
197 delineate the manner in which students can earn credit, how mastery of standards will be
198 assessed, how locally developed assessments will be reviewed and approved, how such
199 credit will be recorded on high school transcripts, and when outcomes as a result of these
200 policies and guidelines will be reviewed. The state board shall adopt such policies and
201 establish guidelines, and such policies and guidelines shall be applicable beginning with
202 the 2012-2013 school year.

203 (b) Students may earn credits through:

204 (1) The completion of courses; or

205 (2) The testing out or otherwise demonstrating mastery of the course content.

206 (c) The state board shall identify assessments, including various commercial assessments,
 207 for immediate use for students to demonstrate subject area competency, which may
 208 include, but not be limited to:

209 (1) Advanced placement exams;

210 (2) ACT course assessment;

211 (3) Industry-specific certificates and credentials for career, technical, and agricultural
 212 education courses;

213 (4) College Level Examination Program (CLEP) exams; and

214 (5) Nationally recognized foreign language performance assessments.

215 The state board shall establish a process for reviewing and approving performance based
 216 assessments developed commercially, by the state, or by a local school system. Initially,
 217 the state board shall limit the number of credits earned through such educational options to
 218 three credits per student until the practice is proven to yield student outcomes at least
 219 equivalent to those found in standard seat-time courses. The policy shall ensure that credit
 220 for demonstrated proficiency is reported on student transcripts in the same way that
 221 seat-time credit is recorded. The state board shall review such policy after three years to
 222 determine if student outcomes from these educational options are equivalent to, if not better
 223 than, student outcomes in traditional courses.

224 (d) Each local school system shall comply with the state board's plan adopted pursuant to
 225 this Code section and shall award units of high school credit in accordance with such plan.
 226 Local boards of education and charter schools shall establish implementation policies and
 227 shall be prohibited from setting policies that negate or otherwise prohibit access to such
 228 plan.

229 20-2-159.5.

230 (a) For purposes of this Code section, the term:

231 (1) 'Dual credit course' means any arrangement whereby an eligible student takes one or
 232 more courses, including virtual courses, at or through an eligible institution while still
 233 enrolled as a public high school student and receives credit both at the high school and
 234 at the eligible institution.

235 (2) 'Eligible institution' means any eligible postsecondary institution as defined in
 236 paragraph (7) of Code Section 20-3-519.

237 (3) 'Eligible student' means a student entering ninth through twelfth grades who attends
 238 a public high school in this state and takes at least two courses per day on campus.

239 (4) 'Secondary credit' means high school credit for dual credit courses taken at an eligible
 240 institution.

241 (b) The department, the Board of Regents of the University System of Georgia, and the
242 Board of Technical and Adult Education shall jointly:

243 (1) Establish the conditions under which high school students may earn dual credit for
244 coursework completed while in high school. Such conditions shall include demonstration
245 by students as to college readiness in reading, writing, and mathematics required for
246 advanced training leading to a certificate, an associate's degree, or a bachelor's degree in
247 order to receive dual credit as set forth in this Code section. A student who meets reading
248 and writing readiness standards shall qualify to enroll in any dual credit course except in
249 courses that require a strong mathematics foundation. To qualify for such mathematics
250 courses, students shall be required to meet mathematics readiness standards as set forth
251 in this Code section. Students who fail to meet these conditions may enroll in such
252 courses if they enroll concurrently in specially designed courses to address their deficits
253 in reading and writing or mathematics or both and shall be awarded dual credit if they
254 meet readiness standards before or at the point they successfully complete the dual credit
255 course;

256 (2) Develop appropriate forms and counseling guidelines for dual credit courses and
257 shall make such forms and guidelines available to local school systems and eligible
258 institutions. No later than the first day of April each year, each local school system shall
259 provide general information about dual credit courses, including such forms, to all its
260 eighth through eleventh grade students. A local school system shall also provide
261 counseling services in accordance with the counseling guidelines provided by the
262 department to such students and their parents or guardians before the students enroll in
263 a dual credit course. Prior to participating in a dual credit course, the student and the
264 student's parent or guardian shall sign the form provided by the school system or by an
265 eligible institution stating that they have received the counseling specified in this Code
266 section and that they understand the responsibilities that shall be assumed in participating
267 in the dual credit program; and

268 (3) Establish policies to ensure that dual credit courses reflect college-level work in order
269 for such courses to yield dual credit, which shall include:

270 (A) Establishing college-readiness standards in reading, writing, and mathematics that
271 students must meet to enroll in dual credit courses;

272 (B) Setting minimum eligibility requirements for earning college credit while in high
273 school and for all state postsecondary institutions to apply to both academic and career,
274 technical, and agricultural education dual credit courses;

275 (C) Establishing the same content standards, requirements for faculty, course syllabi,
276 and end-of-course exams for dual credit academic and career, technical, and agricultural
277 education courses, whether taught to high school or college students;

278 (D) Developing a state-wide system for the transfer of college credits earned through
 279 dual credit courses; and

280 (E) Determining how dual enrollment will be monitored to assure programs meet state
 281 standards for college-level work.

282 (c) Any eligible student may apply to an eligible institution to take one or more dual credit
 283 courses at or through that institution which are approved for secondary credit in accordance
 284 with the conditions established pursuant to subsection (d) of this Code section. If accepted
 285 at an eligible institution, such eligible student may take any such course at that institution,
 286 whether or not the course is taught during the regular public school day, and receive
 287 secondary credit therefor under the conditions provided in this Code section.

288 (d)(1) A local school system shall grant academic credit to an eligible student enrolled
 289 in a dual credit course in an eligible institution if that course has been approved by the
 290 State Board of Education or in a virtual course approved by the State Board of Education
 291 if such student successfully completes such course. The State Board of Education shall
 292 approve any such course which is substantially comparable to a state approved course.
 293 The secondary credit granted shall be for the comparable course approved by the State
 294 Board of Education. Upon completion of an eligible institution's approved course, the
 295 eligible student shall be responsible for requesting that the institution notify the student's
 296 local school system regarding his or her grade in that course.

297 (2) Secondary school credits granted for dual credit courses under paragraph (1) of this
 298 subsection shall be counted toward State Board of Education graduation requirements and
 299 subject area requirements of the local school system. Evidence of successful completion
 300 of each course and secondary credits granted shall be included in the eligible student's
 301 secondary school records.

302 (3) Following the grant of postsecondary credit for successful completion of any dual
 303 enrollment course, when a student enrolls in an eligible institution after leaving secondary
 304 school, that eligible institution shall award postsecondary credit for any dual credit course
 305 successfully completed on the same basis on which such credits are customarily awarded.
 306 An eligible institution shall not charge a student for the award of such postsecondary
 307 credit.

308 (4) The department shall consult the Board of Regents of the University System of
 309 Georgia and the State Board of Technical and Adult Education in developing rules and
 310 regulations to be recommended to the State Board of Education for approval regarding
 311 the eligibility criteria for dual credit courses.

312 (e) The State Board of Education shall establish rules and regulations relating to applicable
 313 state and federal testing requirements for eligible students participating in dual credit
 314 courses.

315 (f) Any person who knowingly makes or furnishes any false statement or
 316 misrepresentation, or who accepts such statement or misrepresentation knowing it to be
 317 false, for the purpose of enabling an eligible institution to obtain wrongfully any payment
 318 under this Code section shall be guilty of a misdemeanor.

319 (g) Students enrolled in the Georgia Youth Apprenticeship Program under Code Section
 320 20-2-161.2 shall be eligible to earn dual credit upon completing a planned training
 321 experience under guidelines developed by the State Board of Education and the Board of
 322 Technical and Adult Education provided students meet postsecondary readiness established
 323 in reading and writing and mathematics for the particular advanced training program or
 324 associate's degree."

325

SECTION 6.

326 Said article is further amended by revising subsection (a) of Code Section 20-2-160, relating
 327 to determination of enrollment by instructional program, as follows:

328 "(a) The State Board of Education shall designate the specific dates upon which two counts
 329 of students enrolled in each instructional program authorized under this article shall be
 330 made each school year and by which the counts shall be reported to the Department of
 331 Education. The initial enrollment count shall be made after October 1 but prior to
 332 November 17 and the final enrollment count after March 1 but prior to May 1. The report
 333 shall indicate the student's specific assigned program for each one-sixth segment of the
 334 school day on the designated reporting date. No program shall be indicated for a student
 335 for any one-sixth segment of the school day that the student is assigned to a study hall; a
 336 noncredit course; a course recognized under this article or by state board policy as an
 337 enrichment course, except a driver education course; a course which requires participation
 338 in an extracurricular activity for which enrollment is on a competitive basis; a course in
 339 which the student serves as a student assistant to a teacher, in a school office, or in the
 340 media center, except when such placement is an approved work site of a recognized career
 341 or vocational program; an individual study course for which no outline of course objectives
 342 is prepared in writing prior to the beginning of the course; a course taken through the
 343 Georgia Virtual School pursuant to Code Section 20-2-319.1; or any other course or
 344 activity so designated by the state board. For the purpose of this Code section, the term
 345 'enrichment course' means a course which does not dedicate a major portion of the class
 346 time toward the development and enhancement of one or more student competencies as
 347 adopted by the state board under Code Section 20-2-140. A program shall not be indicated
 348 for a student for any one-sixth segment of the school day for which the student is not
 349 enrolled in an instructional program or has not attended a class or classes within the
 350 preceding ten days; nor shall a program be indicated for a student for any one-sixth

351 segment of the school day for which the student is charged tuition or fees or is required to
 352 provide materials or equipment beyond those authorized pursuant to Code Section
 353 20-2-133. ~~A student who is enrolled in an eligible institution under the program~~
 354 ~~established in Code Section 20-2-161.1 may be counted for the high school program for~~
 355 ~~only that portion of the day that the student is attending the high school for those segments~~
 356 ~~that are eligible to be counted under this subsection. A student who is enrolled in a dual~~
 357 credit course pursuant to Code Section 20-2-159.5 shall be counted for the high school
 358 program or other appropriate program for each segment in which the student is attending
 359 such dual credit course. The state board shall adopt such regulations and criteria as
 360 necessary to ensure objective and true counts of students in state approved instructional
 361 programs. The state board shall also establish criteria by which students shall be counted
 362 as resident or nonresident students, including specific circumstances which may include,
 363 but not be limited to, students attending another local school system under court order or
 364 under the terms of a contract between two local school systems. If a local school system
 365 has a justifiable reason, it may seek authority from the state board to shift full-time
 366 equivalent program counts from the designated date to a requested alternate date."

367 **SECTION 7.**

368 Said chapter is further amended by repealing and reserving Code Section 20-2-161.1, relating
 369 to enrollment in postsecondary courses.

370 **SECTION 8.**

371 Said chapter is further amended by revising subsection (b) of Code Section 20-2-244, relating
 372 to waivers to improve student performance, as follows:

373 "(b) The State Board of Education is not authorized to waive any federal, state, and local
 374 rules, regulations, court orders, and statutes relating to civil rights; insurance; the protection
 375 of the physical health and safety of school students, employees, and visitors; conflicting
 376 interest transactions; the prevention of unlawful conduct; any laws relating to unlawful
 377 conduct in or near a public school; any reporting requirements pursuant to Code Section
 378 20-2-320 or Chapter 14 of this title; ~~or the requirements of Code Section 20-2-211.1; or the~~
 379 requirements in subsection (c) of Code Section 20-2-327. A school or school system that
 380 has received a waiver shall remain subject to the provisions of Part 3 of Article 2 of
 381 Chapter 14 of this title, the requirement that it shall not charge tuition or fees to its students
 382 except as may be authorized for local boards by Code Section 20-2-133, and shall remain
 383 open to enrollment in the same manner as before the waiver request."

384

SECTION 9.

385 Said chapter is further amended by revising subsection (b) of Code Section 20-2-2065,
 386 relating to waiver of provisions of Title 20 for charter schools, as follows:

387 "(b) In determining whether to approve a charter petition or renew an existing charter, the
 388 local board and state board shall ensure that a charter school, or for charter systems, each
 389 school within the system, shall be:

390 (1) A public, nonsectarian, nonreligious, nonprofit school that is not home based,
 391 provided that a charter school's nonprofit status shall not prevent the school from
 392 contracting for the services of a for profit entity and that nothing in this Code section
 393 shall preclude the use of computer and Internet based instruction for students in a virtual
 394 or remote setting;

395 (2) Subject to the control and management of the local board of the local school system
 396 in which the charter school is located, as provided in the charter and in a manner
 397 consistent with the Constitution, if a local charter school;

398 (3) Subject to the supervision of the state board, as provided in the charter and in a
 399 manner consistent with the Constitution, if a state chartered special school;

400 (4) Organized and operated as a nonprofit corporation under the laws of this state;
 401 provided, however, that this paragraph shall not apply to any charter petitioner that is a
 402 local school, local school system, or state or local public entity;

403 (5) Subject to all federal, state, and local rules, regulations, court orders, and statutes
 404 relating to civil rights; insurance; the protection of the physical health and safety of
 405 school students, employees, and visitors; conflicting interest transactions; and the
 406 prevention of unlawful conduct;

407 (6) Subject to all laws relating to unlawful conduct in or near a public school;

408 (7) Subject to an annual financial audit conducted by the state auditor or, if specified in
 409 the charter, by an independent certified public accountant licensed in this state;

410 (8) Subject to the provisions of Part 3 of Article 2 of Chapter 14 of this title, and such
 411 provisions shall apply with respect to charter schools whose charters are granted or
 412 renewed on or after July 1, 2000;

413 (9) Subject to all reporting requirements of Code Section 20-2-160, subsection (e) of
 414 Code Section 20-2-161, Code Section 20-2-320, and Code Section 20-2-740;

415 (10) Subject to the requirement that it shall not charge tuition or fees to its students
 416 except as may be authorized for local boards by Code Section 20-2-133;

417 (11) Subject to the provisions of Code Section 20-2-1050 requiring a brief period of
 418 quiet reflection; ~~and~~

419 (12) Subject to the provisions of Code Section 20-2-211.1 relating to fingerprint and
 420 criminal background checks; and

421 (13) Subject to the provisions of subsection (c) of Code Section 20-2-327 relating to
 422 individual graduation plans."

423 **SECTION 10.**

424 Chapter 14 of Title 34 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, relating to the Georgia
 425 Workforce Investment Board, is amended in Code Section 34-14-3, relating to the
 426 establishment of the Governor's Office of Workforce Development, as follows:

427 "34-14-3.

428 (a)(1) The Governor's Office of Workforce Development is hereby established to
 429 implement state workforce development policy as directed by the Governor and to serve
 430 as staff to the board.

431 (2) In addition, the office is authorized to establish certification in soft skills, which may
 432 include, but not be limited to, skills relating to punctuality, ability to learn, and ability to
 433 work in a team, as a discrete and complementary component to the current assessment
 434 system utilized in Georgia to measure an individual worker's skill and knowledge in the
 435 areas of applied mathematics, reading for information, and locating information to
 436 determine and indicate to potential employers such worker's level of work readiness.
 437 Such certification is intended to assist both the existing workforce as well as the state's
 438 emerging workforce. The office is authorized to explore local, national, and international
 439 soft skills programs for the purpose of developing a soft skills certification system.

440 (3) The office is authorized and encouraged to work with the state's emerging workforce,
 441 including rising and graduating high school students, with the goal that, upon graduation,
 442 high school students have both a diploma and certification in soft skills and work
 443 readiness to enable them to be successful in postsecondary education, a career pathway,
 444 or both. The office may collaborate with the Department of Education and the Board of
 445 Technical and Adult Education to facilitate coordination with high schools so that high
 446 school students can attain certification in soft skills and work readiness.

447 (b) The Governor's Office of Workforce Development shall have an executive director
 448 appointed by the Governor whose duties are to implement state-wide workforce
 449 development policy as directed by the Governor, to serve as workforce development policy
 450 advisor to the Governor, and to serve as executive director to the board.

451 (c) The Governor's Office of Workforce Development shall be attached to the Office of
 452 Planning and Budget for administrative purposes only."

453 **SECTION 11.**

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

456

SECTION 12.

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