

House Bill 131 (COMMITTEE SUBSTITUTE)

By: Representatives Clark of the 101<sup>st</sup>, Coleman of the 97<sup>th</sup>, Kaiser of the 59<sup>th</sup>, Jones of the 47<sup>th</sup>, Taylor of the 173<sup>rd</sup>, and others

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED  
AN ACT

1 To amend Part 3 of Article 6 of Chapter 2 of Title 20 of the Official Code of Georgia  
2 Annotated, relating to educational programs, so as to define a certain term; to provide that  
3 dual credit courses shall be treated in the same manner as advanced placement and  
4 international baccalaureate courses for purposes of determining eligibility for the HOPE  
5 scholarship; to provide for related matters; to repeal conflicting laws; and for other purposes.

6 BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF GEORGIA:

7 **SECTION 1.**

8 Part 3 of Article 6 of Chapter 2 of Title 20 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated,  
9 relating to educational programs, is amended by revising Code Section 20-2-157, relating to  
10 uniform reporting system for certain purposes and academic eligibility requirements to  
11 receive HOPE scholarship, as follows:

12 "20-2-157.

13 (a) It is the intent of the General Assembly to establish a uniform reporting system to be  
14 used as one of the criteria to determine eligibility of students seeking educational  
15 scholarships, grants, or loan assistance administered by the Georgia Student Finance  
16 Commission pursuant to Article 7 of Chapter 3 of this title.

17 (a.1) As used in this Code section, the term 'dual credit course' shall have the same  
18 meaning as in Code Section 20-2-159.5.

19 (b) Each school system and private school shall adopt the reporting system described in  
20 this subsection for purposes of identifying and qualifying graduating seniors for the HOPE  
21 scholarship program and other programs identified in this Code section:

22 (1) Each school system and private school shall transmit, in a manner and at times  
23 prescribed by the Georgia Student Finance Commission, an electronic transcript of  
24 courses and course grades for each graduating senior that reflects the complete high  
25 school academic record of the student, including scores on any state tests required for  
26 graduation, the grading scales used by the school system or private school for the time

27 periods referenced by the transcripts, and any other pertinent information as determined  
 28 by the Georgia Student Finance Commission. Each grade reported by a school system  
 29 or private school to the commission for the purpose of calculating the grade point average  
 30 for HOPE scholarship eligibility shall be the actual grade earned by the student, with no  
 31 weighting or addition of points by the local school system or private school;

32 (2) The Georgia Student Finance Commission shall calculate a grade point average for  
 33 the purpose of determining eligibility for the HOPE scholarship from these electronic  
 34 transcripts and shall notify students of their eligibility and high schools as to the  
 35 eligibility of students;

36 (3) For students otherwise qualified and enrolling as freshmen students in eligible public  
 37 or private postsecondary institutions for the first time on May 1, 2007, or thereafter,  
 38 except as otherwise provided in paragraph (3.1) of this subsection, the Georgia Student  
 39 Finance Commission shall calculate grade point averages for determining eligibility for  
 40 the HOPE scholarship and other scholarships referenced in this Code section as follows:

41 (A) For students receiving a college preparatory diploma, each grade for a student in  
 42 attempted coursework in English, mathematics, science, social studies, and foreign  
 43 language that would, if successfully completed, satisfy a core graduation requirement  
 44 for the college preparatory curriculum shall be equated to a grade on a 4.0 scale, such  
 45 that a grade of 'A' = 4.0, a grade of 'B' = 3.0, a grade of 'C' = 2.0, a grade of 'D' = 1.0,  
 46 and a grade of 'F' = 0; or

47 (B) For students receiving a career/technical diploma, each grade for a student in  
 48 attempted coursework in English, mathematics, science, and social studies that would,  
 49 if successfully completed, satisfy a core graduation requirement for the career/technical  
 50 curriculum shall be equated to a grade on a 4.0 scale, such that a grade of 'A' = 4.0, a  
 51 grade of 'B' = 3.0, a grade of 'C' = 2.0, a grade of 'D' = 1.0, and a grade of 'F' = 0.

52 Grades for coursework that is classified as advanced placement, a dual credit course, or  
 53 international baccalaureate shall be weighted uniformly by the Georgia Student Finance  
 54 Commission in calculating the overall grade point averages for students, provided that  
 55 the weighting of such course grades is uniformly applied to all students in ~~the~~ this state  
 56 taking the specified coursework. The sum of the equated grades shall be divided by the  
 57 number of course grades, adjusted for term length, to yield a grade point average on a 4.0  
 58 scale;

59 (3.1) For students otherwise qualified and enrolling in the ninth grade for the first time  
 60 during the 2008-2009 school year and thereafter, the Georgia Student Finance  
 61 Commission shall calculate grade point averages for determining eligibility for the HOPE  
 62 scholarship and other scholarships referenced in this Code section by equating each grade  
 63 for a student in attempted coursework in English, mathematics, science, social studies,

64 and foreign language during the student's ninth, tenth, eleventh, or twelfth grade year to  
 65 a grade on a 4.0 scale, such that a grade of 'A' = 4.0, a grade of 'B' = 3.0, a grade of 'C' =  
 66 2.0, a grade of 'D' = 1.0, and a grade of 'F' = 0. Grades for coursework that is classified  
 67 as advanced placement, a dual credit course, or international baccalaureate shall be  
 68 weighted uniformly by the Georgia Student Finance Commission in calculating the  
 69 overall grade point averages for students, provided that the weighting of such course  
 70 grades is uniformly applied to all students in ~~the~~ this state taking the specified  
 71 coursework. Any student earning grades reported for purposes of this paragraph for  
 72 coursework provided for by an individualized education program may petition the  
 73 Georgia Student Finance Commission for a special weighting of such grades or a waiver  
 74 of the grade point average requirement for HOPE scholarship eligibility. The sum of the  
 75 equated grades shall be divided by the number of course grades, adjusted for term length,  
 76 to yield a grade point average on a 4.0 scale; and

77 (4) Qualification for the HOPE scholarship shall be determined from the grade point  
 78 average calculated either as set out in paragraph (3) of this subsection or as set out in  
 79 paragraph (3.1) of this subsection for students enrolling in the ninth grade for the first  
 80 time in a Georgia public school during the 2008-2009 school year and thereafter.  
 81 Beginning May 1, 2007, students with grade point averages equal to or in excess of 3.0  
 82 on the 4.0 scale with a college preparatory diploma shall meet achievement standards for  
 83 the HOPE scholarship; students receiving a career/technical diploma shall meet  
 84 achievement standards for the HOPE scholarship with a grade point average equal to or  
 85 in excess of 3.2 on a 4.0 scale. For students enrolling in the ninth grade for the first time  
 86 in a Georgia public school during the 2008-2009 school year and thereafter, such students  
 87 with grade point averages equal to or in excess of 3.0 on a 4.0 scale shall meet  
 88 achievement standards for the HOPE scholarship. This paragraph shall apply regardless  
 89 of when a student graduated from high school and regardless of such student's eligibility  
 90 status prior to May 1, 2007.

91 (c)(1) Beginning with the school year beginning after May 1, 2011, each school system  
 92 and private school shall adopt the reporting system described in this subsection for  
 93 purposes of determining potential eligibility for freshman, sophomore, and junior high  
 94 school students for the HOPE scholarship program and other programs identified in this  
 95 Code section.

96 (2) Each school system and private school shall transmit to the Georgia Student Finance  
 97 Commission, in such manner and at such times as the commission may prescribe, an  
 98 electronic transcript of courses and course grades for each freshman, sophomore, and  
 99 junior high school student that reflects the complete high school academic record of the  
 100 student, including scores on any state tests required for graduation, the grading scales

101 used by the school system or private school for the time periods referenced by the  
102 transcripts, and any other pertinent information as determined by the Georgia Student  
103 Finance Commission. Each grade reported by a school system or private school to the  
104 commission for the purpose of calculating the grade point average for potential HOPE  
105 scholarship eligibility shall be the actual grade earned by the student with no weighting  
106 or addition of points by the school system or private school.

107 (3) The Georgia Student Finance Commission shall calculate a grade point average for  
108 the purpose of determining eligibility for the HOPE scholarship from these electronic  
109 transcripts and shall notify students of their potential eligibility and high schools as to the  
110 potential eligibility of students.

111 (d) Beginning with students graduating from high school on or after May 1, 2015, in order  
112 to be eligible to receive a HOPE scholarship, a student shall receive credit in at least two  
113 courses prior to graduating from high school from the following categories:

114 (1) Advanced math, such as Advanced Algebra and Trigonometry, Math III, or an  
115 equivalent or higher course;

116 (2) Advanced science, such as Chemistry, Physics, Biology II, or an equivalent or higher  
117 course;

118 (3) Advanced placement courses in core subjects;

119 (3.1) Dual credit courses in core subjects;

120 (4) International baccalaureate courses in core subjects;

121 (5) Courses taken at a unit of the University System of Georgia in core subjects where  
122 such courses are not remedial and developmental courses, as defined in Code Section  
123 20-3-519; or

124 (6) Advanced foreign language courses.

125 Students may take one or more courses in each category; provided, however, that a course  
126 may only be counted one time. The Georgia Student Finance Commission shall be  
127 authorized to promulgate rules and regulations necessary to carry out the intent of this  
128 subsection.

129 (e) Beginning with students graduating from high school on or after May 1, 2016, in order  
130 to be eligible to receive a HOPE scholarship, a student shall receive credit in at least three  
131 courses prior to graduating from high school from the following categories:

132 (1) Advanced math, such as Advanced Algebra and Trigonometry, Math III, or an  
133 equivalent or higher course;

134 (2) Advanced science, such as Chemistry, Physics, Biology II, or an equivalent or higher  
135 course;

136 (3) Advanced placement courses in core subjects;

137 (3.1) Dual credit courses in core subjects;

- 138 (4) International baccalaureate courses in core ~~courses~~ subjects;
- 139 (5) Courses taken at a unit of the University System of Georgia in core subjects where
- 140 such courses are not remedial and developmental courses, as defined in Code Section
- 141 20-3-519; or
- 142 (6) Advanced foreign language courses.

143 Students may take one or more courses in each category; provided, however, that a course

144 may only be counted one time. The Georgia Student Finance Commission shall be

145 authorized to promulgate rules and regulations necessary to carry out the intent of this

146 subsection.

147 (f) Beginning with students graduating from high school on or after May 1, 2017, in order

148 to be eligible to receive a HOPE scholarship, a student shall receive credit in at least four

149 courses prior to graduating from high school from the following categories:

- 150 (1) Advanced math, such as Advanced Algebra and Trigonometry, Math III, or an
- 151 equivalent or higher course;
- 152 (2) Advanced science, such as Chemistry, Physics, Biology II, or an equivalent or higher
- 153 course;
- 154 (3) Advanced placement courses in core subjects;
- 155 (3.1) Dual credit courses in core subjects;
- 156 (4) International baccalaureate courses in core ~~courses~~ subjects;
- 157 (5) Courses taken at a unit of the University System of Georgia in core subjects where
- 158 such courses are not remedial and developmental courses, as defined in Code Section
- 159 20-3-519; or
- 160 (6) Advanced foreign language courses.

161 Students may take one or more courses in each category; provided, however, that a course

162 may only be counted one time. The Georgia Student Finance Commission shall be

163 authorized to promulgate rules and regulations necessary to carry out the intent of this

164 subsection."

165 **SECTION 2.**

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