

Senate Resolution 1201

By: Senators Jackson of the 2nd and Harbison of the 15th

A RESOLUTION

1 Urging the State Board of Education to study and adopt guidelines for integrating Braille
2 instruction in the classroom so as to enable every blind or visually impaired child to
3 communicate and learn effectively and efficiently; and for other purposes.

4 WHEREAS, the Georgia General Assembly has continually demonstrated its full support of
5 education for all Georgia citizens through a myriad of educational programs that promote the
6 attainment of the knowledge and skills necessary to meet the demands of the new age work
7 force; and

8 WHEREAS, it is in the best interest of all of Georgia's citizens that persons who are blind
9 or visually impaired be afforded the same and equal access to elementary, secondary, and
10 postsecondary educational opportunities; and

11 WHEREAS, the key component of achieving an education is literacy, and it is widely
12 recognized that persons who are blind or visually impaired use Braille as an essential tool to
13 achieve true literacy; and

14 WHEREAS, instructional materials and textbooks are the primary tools to provide successful
15 educational experiences to students, and access to instructional materials and textbooks in
16 Braille is the primary means to provide successful educational experiences to blind or
17 visually impaired students; and

18 WHEREAS, inaccessibility to such materials in an accessible format denies blind or visually
19 impaired students the opportunity to be successful in their educational pursuits and become
20 competitive, gainfully employed citizens upon graduation; and

21 WHEREAS, if publishers of textbooks and other instructional materials sold to local boards
22 of education in this state furnished an electronic version in the National Instructional

23 Materials Accessibility Standard format to the National Instructional Materials Access
24 Center, this would provide readily available access to blind or visually impaired students; and

25 WHEREAS, equally important is that teachers providing academic instruction to blind or
26 visually impaired students are able to read and write in Braille themselves and that they are
27 properly trained in how to teach in Braille; and

28 WHEREAS, there can be no doubt that the ability to read and write in Braille competently
29 and efficiently is the key to education, employment, and success for the blind and visually
30 impaired; and

31 WHEREAS, study and guidelines focused on this critically important matter are needed to
32 ensure that equal opportunities in education are available to every blind or visually impaired
33 child.

34 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE that this body urges the State
35 Board of Education to study these issues and develop guidelines for the implementation of
36 practices and procedures for integrating Braille instruction in the classroom so as to enable
37 every blind or visually impaired child to communicate and learn effectively and efficiently
38 in the classroom and, therefore, be successful in all walks of life.

39 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Secretary of the Senate is authorized and directed
40 to transmit an appropriate copy of this resolution to the State Board of Education.