

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED  
AN ACT

1 To amend Title 20 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, relating to education, so as to  
2 authorize the Georgia Student Finance Commission to provide for weighted grade point  
3 averages in excess of 4.0 for international baccalaureate, advanced placement, and dual credit  
4 course grades for purposes of determining eligibility for the HOPE scholarship for incoming  
5 freshmen; to provide for related matters; to repeal conflicting laws; and for other purposes.

6 BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF GEORGIA:

**SECTION 1.**

7  
8 Title 20 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, relating to education, is amended by  
9 revising subsection (b) of Code Section 20-2-157, relating to the uniform reporting system  
10 for certain purposes and academic eligibility requirements to receive HOPE scholarships, as  
11 follows:

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

15 (1) Each school system and private school shall transmit, in a manner and at times  
16 prescribed by the Georgia Student Finance Commission, an electronic transcript of  
17 courses and course grades for each graduating senior that reflects the complete high  
18 school academic record of the student, including scores on any state tests required for  
19 graduation, the grading scales used by the school system or private school for the time  
20 periods referenced by the transcripts, and any other pertinent information as determined  
21 by the Georgia Student Finance Commission. Each grade reported by a school system  
22 or private school to the commission for the purpose of calculating the grade point average  
23 for HOPE scholarship eligibility shall be the actual grade earned by the student, with no  
24 weighting or addition of points by the local school system or private school;

25 (2) The Georgia Student Finance Commission shall calculate a grade point average for  
26 the purpose of determining eligibility for the HOPE scholarship from these electronic

27 transcripts and shall notify students of their eligibility and high schools as to the  
28 eligibility of students;

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

34 (A) For students receiving a college preparatory diploma, each grade for a student in  
35 attempted coursework in English, mathematics, science, social studies, and foreign  
36 language that would, if successfully completed, satisfy a core graduation requirement  
37 for the college preparatory curriculum shall be equated to a grade on a 4.0 scale, such  
38 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,  
39 and a grade of 'F' = 0; or

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

45 Grades for coursework that is classified as advanced placement, a dual credit course, or  
46 international baccalaureate shall be weighted uniformly by the Georgia Student Finance  
47 Commission in calculating the overall grade point averages for students, provided that  
48 the weighting of such course grades is uniformly applied to all students in this state  
49 taking the specified coursework. The sum of the equated grades shall be divided by the  
50 number of course grades, adjusted for term length, to yield a grade point average on a 4.0  
51 scale; provided, however, that the Georgia Student Finance Commission, in its discretion,  
52 may weight coursework that is classified as advanced placement, a dual credit course, or  
53 international baccalaureate in such a manner that such coursework's grade exceeds 4.0  
54 on a 4.0 scale;

55 (3.1) For students otherwise qualified and enrolling in the ninth grade for the first time  
56 during the 2008-2009 school year and thereafter, the Georgia Student Finance  
57 Commission shall calculate grade point averages for determining eligibility for the HOPE  
58 scholarship and other scholarships referenced in this Code section by equating each grade  
59 for a student in attempted coursework in English, mathematics, science, social studies,  
60 and foreign language during the student's ninth, tenth, eleventh, or twelfth grade year to  
61 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' =  
62 2.0, a grade of 'D' = 1.0, and a grade of 'F' = 0. Grades for coursework that is classified  
63 as advanced placement, a dual credit course, or international baccalaureate shall be

64 weighted uniformly by the Georgia Student Finance Commission in calculating the  
 65 overall grade point averages for students, provided that the weighting of such course  
 66 grades is uniformly applied to all students in this state taking the specified coursework.  
 67 The sum of the equated grades shall be divided by the number of course grades, adjusted  
 68 for term length, to yield a grade point average on a 4.0 scale; provided, however, that the  
 69 Georgia Student Finance Commission may, in its discretion, weight coursework that is  
 70 classified as advanced placement, a dual credit course, or international baccalaureate, in  
 71 such a manner that such coursework's grade exceeds 4.0 on a 4.0 scale; and

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

## 86 SECTION 2.

87 Said title is further amended in Code Section 20-3-519, relating to definitions relative to  
 88 HOPE scholarships and grants, by revising paragraphs (12) and (27) as follows:

89 "(12) 'Grade point average' means the numbered grade average calculated using a 4.0  
 90 scale; provided, however, that in the discretion of the Georgia Student Finance  
 91 Commission, for purposes of calculating the high school grade point average pursuant to  
 92 Code Section 20-2-157 of high school students who complete coursework that is  
 93 classified as advanced placement, a dual credit course, or international baccalaureate,  
 94 such student's high school grade point average may exceed 4.0 on a 4.0 scale."

95 "(27) 'Zell Miller Scholarship Scholar' means a student ~~that~~ who has met the applicable  
 96 eligibility requirements to receive a HOPE scholarship in accordance with Code Section  
 97 20-3-519.2 and:

98 (A) As an incoming freshman:

99 (i) Having graduated from an eligible high school with a high school grade point  
100 average of at least 3.7 calculated in accordance with Code Section 20-2-157 and  
101 having received a score of at least 1,200 combined critical reading score and math  
102 score on a single administration of the SAT or an ACT composite scale score of at  
103 least 26;

104 (ii) Having graduated from an eligible high school as a valedictorian or salutatorian;  
105 or

106 (iii) Having completed a home study program meeting the requirements of subsection  
107 (c) of Code Section 20-2-690, having received a score of at least 1,200 combined  
108 critical reading score and math score on a single administration of the SAT or an ACT  
109 composite scale score of at least 26, and earning a cumulative grade point average of  
110 at least 3.3 at an eligible postsecondary institution at the end of the quarter or semester  
111 in which the student has attempted 45 quarter hours or 30 semester hours, provided  
112 that such student shall be eligible to receive a retroactive scholarship for such  
113 student's freshman year to be paid at the end of the freshman year; and

114 (B) As a sophomore, junior, senior, or first professional student who met the  
115 requirements of subparagraph (A) of this paragraph, having a cumulative grade point  
116 average of at least 3.3 at the checkpoints set forth in paragraph (1) of subsection (b) of  
117 Code Section 20-3-519.2. Notwithstanding the foregoing, a student ~~that~~ who entered  
118 an eligible postsecondary institution as a freshman between July 1, 2007, and June 30,  
119 2011, and met the requirements of subparagraph (A) of this paragraph may become a  
120 Zell Miller Scholarship Scholar as a sophomore, junior, senior, or first professional  
121 student.

122 A student ~~that~~ who loses eligibility to be a Zell Miller Scholarship Scholar for any reason  
123 may regain eligibility one time if the student requalifies at one of the checkpoints set  
124 forth in paragraph (1) of subsection (b) of Code Section 20-3-519.2."

### 125 SECTION 3.

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