

The House Committee on Higher Education offers the following substitute to HB 6:

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 provide for weighted grade point averages in excess of 4.0 for international baccalaureate,
3 advanced placement, and dual credit course grades in science, technology, engineering, and
4 mathematics (STEM) courses for purposes of determining eligibility for the HOPE
5 scholarship for incoming freshmen; to provide for related matters; to provide for contingent
6 effectiveness; to repeal conflicting laws; and for other purposes.

7 BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF GEORGIA:

8 **SECTION 1.**

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

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

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

27 (2) The Georgia Student Finance Commission shall calculate a grade point average for
 28 the purpose of determining eligibility for the HOPE scholarship and Zell Miller
 29 scholarship from these electronic transcripts and shall notify students of their eligibility
 30 and high schools as to the eligibility of students;

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

36 (A) For students receiving a college preparatory diploma, each grade for a student in
 37 attempted coursework in English, mathematics, science, social studies, and foreign
 38 language that would, if successfully completed, satisfy a core graduation requirement
 39 for the college preparatory curriculum shall be equated to a grade on a 4.0 scale, such
 40 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,
 41 and a grade of 'F' = 0; or

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

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

57 (3.1) For students otherwise qualified and enrolling in the ninth grade for the first time
 58 during the 2008-2009 school year and thereafter, the Georgia Student Finance
 59 Commission shall calculate grade point averages for determining eligibility for the HOPE
 60 scholarship and other scholarships referenced in this Code section by equating each grade
 61 for a student in attempted coursework in English, mathematics, science, social studies,
 62 and foreign language during the student's ninth, tenth, eleventh, or twelfth grade year to
 63 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' =

64 2.0, a grade of 'D' = 1.0, and a grade of 'F' = 0. Grades for coursework that is classified
 65 as advanced placement, a dual credit course, or international baccalaureate shall be
 66 weighted uniformly by the Georgia Student Finance Commission in calculating the
 67 overall grade point averages for students, provided that the weighting of such course
 68 grades is uniformly applied to all students in this state taking the specified coursework.
 69 The sum of the equated grades shall be divided by the number of course grades, adjusted
 70 for term length, to yield a grade point average on a 4.0 scale; provided, however, that the
 71 Georgia Student Finance Commission shall weight coursework in science, technology,
 72 engineering, and mathematics (STEM) that is classified as advanced placement, dual
 73 credit, or international baccalaureate in such a manner that such coursework's grade could
 74 exceed 4.0 on a 4.0 scale; and

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

89

SECTION 2.

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

92 "(12) 'Grade point average' means the numbered grade average calculated using a 4.0
 93 scale; provided, however, that for purposes of calculating the high school grade point
 94 average pursuant to Code Section 20-2-157 of high school students who complete
 95 coursework in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) that is
 96 classified as advanced placement, dual credit, or international baccalaureate, such
 97 student's high school grade point average may exceed 4.0 on a 4.0 scale."

98 "(27) 'Zell Miller Scholarship Scholar' means a student ~~that~~ who has met the applicable
 99 eligibility requirements to receive a HOPE scholarship in accordance with Code Section
 100 20-3-519.2 and:

101 (A) As an incoming freshman:

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

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

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

117 (B) As a sophomore, junior, senior, or first professional student who met the
 118 requirements of subparagraph (A) of this paragraph, having a cumulative grade point
 119 average of at least 3.3 at the checkpoints set forth in paragraph (1) of subsection (b) of
 120 Code Section 20-3-519.2. Notwithstanding the foregoing, a student ~~that~~ who entered
 121 an eligible postsecondary institution as a freshman between July 1, 2007, and June 30,
 122 2011, and met the requirements of subparagraph (A) of this paragraph may become a
 123 Zell Miller Scholarship Scholar as a sophomore, junior, senior, or first professional
 124 student.

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

128 **SECTION 3.**

129 This Act shall become effective only if funds are specifically appropriated for the purposes
 130 of this Act in an appropriations Act enacted by the General Assembly.

131 **SECTION 4.**

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