

Senate Bill 3

By: Senators Tippins of the 37th, Wilkinson of the 50th, Brass of the 28th, Cowser of the 46th, Anderson of the 24th and others

AS PASSED SENATE

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 enact the "Creating Opportunities Needed Now
3 to Expand Credentialed Training (CONNECT) Act"; to provide for industry credentialing
4 for students who complete certain focused programs of study; to provide for industry
5 credentialing in individual graduation plans; to provide for the identification of certain
6 critical and emerging occupations; to provide for a short title; to provide for related matters;
7 to repeal conflicting laws; and for other purposes.

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

9 **SECTION 1.**

10 This Act shall be known and may be cited as the "Creating Opportunities Needed Now to
11 Expand Credentialed Training (CONNECT) Act."

12 **SECTION 2.**

13 Chapter 2 of Title 20 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, relating to elementary and
14 secondary education, is amended by revising Code Section 20-2-145.1, relating to career
15 education, as follows:

16 "20-2-145.1.

17 The State Board of Education shall prescribe a minimum course of study in career
18 education for students in grades ~~kindergarten~~ six through 12. Such minimum course of
19 study shall be age appropriate and shall include, but not be limited to, ~~career awareness,~~
20 career exploration; and career oriented learning experiences. Career oriented learning
21 experiences shall include, but not be limited to, participation in work based learning
22 programs such as internships, apprenticeships, cooperative education, or employability skill
23 development. The State Board of Education shall ensure that career oriented learning
24 experiences include rigorous industry credentialing, as defined in Code Section 20-2-326,

25 if such rigorous industry credentialing has been created or endorsed by Georgia employers."

26 **SECTION 3.**

27 Said chapter is further amended by revising Code Section 20-2-159.1, relating to focused
28 programs of study, as follows:

29 "20-2-159.1.

30 (a) The ~~No later than July 1, 2013,~~ the Department of Education shall develop, and the
31 State Board of Education shall approve, state models and industry required content
32 standards, after consultation with industries in Georgia and in collaboration with the
33 Technical College System of Georgia and the University System of Georgia to ensure
34 alignment with postsecondary opportunities, for the following focused programs of study,
35 as defined in Code Section 20-2-326, including, but not limited to:

- 36 (1) Agriculture, food, and natural resources;
37 (2) Architecture and construction;
38 (3) Arts, audio-video technology, and communications;
39 (4) Business, management, and administration;
40 (5) Education and training;
41 (6) Finance;
42 (7) Health science;
43 (8) Hospitality and tourism;
44 (9) Human services;
45 (10) Information technology;
46 (11) Law, public safety, and security;
47 (12) Manufacturing;
48 (13) Government and public administration;
49 (14) Marketing, sales, and service;
50 (15) Science, technology, engineering, and mathematics; ~~and~~
51 (16) Transportation, distribution, and logistics; and
52 (17) Energy.

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

54 (b) The focused programs of study established pursuant to this Code section may include
55 or be revised to include industry certifications or industry credentialing, as defined in Code
56 Section 20-2-326, pertinent to any such focused program of study. After consultation with
57 employers and industries in Georgia, the Department of Education and the Technical
58 College System of Georgia shall jointly establish a list of industry credentials that are
59 required by Georgia employers. Such list shall be made available on the Department of
60 Education and the Technical College System of Georgia websites. Such list shall be

61 annually reviewed and updated as appropriate and made available prior to the beginning
 62 of the annual competitive grant application process provided for in subsection (j) of Code
 63 Section 20-2-260."

64 **SECTION 4.**

65 Said chapter is further amended by revising subsection (c) of Code Section 20-2-159.4,
 66 relating to policies and guidelines for awarding units of high school credit based on
 67 demonstrated proficiency, as follows:

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

- 71 (1) Advanced placement exams;
- 72 (2) ACT course assessment;
- 73 (3) Industry-specific certificates and ~~credentials~~ industry credentialing, as defined in
 74 Code Section 20-2-326, for career, technical, and agricultural education courses;
- 75 (4) College Level Examination Program (CLEP) exams; and
- 76 (5) Nationally recognized foreign language performance assessments.

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

86 **SECTION 5.**

87 Said chapter is further amended by revising subsection (b) of Code Section 20-2-161.2,
 88 relating to work based learning programs, as follows:

89 "(b) Any student aged ~~16~~ 15 or over in any public school in this state may enroll in a work
 90 based learning program which is offered at that public school and which is approved for
 91 secondary credit by the department. Such student shall be granted release time from the
 92 public school to work as a student learner for any business or governmental enterprise
 93 which is approved by the local work based learning coordinator as a qualified employer
 94 pursuant to this Code section and work based learning program guidelines established by
 95 the department. A student shall receive secondary credit for such work based learning only

96 under the conditions established by the department. The department is authorized to
 97 establish work based learning programs and guidelines to assist local school systems in
 98 operating such programs and to promulgate such policies, standards, procedures, criteria,
 99 and administrative requirements as may be necessary to implement the program by rules
 100 and regulations. The work based learning programs established pursuant to this Code
 101 section may include, but not be limited to, employability skill development, ~~service~~
 102 ~~learning~~, cooperative education, internships, and youth apprenticeships. The department
 103 shall collaborate with the Department of Labor and the Technical College System of
 104 Georgia in developing such policies and procedures. The department's work based learning
 105 programs shall include but not be limited to the following:

- 106 (1) A detailed training agreement and training plan between employer and student that
 107 identifies specific work tasks that will develop workplace competency;
- 108 (2) A minimum of one unit of credit in a career pathway course related to the work based
 109 learning placement;
- 110 (3) A minimum number of hours of on-the-job training as required in the department's
 111 guidelines for awarding secondary credit;
- 112 (4) On-site evaluation of the student's performance;
- 113 (5) Training remediation as necessary at the school site;
- 114 (6) A broad range of skills but shall be focused on skills related to the student's career
 115 pathway;
- 116 (7) Development of materials by the business, industry, and labor community in
 117 conjunction with the department to promote the awareness of work based learning
 118 opportunities for high school students and encourage recruitment; and
- 119 (8) Structural linkage between secondary and postsecondary components of the program
 120 leading to the awarding of a high school diploma and a postsecondary credential, which
 121 may include industry credentialing, as defined in Code Section 20-2-326, related to the
 122 student's career pathway."

123 **SECTION 6.**

124 Said chapter is further amended by revising paragraph (5) of and adding a new paragraph to
 125 subsection (b) and by revising paragraph (5) of subsection (c) and subsections (j) and (k) of
 126 Code Section 20-2-260, relating to capital outlay funds generally, as follows:

127 "(5) 'Educational facilities' shall include buildings, fixtures, and equipment necessary for
 128 the effective and efficient operation of the program of public education required by this
 129 article, which, without limiting the generality of the foregoing, shall include classrooms,
 130 libraries, rooms and space for physical education, space for fine arts, restrooms,
 131 specialized laboratories, cafeterias, media centers, building equipment, building fixtures,

132 furnishings, career, technical, and agricultural education labs and facilities to support
133 industry credentialing, related exterior facilities, landscaping and paving, and similar
134 items which the State Board of Education may determine necessary. The following
135 facilities are specifically excluded: swimming pools, tracks, stadiums, and other facilities
136 or portions of facilities used primarily for athletic competition and the central and area
137 administrative offices of local units of administration."

138 "(8.1) 'Industry credentialing' shall have the same meaning as in Code Section 20-2-326."

139 "(5) To develop a state-wide needs assessment for purposes of planning and developing
140 policies, anticipating state-wide needs for educational facilities, and providing assistance
141 to local school systems in developing educational facilities plans. The state-wide needs
142 assessment shall be developed from, among other sources, vital statistics published by the
143 Department of Public Health, census data published by the Bureau of the Census, local
144 school system educational facilities and real property inventories, educational facilities
145 surveys, full-time equivalent student projection research, and educational facilities
146 construction plans; shall reflect circumstances where rapid population growth is caused
147 by factors not reflected in full-time equivalent student projection research; and shall give
148 priority to elementary school construction. In addition, the state board shall develop a
149 consistent, systematic research approach to full-time equivalent student projections which
150 will be used in the development of needs within each local unit. Projections shall not be
151 confined to full-time equivalent resident students but shall be based on full-time
152 equivalent student counts which include full-time equivalent nonresident students,
153 whether or not such full-time equivalent nonresident students attend school pursuant to
154 a contract between local school systems and shall also account for properties owned by
155 the Technical College System of Georgia for the purposes of a college and career
156 academy. The full-time equivalent projection shall be calculated in accordance with
157 subsection (m) of this Code section. The survey team will use such projections in
158 determining the improvements needed for the five-year planning period. The state board
159 shall also develop schedules for allowable square footage and cost per square foot and
160 review these schedules annually. The cost estimate for each recommended improvement
161 included in the plan shall be based on these schedules. Any increase in cost or square
162 footage for a project beyond that allowed by state board schedules for such projects shall
163 be the responsibility of the local school system and shall not count toward present or
164 future required local participation. The schedules for allowable square footage and cost
165 per square foot shall be specified in regulations by the State Board of Education;"

166 "(j) The State Board of Education shall establish an annual competitive grant program for
167 renovation, modernization, replacement, or purchase of equipment for the enhancement of
168 programs that are currently certified or in the process of achieving industry certification in

169 educational facilities that align with industry credentials on the list developed pursuant to
 170 Code Section 20-2-159.1 or have been (1) linked to an occupation that addresses a critical
 171 local or state-wide workforce need, (2) linked to an occupation that is identified as part of
 172 the skilled trade industry, or (3) linked to an occupation that is identified in an emerging
 173 field or technology. The State Board of Education in awarding grants shall give priority
 174 to local programs that demonstrate local industry support and postsecondary partnerships
 175 that are linked to the verified industry need. ~~Reserved.~~

176 (k) The State Board of Education shall request separate appropriations for each of the
 177 following categories:

- 178 (1) Regular entitlements pursuant to subsection (g) of this Code section;
 179 (2) Regular advance funding projects pursuant to paragraphs (1) through (4) of
 180 subsection (h) of this Code section;
 181 (3) Construction projects resulting from the consolidation of schools across local school
 182 system lines pursuant to paragraph (5) of subsection (h) of this Code section;
 183 (4) Construction projects resulting from merger of local school systems pursuant to
 184 subsection (a) of Code Section 20-2-291 or by agreement between two or more local
 185 school systems; and
 186 (5) Advance funding projects for consolidation or reorganization of schools pursuant to
 187 subsection (i) of this Code section; and
 188 (6) Equipment grants to enhance industry credentialing pursuant to subsection (j) of this
 189 Code section."

190 **SECTION 7.**

191 Said chapter is further amended by revising Code Section 20-2-326, relating to definitions
 192 relative to the "Building Resourceful Individuals to Develop Georgia's Economy Act," as
 193 follows:

194 "20-2-326.

195 For purposes of this part, the term:

- 196 (1) 'Articulation' means agreement between a high school and a postsecondary institution
 197 regarding the awarding of both secondary and postsecondary credit for a dual enrollment
 198 course.
 199 (2) 'Choice technical high school' means a high school, other than the high school to
 200 which a student is assigned by virtue of his or her residence and attendance zone, which
 201 is designed to prepare a high school student for postsecondary education and for
 202 employment in a career field. A choice technical high school may be operated by a local
 203 school system or a technical school or college. A choice technical high school may also

204 be operated as a charter school under a governance board composed of parents,
205 employers, and representatives from the local board of education.

206 (3) 'Chronically low-performing high school' means a public high school in this state that
207 has a graduation rate of less than 60 percent for three consecutive years, as determined
208 in accordance with methodology established by the National Governors Association's
209 Compact on High School Graduation Data, or that has received an unacceptable rating
210 for three consecutive years, as defined by the Office of Student Achievement.

211 (4) 'College and career academy' means a specialized school established as a charter
212 school or pursuant to a contract for a strategic waivers school system or charter system,
213 which formalizes a partnership that demonstrates a collaboration between business,
214 industry, and community stakeholders to advance work force development between one
215 or more local boards of education, a private individual, a private organization, or a state
216 or local public entity in cooperation with one or more postsecondary institutions.

217 (5) 'Focused program of study' means a rigorous academic core combined with a focus
218 in mathematics and science; a focus in humanities, fine arts, and foreign language; or a
219 coherent sequence of career pathway courses that is aligned with graduation requirements
220 established by the State Board of Education and content standards established pursuant
221 to Part 2 of this article that prepares a student for postsecondary education or immediate
222 employment after high school graduation.

223 (6) 'Graduation plan' means a student specific plan developed in accordance with
224 subsection (c) of Code Section 20-2-327 detailing the courses necessary for a high school
225 student to graduate from high school and to successfully transition to postsecondary
226 education and the work force.

227 (7) 'Industry certification' means a process of program evaluation that ensures that
228 individual programs meet state, national, or international industry standards in the areas
229 of curriculum, teacher qualification, lab specifications, equipment, and industry
230 involvement.

231 (7.1) 'Industry credentialing' means a process through which students are assessed by an
232 independent third-party certifying entity using predetermined standards for knowledge,
233 skills, and competencies, resulting in the award of individual certification or state
234 licensure or an occupational competency that is state, nationally, or internationally
235 recognized.

236 (8) 'Public college or university' means a two-year or four-year college, university, or
237 other institution under the auspices of the Board of Regents of the University System of
238 Georgia.

239 (9) 'Small learning community' means an autonomous or semiautonomous small learning
240 environment within a large high school which is made up of a subset of students and

241 teachers for a two-year, three-year, or four-year period. The goal of a small learning
 242 community is to achieve greater personalization of learning with each community led by
 243 a principal or instructional leader. A small learning community blends academic studies
 244 around a broad career or academic theme where teachers have common planning time to
 245 connect teacher assignments and assessments to college and career readiness standards.
 246 Students voluntarily apply for enrollment in a small learning community but must be
 247 accepted, and such enrollment must be approved by the student's parent or guardian. A
 248 small learning community also includes a college and career academy organized around
 249 a specific career theme which integrates academic and career instruction, provides work
 250 based learning opportunities, and prepares students for postsecondary education and
 251 employment, with support through partnerships with local employers, community
 252 organizations, and postsecondary institutions.

253 (10) 'Teacher adviser system' means a system where an individual professional educator
 254 in the school assists a small group of students and their parents or guardians throughout
 255 the students' high school careers to set postsecondary goals and help them prepare
 256 programs of study, utilizing assessments and other data to track academic progress on a
 257 regular basis; communicates frequently with parents or guardians; and provides
 258 advisement, support, and encouragement as needed.

259 (11) 'Technical school or college' means a ~~school~~, college, institution, or other branch of
 260 the Technical College System of Georgia."

261 SECTION 8.

262 Said chapter is further amended by revising subsection (c) of Code Section 20-2-327, relating
 263 to recognition of advanced proficiency/honors courses and counseling and development of
 264 individual graduation plans, as follows:

265 "(c) Beginning with the 2010-2011 school year, students in the sixth, seventh, and eighth
 266 grades shall be provided counseling, advisement, career awareness, career interest and
 267 career demand inventories, and information to assist them in evaluating their academic
 268 skills and career interests. Before the end of the second semester of the eighth grade,
 269 students shall develop an individual graduation plan in consultation with their parents,
 270 guardians, or individuals appointed by the parents or guardians to serve as their designee.
 271 High school students shall be provided guidance, advisement, and counseling annually that
 272 will enable them to successfully complete their individual graduation plans, preparing them
 273 for a seamless transition to postsecondary study, further training, or employment, including
 274 information regarding occupations, degrees, industry credentials, certifications, and
 275 technical skills; work-ready skills in demand by Georgia employers through the
 276 department's career pipeline website; and other career related inventories made available

277 through the Technical College System of Georgia or the Office of Student Achievement.

278 An individual graduation plan shall:

279 (1) Include rigorous academic core subjects and focused ~~course work~~ coursework in
280 mathematics and science or in humanities, fine arts, and foreign language or sequenced
281 career pathway ~~course work~~ coursework;

282 (2) Incorporate provisions of a student's Individualized Education Program (IEP), where
283 applicable;

284 (3) Align educational and broad career goals and a student's course of study;

285 (4) Be based on the student's selected academic and career focus area as approved by the
286 student's parent or guardian;

287 (5) Include experience based, career oriented learning experiences which may include,
288 but not be limited to, participation in work based learning programs such as internships,
289 apprenticeships, cooperative education, ~~service learning~~, and employability skill
290 development;

291 (6) Include any applicable industry credentialing that pertains to the student's focused
292 program of study;

293 ~~(6)(7)~~ Include opportunities for postsecondary studies through articulation, dual
294 enrollment, and joint enrollment;

295 ~~(7)(8)~~ Be flexible to allow change in the course of study but be sufficiently structured to
296 meet graduation requirements and qualify the student for admission to postsecondary
297 education; and

298 ~~(8)(9)~~ Be approved by the student and the student's parent or guardian with guidance
299 from the student's school counselor or teacher adviser.

300 An individual graduation plan shall be reviewed annually, and revised, if appropriate, upon
301 approval by the student and the student's parent or guardian with guidance from the
302 student's school counselor or teacher adviser. An individual graduation plan may be
303 changed at any time throughout a student's high school career upon approval by the student
304 and the student's parent or guardian with guidance from the student's school counselor or
305 teacher adviser."

306 **SECTION 9.**

307 Said chapter is further amended by adding a new Code section to read as follows:

308 "20-2-327.1.

309 (a) The State Board of Education, in collaboration with the Technical College System of
310 Georgia, shall facilitate and encourage industry credentialing for career, technical, and
311 agricultural education programs utilizing existing career pathways and individual
312 graduation plans. Further, local school systems are authorized and encouraged to align

313 competency based career education, along with enhanced work based learning experiences,
 314 as provided for in Code Section 20-2-161.2, to facilitate and make available to students
 315 opportunities to receive industry credentialing in critical and emerging occupations in
 316 Georgia.

317 (b) No later than December 31, 2017, and annually thereafter, the Department of
 318 Education shall produce a report identifying the industry credentialing attainment levels
 319 for the previous calendar year. Such report shall include the current and projected regional
 320 business and industry needs for the purpose of establishing annual goals and strategies to
 321 increase attainment rates of industry credentialing, including the development of additional
 322 industry credentials to enhance current industry certified programs."

323 **SECTION 10.**

324 Said chapter is further amended by revising Code Section 20-2-328, relating to a competitive
 325 grant program, as follows:

326 "20-2-328.

327 (a) Subject to appropriations by the General Assembly, the State Board of Education shall
 328 establish a competitive grant program for local school systems to implement school reform
 329 measures in selected high schools. The state board shall establish program requirements
 330 in accordance with the provisions of this Code section and shall establish grant criteria,
 331 which shall ~~include that priority~~ encourage alignment with industry credentialing, including
 332 postsecondary partnerships between the Technical College System of Georgia and college
 333 and career academies and other career, technical, and agricultural education programs in
 334 high schools. Priority for reform grants shall be given to chronically low-performing high
 335 schools in accordance with subsection (b) of this Code section or to high schools enhancing
 336 career, technical, and agricultural education programs to allow for greater attainment of
 337 industry credentialing in accordance with subsection (b.1) of this Code section.

338 (b)(1) The State Board of Education shall develop an evidence based model program for
 339 chronically low-performing high schools receiving a reform grant pursuant to this Code
 340 section for addressing at-risk students, which shall include various programs and
 341 curricula that have proven to be effective for at-risk students focusing on:

342 (A) Identification of students at risk for being poorly prepared for the next grade level
 343 or for dropping out of school;

344 (B) Strengthening retention of ninth grade students in school and reducing high failure
 345 rates;

346 (C) Improving more students' performances to grade level standards in reading and
 347 mathematics by the end of ninth grade;

348 (D) Assisting students and their parents or guardians in setting an outcome career and
349 educational goal and identifying a focused program of study to achieve such goal; and
350 (E) Assisting students in learning and applying study skills, coping skills, and other
351 habits that produce successful students and adults.

352 (2) The at-risk model program shall include:

353 (A) Diagnostic assessments to identify strengths and weaknesses in the core academic
354 areas;

355 (B) A process for identifying at-risk students, closely monitored by the Department of
356 Education in collaboration with local school systems to ensure that students are being
357 properly identified and provided timely, appropriate guidance and assistance and to
358 ensure that no group is disproportionately represented; and

359 (C) An evaluation component in each high school to ensure the programs are providing
360 students an opportunity to graduate with a high school diploma.

361 (3) The at-risk model program may include various components designed to result in
362 more students facilitating a successful start in high school and passing ninth grade such
363 as:

364 (A) Utilizing a flexible schedule that increases students' time in core language
365 arts/reading and mathematics studies designed to eliminate academic deficiencies;

366 (B) Maintaining a student-teacher ratio in ninth grade that is no higher than any other
367 grade level ratio in high school;

368 (C) Utilizing experienced and effective teachers as leaders for teacher teams in ninth
369 grade to improve instructional planning, delivery, and reteaching strategies;

370 (D) Assigning students to a teacher mentor who will meet with them frequently to
371 provide planned lessons on study skills and other habits of success that help students
372 become independent learners and who will help them receive the assistance they need
373 to successfully pass ninth grade; and

374 (E) Including ninth grade career courses which incorporate a series of miniprojects
375 throughout the school year that require the application of ninth grade level reading,
376 mathematics, and science skills to complete while students learn to use a range of
377 technology and help students explore a range of educational and career options that will
378 assist them in formulating post high school goals and give them a reason to stay in
379 school and work toward achieving their stated goals.

380 (b.1) The State Board of Education shall develop criteria for reform grants for high schools
381 that enhance career, technical, and agricultural education programs to allow for greater
382 attainment of industry credentialing including postsecondary partnerships between the
383 Technical College System of Georgia and college and career academies and other career,
384 technical, and agricultural education programs in high schools. The grants may also be

385 used to require that career, technical, and agricultural education teachers participate in
 386 industry credentialing training to teach courses that lead to industry credentialing.

387 (c) The State Board of Education shall promulgate rules and regulations for ~~chronically~~
 388 ~~low-performing~~ high schools receiving a reform grant pursuant to this Code section to
 389 make the high schools more relevant to and effective for all students. Such rules shall
 390 encourage high schools to implement a comprehensive school reform research based model
 391 that focuses on:

- 392 (1) Setting high expectations for all students;
 393 (2) Personalizing individual graduation plans for students;
 394 (3) Developing small learning communities or college and career academies with a
 395 rigorous academic foundation and emphasis in broad career fields of study;
 396 (4) Using project based instruction embedded with strong academics to improve
 397 relevancy in learning;
 398 (5) Fostering collaboration among academic and career/technical teachers;
 399 (6) Implementing nontraditional scheduling in ninth grade for students behind in their
 400 grade level;
 401 (7) Promoting parental involvement; and
 402 (8) Training teachers to work with low-performing students and their parents or
 403 guardians.
 404 (d) This Code section shall be subject to appropriations by the General Assembly."

405 **SECTION 11.**

406 Said chapter is further amended by revising Code Section 20-2-329, relating to requirements
 407 for high schools that receive a reform grant, as follows:

408 "20-2-329.

409 High schools that receive a reform ~~grant~~ grants as chronically low-performing high schools
 410 pursuant to subsection (b) of Code Section 20-2-328 shall:

- 411 (1) Provide focused programs of study which are designed to provide a well-rounded
 412 education for students by fostering artistic creativity, critical thinking, and self-discipline
 413 through the teaching of academic content, knowledge, and skills that students will use in
 414 the workplace, further education, and life. The focused programs of study, whether
 415 provided at a choice technical high school, a college and career academy, a traditional
 416 high school, or on site at a technical school or college or a public college or university,
 417 shall be aligned with graduation requirements established by the State Board of Education
 418 and content standards established pursuant to Part 2 of this article, including, at a
 419 minimum, four years of mathematics, Algebra I and higher, and four years of English,
 420 with an emphasis on developing reading and writing skills to meet college and career

421 readiness standards or including high school diploma requirements established pursuant
422 to Code Section 20-2-149.2;

423 (2) Implement a teacher adviser system;

424 (3) Provide students in the ninth through twelfth grades information on educational
425 programs offered in high school, in technical and community colleges, in colleges and
426 universities, and through work based learning programs and how these programs can lead
427 to a variety of career fields. Local school systems shall provide career awareness and
428 exploratory opportunities such as field trips, speakers, educational and career information
429 centers, job shadowing, and classroom centers to assist students and their parents or
430 guardians, with guidance from school counselors and teacher advisers, in revising, if
431 appropriate, the individual graduation plan developed pursuant to subsection (c) of Code
432 Section 20-2-327;

433 (4) Enroll students no later than ninth grade into one of the following options for earning
434 a high school diploma and preparing students for postsecondary education and a career
435 which will include a structured program of academic study with in-depth studies in:

436 (A) Mathematics and science;

437 (B) Humanities, fine arts, and foreign language; or

438 (C) A career pathway that leads to passing an ~~employer certification~~ industry
439 credentialing exam in a high demand, high skill, or high wage career field or to an
440 associate's degree or bachelor's degree.

441 The awarding of a special education diploma to any disabled student who has not
442 completed all of the requirements for a high school diploma, but who has completed his
443 or her Individualized Education Program (IEP) shall be deemed to meet the requirements
444 of this paragraph;

445 (5) Implement the at-risk model program developed by the State Board of Education
446 pursuant to subsection (b) of Code Section 20-2-328;

447 (6) Comply with the rules and regulations promulgated by the State Board of Education
448 for chronically low-performing high schools pursuant to subsection (c) of Code Section
449 20-2-328; and

450 (7) Schedule annual conferences to assist students and their parents or guardians in
451 setting educational and career goals and creating individual graduation plans beginning
452 with students in the eighth grade and continuing through high school. These conferences
453 shall include, but are not limited to, assisting the student in identifying educational and
454 career interests and goals, selecting a career and academic focus area, and developing an
455 individual graduation plan."

456

SECTION 12.

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