

House Bill 763

By: Representatives Nix of the 69<sup>th</sup>, Belton of the 112<sup>th</sup>, Chandler of the 105<sup>th</sup>, Coleman of the 97<sup>th</sup>, and Stovall of the 74<sup>th</sup>

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED  
AN ACT

1 To amend Subpart 2 of Article 16 of Chapter 2 of Title 20 of the Official Code of Georgia  
2 Annotated, relating to compulsory attendance for students in elementary and secondary  
3 education, so as to expand the student attendance protocol committees to school climate; to  
4 provide for recommendations; to provide for periodic review of recommendations; to provide  
5 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 Subpart 2 of Article 16 of Chapter 2 of Title 20 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated,  
9 relating to compulsory attendance for students in elementary and secondary education, is  
10 amended by revising Code Section 20-2-690.2, relating to the establishment of student  
11 attendance protocol committees, membership and protocol, summary of penalties for failure  
12 to comply, and reporting, as follows:

13 "20-2-690.2.

14 (a) The chief judge of the superior court of each county shall establish a student attendance  
15 ~~protocol~~ and school climate committee for its such county. The purpose of the committee  
16 shall be to ensure coordination and cooperation among officials, agencies, and programs  
17 involved in compulsory attendance issues, to reduce the number of unexcused absences  
18 from school, ~~and~~ to increase the percentage of students present to take tests which are  
19 required to be administered under the laws of this state, and to improve the school climate  
20 in each school. The chief judge is responsible for ensuring that all members of the  
21 committee are notified of their responsibility to the committee and shall call the first  
22 meeting of the committee in each county. The committee shall elect a chairperson and may  
23 elect other officers.

24 (b) Each local board of education shall participate in, consider, and make publicly  
25 available, including, but not limited to, posting in a conspicuous location, its decision  
26 regarding the recommendations of the committee as provided in this Code section.

27 Independent school systems may participate in the committee in the county where the  
 28 system is located. Independent school systems whose geographic area encompasses more  
 29 than one county may select one of such counties in which to participate. An independent  
 30 school system that elects not to participate in the committee of the county where it is  
 31 located shall request that the chief judge of the superior court of a county encompassed by  
 32 its geographic area to establish an independent student attendance ~~protocol~~ and school  
 33 climate committee in the same manner as established for the county school system.

34 (c) Each of the following agencies, officials, or programs shall designate a representative  
 35 to serve on the committee:

- 36 (1) The chief judge of the superior court;
- 37 (2) The juvenile court judge or judges of the county;
- 38 (3) The district attorney for the county;
- 39 (4) The solicitor-general of state court, if the county has a state court;
- 40 (5) The Department of Juvenile Justice, which may include representatives from area  
 41 juvenile detention facilities as defined in Code Section 49-4A-1;
- 42 (6) The superintendent, a certificated school employee, and a local school board member  
 43 from each public school system in the county and a certificated school social worker from  
 44 each public school system, if any are employed by the school system;
- 45 (7) The sheriff of the county;
- 46 (8) The chief of police of the county police department;
- 47 (9) The chief of police of each municipal police department in the county;
- 48 (10) The county department of family and children services;
- 49 (11) The county board of health;
- 50 (12) The county mental health organization;
- 51 (13) The county Family Connection commission, board, or authority, or other county  
 52 agency, board, authority, or commission having the duty and authority to study problems  
 53 of families, children, and youth and provide services to families, children, and youth; and
- 54 (14) The court approved community based risk reduction program established by the  
 55 juvenile court in accordance with Code Section 15-11-38, if such a program has been  
 56 established.

57 (d) The committee thus established may appoint such additional members as necessary and  
 58 proper to accomplish the purposes of the committee.

59 (e)(1) Each committee shall, by June 1, 2005, adopt a written student attendance protocol  
 60 for its county school system and for each independent school system within its  
 61 geographic boundaries which shall be filed with the Department of Education. The  
 62 protocol shall outline in detail the procedures to be used in identifying, reporting,  
 63 investigating, and prosecuting cases of alleged violations of Code Section 20-2-690.1,

64 relating to mandatory school attendance. The protocol shall outline in detail methods for  
 65 determining the causes of failing to comply with compulsory attendance and  
 66 appropriately addressing the issue with children and their parents or guardians. The  
 67 protocol shall also include recommendations for policies relating to tardiness. The  
 68 Department of Education shall provide model school attendance protocols, if requested  
 69 by the committee.

70 ~~(f)~~(2) A copy of the protocol shall be furnished to each agency, official, or program  
 71 within the county that has any responsibility in assisting children and their parents or  
 72 guardians in complying with Code Section 20-2-690.1.

73 ~~(g)~~(3) The committee shall write the summary of possible consequences and penalties  
 74 for failing to comply with compulsory attendance under Code Section 20-2-690.1 for  
 75 children and their parents, guardians, or other persons who have control or charge of  
 76 children for distribution by schools in accordance with Code Section 20-2-690.1. The  
 77 summary of possible consequences for children shall include possible dispositions for  
 78 children in need of services and possible denial of a driver's license for a child in  
 79 accordance with Code Section 40-5-22.

80 (f) The committee shall review and make recommendations for policies relating to school  
 81 climate for the purpose of promoting positive gains in student achievement scores, student  
 82 and teacher morale, community support, and student and teacher attendance, while  
 83 decreasing student suspensions, expulsions, dropouts, and other negative aspects of the  
 84 total school environment. Such review may include school climate ratings established  
 85 pursuant to Code Section 20-14-33 for each school in the county school system and any  
 86 independent school systems, if applicable. The committee may review, if available,  
 87 nonidentifying data from student health surveys, data on environmental and behavioral  
 88 indicators, data on student behavioral and school-based reactions, and teacher and parent  
 89 survey instruments. The committee may recommend the use of positive behavioral  
 90 interventions and supports and response to intervention, trauma informed care training, and  
 91 the optimization of local resources through voluntary community, student, teacher,  
 92 administrator, and other school personnel participation.

93 ~~(h)~~(g) ~~The committee shall continue in existence after writing the student attendance~~  
 94 ~~protocol.~~ The chief judge of the superior court of each county shall ensure that the  
 95 committee meets at least ~~quarterly during the first year, and twice annually thereafter,~~ to  
 96 evaluate compliance with the protocol, effectiveness of the protocol, and appropriate  
 97 modifications and to review and revise, if necessary, recommendations relating to school  
 98 climate.

99 (i)(h) Each local board of education shall report student attendance rates and aggregated  
100 student discipline data to the committee and the State Board of Education at the end of each  
101 school year, according to a schedule established by the State Board of Education.”

102 **SECTION 2.**

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