

Senate Resolution 972

By: Senators Miller of the 49th, Unterman of the 45th, Wilkinson of the 50th, Parent of the 42nd, Ginn of the 47th and others

A RESOLUTION

1 Encouraging local educational agencies to support Georgia's talented and gifted students by
2 complying with all State Board of Education and Georgia Professional Standards
3 Commission guidelines for gifted education; and for other purposes.

4 WHEREAS, federal law has failed to include gifted students as a special education
5 population; however, Georgia lawmakers have continually recognized the special learning
6 needs of the gifted and talented population and the critical importance of fully developing
7 one of the state's most valuable resources – the extraordinary potential of gifted and talented
8 children from all backgrounds; and

9 WHEREAS, since 1958, Georgia's leaders have recognized gifted children as a special
10 education group by assigning a Category VI classification for gifted students under special
11 education in state law (O.C.G.A. 20-2-152) and by providing support for the process of
12 identifying and serving exceptional children; and

13 WHEREAS, the eligibility criteria, teacher training, and service options described in Georgia
14 law and the State Board of Education guidelines have been recognized as exemplars at a
15 national level; and

16 WHEREAS, taxpayer monies have been approved in Georgia law to support instructional
17 programs designed to address the special needs of gifted learners, and both educational and
18 fiscal accountability requires lawmakers to maintain safeguards of quality programming for
19 the state's gifted students; and

20 WHEREAS, state laws related to increased flexibility for local school systems allow local
21 education agencies to waive standards for appropriate services for Georgia's gifted students,
22 including class size, approved delivery models based on research evidence of effectiveness,
23 and qualified teachers with specific training in the needs of gifted learners.

24 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE that the members of this body
25 encourage all local education agencies, especially those that collect weighted, full-time
26 equivalent funding for gifted education, to comply with all State Board of Education and
27 Georgia Professional Standards Commission guidelines for gifted education; and if an
28 agency chooses to waive these provisions, it should notify parents of students identified as
29 gifted which provisions it has waived and how it will meet the needs of their gifted students.

30 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Secretary of the Senate is authorized and directed
31 to make appropriate copies of this resolution available to local education agencies, the public,
32 and the press.