

Senate Bill 161

By: Senators Tippins of the 37th, Black of the 8th, Unterman of the 45th, Stone of the 23rd, Albers of the 56th and others

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 scores for certain coursework for purposes of determining HOPE
3 scholarship and Zell Miller scholarship eligibility; to provide for related matters; to provide
4 for an effective date; to repeal conflicting laws; and for other purposes.

5 BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF GEORGIA:

6 style="text-align:center">**SECTION 1.**

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

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

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

27 scholarship from these electronic transcripts and shall notify students of their eligibility
28 and high schools as to the 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~~ by increasing the grade assigned by the teacher to the
50 student for such course by an additional 0.5 point if such grade is an A, B, C, or D. The
51 sum of the equated grades shall be divided by the number of course grades, adjusted for
52 term length, to yield a grade point average on a 4.0 scale;

53 (3.1) For students otherwise qualified and enrolling in the ninth grade for the first time
54 during the 2008-2009 school year and thereafter, the Georgia Student Finance
55 Commission shall calculate grade point averages for determining eligibility for the HOPE
56 scholarship and other scholarships referenced in this Code section by equating each grade
57 for a student in attempted coursework in English, mathematics, science, social studies,
58 and foreign language during the student's ninth, tenth, eleventh, or twelfth grade year to
59 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' =
60 2.0, a grade of 'D' = 1.0, and a grade of 'F' = 0. Grades for coursework that is classified
61 as advanced placement, a dual credit course, or international baccalaureate shall be
62 weighted uniformly by the Georgia Student Finance Commission in calculating the
63 overall grade point averages for students; ~~provided that the weighting of such course~~

64 ~~grades is uniformly applied to all students in this state taking the specified coursework~~
 65 ~~by increasing the grade assigned by the teacher to the student for such course by an~~
 66 ~~additional 0.5 point if such grade is an A, B, C, or D.~~ The sum of the equated grades
 67 shall be divided by the number of course grades, adjusted for term length, to yield a grade
 68 point average on a 4.0 scale; and

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

83 (c)(1) Beginning with the school year beginning after May 1, 2011, each school system
 84 and private school shall adopt the reporting system described in this subsection for
 85 purposes of determining potential eligibility for freshman, sophomore, and junior high
 86 school students for the HOPE scholarship program and other programs identified in this
 87 Code section.

88 (2) Each school system and private school shall transmit to the Georgia Student Finance
 89 Commission, in ~~such~~ a manner and at such times as the commission may prescribe, an
 90 electronic transcript of courses and course grades for each freshman, sophomore, and
 91 junior high school student that reflects the complete high school academic record of the
 92 student, including scores on any state tests required for graduation, the grading scales
 93 used by the school system or private school for the time periods referenced by the
 94 transcripts, and any other pertinent information as determined by the Georgia Student
 95 Finance Commission. Each grade reported by a school system or private school to the
 96 commission for the purpose of calculating the grade point average for potential HOPE
 97 scholarship and Zell Miller scholarship eligibility shall be the actual grade earned by the
 98 student with no weighting or addition of points by the school system or private school.

99 (3) The Georgia Student Finance Commission shall calculate a grade point average for
 100 the purpose of determining eligibility for the HOPE scholarship and Zell Miller

101 scholarship from these electronic transcripts and shall notify students of their potential
102 eligibility and high schools as to the potential eligibility of students."

103 **SECTION 2.**

104 This Act shall become effective on January 1, 2020.

105 **SECTION 3.**

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