

The House Committee on Higher Education offers the following substitute to SB 161:

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 provide for applicability; to repeal conflicting laws; and for other  
5 purposes.

6 BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF GEORGIA:

7 **SECTION 1.**

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

46 Grades for coursework that is classified as advanced placement, a dual credit course, or  
47 international baccalaureate shall be weighted uniformly by the Georgia Student Finance  
48 Commission in calculating the overall grade point averages for students, provided that  
49 the weighting of such course grades is uniformly applied to all students in this state  
50 taking the specified coursework. The grade earned by each student for any such  
51 advanced placement, dual credit, or international baccalaureate course shall be increased  
52 by an additional 0.5 point if such grade is an A, B, C, or D. The sum of the equated  
53 grades shall be divided by the number of course grades, adjusted for term length, to yield  
54 a grade point average on a 4.0 scale;

55 (3.1) For students otherwise qualified and enrolling in the ninth grade for the first time  
56 during the 2008-2009 school year and thereafter, the Georgia Student Finance  
57 Commission shall calculate grade point averages for determining eligibility for the HOPE  
58 scholarship and other scholarships referenced in this Code section by equating each grade  
59 for a student in attempted coursework in English, mathematics, science, social studies,  
60 and foreign language during the student's ninth, tenth, eleventh, or twelfth grade year to  
61 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' =  
62 2.0, a grade of 'D' = 1.0, and a grade of 'F' = 0. Grades for coursework that is classified

63 as advanced placement, a dual credit course, or international baccalaureate shall be  
64 weighted uniformly by the Georgia Student Finance Commission in calculating the  
65 overall grade point averages for students, provided that the weighting of such course  
66 grades is uniformly applied to all students in this state taking the specified coursework.  
67 The grade earned by each student for any such advanced placement, dual credit, or  
68 international baccalaureate course shall be increased by an additional 0.5 point if such  
69 grade is an A, B, C, or D. The sum of the equated grades shall be divided by the number  
70 of course grades, adjusted for term length, to yield a grade point average on a 4.0 scale;  
71 and

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

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

91 (2) Each school system and private school shall transmit to the Georgia Student Finance  
92 Commission, in ~~such a~~ manner and at such times as the commission may prescribe, an  
93 electronic transcript of courses and course grades for each freshman, sophomore, and  
94 junior high school student that reflects the complete high school academic record of the  
95 student, including scores on any state tests required for graduation, the grading scales  
96 used by the school system or private school for the time periods referenced by the  
97 transcripts, and any other pertinent information as determined by the Georgia Student  
98 Finance Commission. Each grade reported by a school system or private school to the  
99 commission for the purpose of calculating the grade point average for potential HOPE

100 scholarship and Zell Miller scholarship eligibility shall be the actual grade earned by the  
101 student with no weighting or addition of points by the school system or private school.  
102 (3) The Georgia Student Finance Commission shall calculate a grade point average for  
103 the purpose of determining eligibility for the HOPE scholarship and Zell Miller  
104 scholarship from these electronic transcripts and shall notify students of their potential  
105 eligibility and high schools as to the potential eligibility of students."

106 **SECTION 2.**

107 This Act shall become effective upon its approval by the Governor or upon its becoming law  
108 without such approval and shall be applicable to calculations of grade point averages made  
109 by the Georgia Student Finance Commission for students graduating during or after the  
110 2018-2019 school year.

111 **SECTION 3.**

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