

15 (2) A comprehensive study of all state resources and activities that are funded to support
16 improved literacy outcomes is needed. This study should also set recommended priorities
17 for future investments and strategies; and

18 (3) Georgia must have a very specific goal that sets clearly defined measures for third,
19 fifth, and eighth grade reading outcomes.

20

SECTION 2.

21 Title 20 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, relating to education, is amended in
22 Chapter 1, relating to general provisions, by adding a new article to read as follows:

23

"ARTICLE 4

24 20-1-40.

25 As used in this article, the term:

26 (1) 'Council' means the Georgia Council on Literacy established under this article.

27 (2) 'Evidence based literacy instruction methods and curricula' means instructional
28 materials, instructional practices, and curricula that are scientifically based reading
29 instruction, or multisensory language instruction, including oral language development,
30 phonological awareness, and phonics instruction that includes decoding and encoding,
31 fluency, writing, vocabulary, and comprehension.

32 20-1-41.

33 There is established the Georgia Council on Literacy for the purpose of conducting
34 comprehensive reviews of birth to postsecondary programs, the alignment of state support
35 for such programs, and other issues related to improving the literacy outcomes of Georgia
36 students.

37 20-1-42.

38 (a) The council shall be composed of 24 members as follows:

39 (1) The following members appointed by the Governor:

40 (A) A representative from the Sandra Dunagan Deal Center for Early Language and
41 Literacy;

42 (B) A representative from the Office of Public Library Services of the Board of
43 Regents of the University System of Georgia; and

44 (C) Four individuals to include those with knowledge, skills, and experience in early
45 learning, primary and secondary education, adult learning, and workforce development;

46 (2) The following members appointed by the President of the Senate:

47 (A) The chairperson of the Senate Education and Youth Committee;

48 (B) The chairperson of the Senate Higher Education Committee;

49 (C) The chairperson of the Senate Appropriations Committee;

50 (D) Two members of the Senate from the minority caucus; and

51 (E) Four individuals to include a teacher, a local board of education member, a local
52 school superintendent, and a literacy advocate; and

53 (3) The following members appointed by the Speaker of the House of Representatives:

54 (A) The chairperson of the House Committee on Education;

55 (B) The chairperson of the House Committee on Higher Education;

56 (C) The chairperson of the House Committee on Appropriations;

57 (D) Two members of the House of Representatives from the minority caucus; and

58 (E) Four individuals to include a teacher, a local board of education member, a local
59 school superintendent, and a literacy advocate.

60 (b) Each nonlegislative member of the council shall be appointed to serve until his or her
61 successor is duly appointed. Legislative members of the council shall serve until
62 completion of their current terms of office. Any member may be appointed to succeed
63 himself or herself on the council. If a member of the council is an elected or appointed

64 official, such member, or his or her designee, shall be removed from the council if such
65 member no longer serves as such elected or appointed official.

66 (c) The Governor shall designate one of the members appointed pursuant to subsection (a)
67 of this Code section the chairperson of the council. The council may elect other officers
68 as it deems necessary. The chairperson of the council may designate and appoint
69 committees from among the membership of the council as well as appoint other persons
70 to perform such functions as he or she may determine to be necessary as relevant to and
71 consistent with this article. The chairperson shall only vote to break a tie.

72 (d) The Governor shall direct the Alliance of Education Agency Heads provided for in
73 Article 1 of Chapter 14 of this title to work with members of the council.

74 (e) The council shall be attached for administrative purposes only to the Office of Student
75 Achievement. The Office of Student Achievement shall provide staff support for the
76 council. The Office of Student Achievement shall use any funds specifically appropriated
77 to it to support the work of the council.

78 20-1-43.

79 (a) The council may conduct meetings at such places and times as it deems necessary or
80 convenient to enable it to fully and effectively exercise its powers, perform its duties, and
81 accomplish the objectives and purposes of this article; provided, however, that the council
82 shall meet not less than four times per year. The council shall hold meetings at the call of
83 the chairperson.

84 (b) A quorum for transacting business shall be a majority of the members of the council.

85 (c) Legislative members of the council shall receive the allowances provided for in Code
86 Section 28-1-8. Nonlegislative members of the council shall receive a daily expense
87 allowance in the amount specified in subsection (b) of Code Section 45-7-21 as well as the
88 mileage or transportation allowance authorized for state employees. Members of the
89 council who are state officials, other than legislative members, or state employees shall

90 receive no compensation for their services on the council, but shall be reimbursed for
91 expenses incurred by them in the performance of their duties as members of the council in
92 the same manner as they are reimbursed for expenses in their capacities as state officials
93 or state employees. The funds necessary for the reimbursement of the expenses of state
94 officials, other than legislative members, and state employees shall come from funds
95 appropriated to or otherwise available to their respective departments. All other funds
96 necessary to carry out the provisions of this article shall come from funds appropriated to
97 the Senate and the House of Representatives.

98 20-1-44.

99 (a) The council shall have the following duties:

100 (1) Review the conditions, needs, issues, and problems related to state literacy outcomes;
101 make recommendations for legislation and appropriations to support improving such
102 outcomes; and provide by November 30 each year a report of such review and
103 recommendations to the Governor, the Office of Planning and Budget, the Speaker of the
104 House of Representatives, and the President of the Senate;

105 (2) Evaluate and consider the best practices, experiences, and results of legislation in
106 other states with regard to literacy improvements for students;

107 (3) Establish a common metric for literacy scores for kindergarten through grade 12
108 utilizing current assessment instruments required for accountability purposes;

109 (4) Provide public schools and local school systems with the common metric for literacy
110 scores established by the council;

111 (5) Research and make recommendations on improving literacy rates for low-income
112 students;

113 (6) Research and make recommendations on improving literacy rates for minority and
114 English for speakers of other languages (ESOL) students;

- 115 (7) Research and make recommendations on improving literacy rates for students with
116 characteristics of dyslexia;
- 117 (8) Set annual literacy goals and measure state-wide success;
- 118 (9) Review changes or updates to QBE funding to enhance literacy instruction;
- 119 (10) Review and make recommendations on the alignment of teacher certifications to
120 include evidence based literacy instruction and education degree program requirements;
- 121 (11) Review and make recommendations of evidence based literacy instruction methods
122 and curricula resources and the professional development needed by current teachers for
123 improvements in literacy instruction in pre-kindergarten through grade 12;
- 124 (12) Review state-wide birth to age five initiatives and suggest policy and appropriation
125 changes; and
- 126 (13) Review best practices for community based literacy programs and make
127 recommendations for improvement.
- 128 (b) The council shall be authorized to:
- 129 (1) Request and receive data from and review the records of appropriate state agencies
130 to the greatest extent allowed by state and federal law;
- 131 (2) Seek and accept public or private grants, devises, and bequests;
- 132 (3) Enter into contracts or agreements through the council's chairperson necessary or
133 incidental to the performance of its duties;
- 134 (4) Establish rules and procedures for conducting the business of the council;
- 135 (5) Conduct studies, hold public meetings, collect data, or take any other action the
136 council deems necessary to fulfill its responsibilities; and
- 137 (6) Retain the services of attorneys, consultants, subject matter experts, economists,
138 budget analysts, data analysts, statisticians, and other individuals or organizations as
139 deemed appropriate by the council. Such services may be obtained through a request for
140 proposal process conducted through the Office of Planning and Budget; provided,
141 however, that any final selection shall be approved by the council.

142 20-1-45.

143 The council shall be abolished and this article shall stand repealed on December 31, 2026."

144 **SECTION 3.**

145 Said title is further amended in Article 1 of Chapter 14, relating to general provisions for
146 education accountability, by revising Code Section 20-14-8, relating to general powers and
147 duties, as follows:

148 "20-14-8.

149 The ~~council~~ alliance shall have the following general powers and duties, in addition to any
150 and all other powers enumerated in this article, any or all of which may be exercised by the
151 ~~council~~ alliance directly or by the Office of Student Achievement under the direction and
152 supervision of the ~~council~~ alliance:

153 (1) To foster coordination and cooperation among the chief officers of the departments,
154 boards, and offices represented on the ~~council~~ alliance;

155 (2) To develop a seamless and integrated public education system;

156 (3) To require the shared and efficient expenditures for and utilization of facilities,
157 personnel, and other resources;

158 (4) To require the seamless coordination of curriculum among the departments, boards,
159 and offices represented on the ~~council~~ alliance;

160 (5) To require reasonable ease of transition for students among the educational
161 institutions represented on the ~~council~~ alliance;

162 (6) To establish and require high and necessary levels of student achievement at all
163 levels of education;

164 (7) To exercise oversight of accountability systems that are within or among the
165 departments, boards, and offices represented on the ~~council~~ alliance and develop overlay
166 accountability systems through the Office of Student Achievement;

- 167 (8) To exercise supervision and oversight over the Office of Student Achievement
168 created in Part 2 of Article 2 of this chapter;
- 169 (9) To coordinate the activities of state, regional, and local cooperative public education
170 agencies, offices, or councils, including, but not limited to, the state's regional educational
171 service agencies or other such groups that may be created in addition or in their place;
- 172 (10) To focus on literacy improvements for Georgia students;
- 173 (11) To work with the Georgia Council on Literacy to ensure the availability and quality
174 of the education ~~work force~~ workforce through preparation, professional development,
175 and nontraditional routes to employment;
- 176 ~~(11)~~(12) To oversee the development and implementation of a comprehensive
177 system-wide education student information system that will support the implementation
178 of an education accountability system and improve the seamless operation of public
179 education;
- 180 ~~(12)~~(13) To simplify rules and regulations by all departments, boards, and offices
181 represented on the ~~council~~ alliance;
- 182 ~~(13)~~(14) To develop a state-wide mentoring program that enhances student achievement
183 at all levels of public education;
- 184 ~~(14)~~(15) To establish and coordinate a school safety collaborative with representation
185 from agencies and organizations designated by the ~~council~~ alliance to improve the school
186 climate and enhance school safety; and
- 187 ~~(15)~~(16) To mediate disputes among the Department of Education, the University
188 System of Georgia, the Technical College System of Georgia, the Professional Standards
189 Commission, the Department of Early Care and Learning, and the Office of Student
190 Achievement in matters regarding accountability or education system seamlessness."

191 **SECTION 4.**

192 Said title is further amended by revising subsection (d) of Code Section 20-14-35, relating
193 to office powers, on-site audits, reporting findings and recommendations, and authorization
194 of other school audits, as follows:

195 "(d) The auditors shall report to the local board of education, the local school council, and
196 appropriate school administrators and shall report findings and recommendations
197 concerning any necessary improvements or intervention strategies. School audit reports
198 shall be provided to the ~~council~~ alliance and the State Board of Education."

199 **SECTION 5.**

200 Said title is further amended by replacing "Education Coordinating Council" and "council"
201 with "Alliance of Education Agency Heads" and "alliance", respectively, wherever the
202 former terms occur in:

- 203 (1) Code Section 20-2-271, relating to development of regional improvement plan,
204 introduction of core services, instructional care teams, and establishment of alternative
205 methods of teacher certification;
- 206 (2) Code Section 20-2-320, relating to state-wide comprehensive educational information
207 system and identification of data to implement Quality Basic Education Program;
- 208 (3) Code Section 20-14-1, relating to responsibility of council;
- 209 (4) Code Section 20-14-2, relating to creation of council;
- 210 (5) Code Section 20-14-3, relating to membership, officers, and meetings;
- 211 (6) Code Section 20-14-4, relating to quorum and committees;
- 212 (7) Code Section 20-14-5, relating to annual reports;
- 213 (8) Code Section 20-14-6, relating to selection of personnel to support council;
- 214 (9) Code Section 20-14-7, relating to powers of council;
- 215 (10) Code Section 20-14-9, relating to access to records or data;

- 216 (11) Code Section 20-14-10, relating to decisions or actions by council directing action by
217 department, board, or office;
- 218 (12) Code Section 20-14-11, relating to appointment by Governor of study commissions,
219 findings and recommendations, and staff and expenses;
- 220 (13) Code Section 20-14-20, relating to definitions;
- 221 (14) Code Section 20-14-25, relating to creation, director, authority, seal, and
222 administrative assignment;
- 223 (15) Code Section 20-14-26, relating to duties; and
- 224 (16) Code Section 20-14-27, relating to required report and publication format.

225

SECTION 6.

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