

Senate Bill 65

By: Senators Mallow of the 2nd, Hickman of the 4th, Esteves of the 35th, Sims of the 12th and Summers of the 13th

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED
AN ACT

1 To amend Chapter 2 of Title 20 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, relating to
2 elementary and secondary education, so as to provide for mandatory kindergarten for all
3 children prior to entering into first grade; to lower the age of compulsory school attendance
4 from six years old to five years old; to provide for related matters; to provide for contingent
5 effectiveness; to repeal conflicting laws; and for other purposes.

6 BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF GEORGIA:

7 **SECTION 1.**

8 Chapter 2 of Title 20 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, relating to elementary and
9 secondary education, is amended in Code Section 20-2-150, relating to eligibility for
10 enrollment for educational programs, by revising subsection (c) as follows:

11 "(c) All children enrolled for 20 school days or more in the public schools of this state
12 prior to their ~~seventh~~ fifth birthday shall become subject to all of the provisions of this
13 article, the provisions of Code Sections 20-2-690 through 20-2-701, and the rules and
14 regulations of the State Board of Education relating to compulsory school attendance even
15 though they have not attained ~~seven~~ five years of age."

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SECTION 2.

17 Said chapter is further amended in Code Section 20-2-151, relating to general and career
18 education programs, by revising paragraph (1) of subsection (b) as follows:

19 "(1)(A) All local school systems ~~may~~ shall offer a full-day kindergarten program. For
20 purposes of this subsection, the term 'full-day kindergarten program' means a student
21 is provided classroom instruction for a minimum of four and one-half hours daily for
22 a 180 day school year, or the equivalent thereof as determined in accordance with State
23 Board of Education guidelines.

24 (B) It is the policy of this state that all children shall attend a full-day kindergarten
25 program for one school year prior to enrolling in first grade and that the purposes of the
26 kindergarten such program shall be to provide all children with an equal opportunity
27 to become prepared for a successful first grade experience and to acquire the foundation
28 for academic progress throughout the students' educational careers. To be eligible for
29 enrollment in a state supported kindergarten program, a child must attain the age of five
30 by September 1, except as otherwise provided by subsection (b) of Code Section
31 20-2-150;"

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SECTION 3.

33 Said chapter is further amended in Code Section 20-2-690.1, relating to mandatory education
34 for children between the ages of six and 16, by revising subsection (a) as follows:

35 "(a) Mandatory attendance in a public school, private school, or home school program shall
36 be required for children between their ~~sixth~~ fifth and sixteenth birthdays. Such mandatory
37 attendance shall not be required where the child has successfully completed all
38 requirements for a high school diploma."

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SECTION 4.

40 This Act shall become effective only upon the effective date of a specific appropriation of
41 funds for purposes of this Act, as expressed in a line item making specific reference to such
42 Act in a General Appropriations Act enacted by the General Assembly.

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SECTION 5.

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