

The House Committee on Higher Education offers the following substitute to HB 217:

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED
AN ACT

1 To amend Article 6 of Chapter 4 of Title 20 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated,
2 relating to the Dual Achievement Program, so as to extend the Dual Achievement pilot
3 program for an additional five years; to provide for related matters; to repeal conflicting
4 laws; and for other purposes.

5 BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF GEORGIA:

6 **SECTION 1.**

7 Article 6 of Chapter 4 of Title 20 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, relating to the
8 Dual Achievement Program, is amended by revising Code Section 20-4-141, relating to
9 establishment of pilot program, awarding of high school diploma to successful participants,
10 skills and knowledge, eligibility for participation, and regulation, as follows:

11 "20-4-141.

12 (a)(1) The state board shall, in coordination with the State Board of Education,
13 Department of Education, the Department of Juvenile Justice, the Department of
14 Corrections, and the Office of Planning and Budget, establish a pilot program to allow
15 students who meet eligibility requirements to qualify for enrollment in the Dual
16 Achievement Program at a participating unit of the technical college system and, upon

17 successful completion of the program, be awarded a high school diploma. The purpose
18 of the pilot program is to assess the feasibility of implementing a state-funded program
19 for eligible students who have withdrawn from high school to enroll in a unit of the
20 technical college system to participate in an academic and technical education and
21 training program which, upon successful completion, allows the student to earn a high
22 school diploma while also earning a technical college associate degree, a technical
23 college diploma, or technical college certificates of credit in specific career pathways.

24 (2) To implement the pilot program, notwithstanding any other provision of law to the
25 contrary, the ~~State Board of the Technical College System of Georgia~~ state board and the
26 State Board of Education shall be authorized to waive or provide variances to state rules,
27 regulations, policies, and procedures and to provisions of this title that may be reasonably
28 necessary to meet the goals of the pilot program. Such waivers or variances shall
29 automatically expire at the end of ~~five~~ ten years unless an earlier expiration is provided
30 for. The ~~State Board of the Technical College System of Georgia~~ state board and the
31 State Board of Education shall be authorized to seek waivers or variances of federal laws,
32 rules, regulations, policies, and procedures that may be reasonably necessary to meet the
33 goals of the pilot program.

34 (3) The pilot program, as determined by the state board, may include up to five units of
35 the technical college system for a period of ~~five~~ ten years. In an effort to pilot the
36 program under various conditions present in the state, the state board shall seek to include
37 in the pilot program units of the technical college system from various geographic areas
38 in the state.

39 (4) The state board shall review the results of the pilot program and shall no later than
40 ~~February 1~~ November 15 each year during the program provide the ~~General Assembly~~
41 chairpersons of the House Committee on Education, the Senate Education and Youth
42 Committee, the House Committee on Higher Education, and the Senate Higher Education
43 Committee with a comprehensive report on the program with any recommendations for

44 its continued use and any needed changes in the program. Such report shall include a
45 comprehensive list of any such waivers or variances requested as provided for in
46 paragraph (2) of this subsection, a statement of necessity for each request, and whether
47 each request was granted in whole or in part.

48 (b) The pilot program established by the state board pursuant to this article shall provide
49 for the award of a high school diploma to students who successfully complete the program.

50 (c) The state board shall determine the specific competencies concerning the skills and
51 knowledge needed for completion of each component of the program; provided, however,
52 that the state board shall make such determination regarding the skills and knowledge
53 needed to meet the requirements for a high school diploma as provided for in this program
54 in consultation with the State Board of Education and the Department of Education.

55 (d) In order to minimize the risk of prospective students prematurely withdrawing from
56 a secondary school in order to participate in the program, the state board shall provide for
57 preliminary review of academic records, including, but not limited to official secondary
58 school transcripts, submitted by prospective students to determine whether such students
59 meet the requirements provided for in paragraphs (1) and (2) of subsection (e) of this Code
60 ~~Section~~ section. If a prospective student meets such requirements, the student shall be so
61 notified and allowed to complete a readiness assessment required by the technical college
62 system. Students who meet the requirements provided for in paragraphs (1) and (2) of
63 subsection (e) of this Code ~~Section~~ section and attain a an acceptable score of admission
64 ~~acceptable~~ on the readiness assessment shall be notified that they are eligible to participate
65 in the program, subject to meeting the requirements provided for in paragraphs (4) and (5)
66 of subsection (e) of this Code ~~Section~~ section.

67 (e) To be eligible to participate in the program, a student shall:

68 (1) Be 16 years of age or older;

69 (2) Have completed at least six of the nine following state required ninth and tenth grade
70 level high school courses: two English courses, two mathematics courses, two science

- 71 courses, two social studies courses, and one health and physical education course; and
72 any state required tests associated with any such courses;
- 73 (3) Receive a score of admission acceptable on the readiness assessment required by the
74 technical college system;
- 75 (4) Provide the following:
- 76 (A) If an unemancipated minor:
- 77 (i) Verification that the student's parent or legal guardian attended a conference with
78 the student's high school principal or the principal's designee as provided for in
79 subsection (e) of Code Section 20-2-690.1;
- 80 (ii) A copy of the form provided for in subsection (e) of Code Section 20-2-690.1
81 signed by the student's parent or legal guardian;
- 82 (iii) Written acknowledgment by the student's parent or guardian that withdrawal of
83 the student from secondary school may result in loss of eligibility for
84 accommodations, specialized instruction, and other services pursuant to the federal
85 Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, ~~20 U.S.C.A.~~ U.S.C. Section 1400, et seq.,
86 and Section 504 of the federal Rehabilitation Act of 1973, ~~29 U.S.C.A.~~ U.S.C. Section
87 701, et seq.; and
- 88 (iv) Written acknowledgment that the high school diploma available through the Dual
89 Achievement Program requires successful completion of the program; or
- 90 (B) If an emancipated minor or a student who is 18, 19, or 20 years of age:
- 91 (i) Written acknowledgment that the student has conferred with his or her secondary
92 school principal or the principal's designee or a qualified designated official of the
93 technical college system and discussed alternatives to withdrawing from high school
94 without completing graduation requirements and potential consequences of not having
95 a high school diploma, including lower lifetime earnings, fewer jobs for which the
96 student will be qualified, and the inability to avail oneself of higher educational
97 opportunities;

- 98 (ii) Written acknowledgment by the student's parent or guardian that withdrawal of
99 the student from secondary school may result in loss of eligibility for
100 accommodations, specialized instruction, and other services pursuant to the federal
101 Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, 20 ~~U.S.C.A.~~ U.S.C. Section 1400, et seq.,
102 and Section 504 of the federal Rehabilitation Act of 1973, 29 ~~U.S.C.A.~~ U.S.C. Section
103 701, et seq.; and
- 104 (iii) Written acknowledgment that the high school diploma available through the
105 Dual Achievement Program requires successful completion of the program; and
- 106 (5) Be withdrawn from a public secondary school of this state.
- 107 (f) The state board shall award a high school diploma to a student enrolled in the program
108 provided for in this article who:
- 109 (1) Completes all student counseling and assessment requirements of the program;
110 (2) Completes rigorous coursework at a participating unit of the technical college
111 system; and
- 112 (3) Completes:
- 113 (A) A technical college associate degree program;
114 (B) A technical college diploma program; or
115 (C) At least two technical college certificate of credit programs in one specific career
116 pathway.
- 117 (g) A student who meets the requirements of subsections (f) of this Code section shall be
118 deemed to have met all graduation requirements of the State Board of Education and shall
119 not be subject to any assessments otherwise required for purposes of graduation.
- 120 (h) The state board, in consultation with the State Board of Education, Department of
121 Education, the Department of Juvenile Justice, the Department of Corrections, and the
122 Office of Planning and Budget, shall establish rules and regulations to implement the
123 provisions of this article."

124 **SECTION 2.**

125 Said article is further amended by revising Code Section 20-4-142, relating to automatic
126 repeal, as follows:

127 "20-4-142.

128 This article shall stand repealed on July 1, ~~2026~~ 2031."

129 **SECTION 3.**

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