

The Senate Committee on Education and Youth offered the following substitute to SB 148:

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED
AN ACT

1 To amend Article 11 of Chapter 2 of Title 20 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated,
2 relating to public school property and facilities, so as to provide for an outdoor learning
3 spaces pilot program; to provide for a pilot program evaluation and report; to amend Part 4
4 of Article 17 of Chapter 2 of Title 20 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, relating to
5 sick, personal, and maternity leave for teachers and other school personnel, so as to increase
6 from three to five the number of accumulated sick leave days teachers and other school
7 personnel may take each school year for personal or professional reasons; to provide for
8 related matters; to repeal conflicting laws; and for other purposes.

9 BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF GEORGIA:

10 **SECTION 1.**

11 Article 11 of Chapter 2 of Title 20 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, relating to
12 public school property and facilities, is amended by adding a new part to read as follows:

13 "Part 4

14 20-2-590.

15 (a) The Department of Education is authorized to establish a pilot program, beginning in
16 the 2025-2026 school year, to provide for the development and study of outdoor learning
17 spaces on elementary and secondary school property. The purpose of the pilot program
18 shall be to determine whether and how to implement best practices and design standards
19 for outdoor learning spaces.

20 (b) The Department of Education is authorized to select elementary or secondary schools
21 with sufficient existing or potential outdoor learning spaces for participation in the pilot
22 program as pilot schools. Private, nonprofit, and local school system funding may be
23 utilized by such pilot schools for community engagement, school grounds design support,
24 and capital construction costs. The local board of education for each pilot school shall
25 agree to implement a program to incorporate outdoor learning spaces into the existing
26 curriculum and to continue to provide such program for a period no shorter than three
27 years.

28 (c) The Department of Education shall provide for an evaluation regarding the success and
29 impact of the pilot program upon completion of the third year of the pilot program and
30 shall report the results of such evaluation to the House Committee on Education and the
31 Senate Education and Youth Committee."

32 **SECTION 2.**

33 Part 4 of Article 17 of Chapter 2 of Title 20 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated,
34 relating to sick, personal, and maternity leave for teachers and other school personnel, is
35 amended by revising Code Section 20-2-851, relating to use of accumulated sick leave for
36 personal or professional reasons, as follows:

37 "20-2-851.

38 During any school year, personnel may utilize up to a maximum of ~~three~~ five days of any
39 accumulated sick leave for the purpose of absenting themselves from their duties for
40 personal or professional reasons if prior approval of their absence is given by the local
41 school superintendent or his or her authorized representative; provided, however, that the
42 absence is not in conflict with a local board of education policy concerning school days on
43 which the presence of the personnel requesting absence is essential for effective school
44 operation. No grant of approval for an absence permitted under this Code section shall be
45 conditioned upon disclosure of the specific purpose for which such absence is sought, nor
46 shall any such grant of approval be withheld or denied because of the failure or refusal of
47 personnel to disclose the specific purpose for which such an absence is sought; provided,
48 however, that personnel may be requested to state whether the absence is sought under the
49 category of 'personal' or 'professional' absence."

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SECTION 3.

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