

Senate Bill 148

By: Senators Hatchett of the 50th and Rahman of the 5th

**AS PASSED SENATE**

**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.