

The House Committee on Higher Education offers the following substitute to HB 1293:

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED  
AN ACT

1 To amend Chapter 4 of Title 20 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, relating to  
2 vocational, technical, and adult education, so as to provide updated eligibility requirements  
3 for the Dual Achievement Program; to provide for continued eligibility for students already  
4 enrolled in the program; to provide for certain students to remain enrolled in their resident  
5 school or resident school system for administrative and accountability purposes only; to  
6 provide for the creation of a funding formula; to provide for policies, rules, and regulations;  
7 to repeal provisions regarding participation agreements, QBE funding, and accountability  
8 assessments for the program; to provide for continuation of the program and eliminate a  
9 provision providing for automatic repeal; to provide for an effective date; to provide for  
10 related matters; to repeal conflicting laws; and for other purposes.

11 BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF GEORGIA:

12 **SECTION 1.**

13 Chapter 4 of Title 20 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, relating to vocational,  
14 technical, and adult education, is amended by revising Article 6, relating to the Dual  
15 Achievement Program, as follows:

## 16 "ARTICLE 6

17 20-4-140.

18 As used in this article, the term:

19 (1) 'Completion special school' means a special school provided for in Article 31C of  
20 Chapter 2 of this title which meets the requirements of Code Section 20-2-2096.3.21 (2) 'Completion special school attendance zone' means an attendance zone established  
22 by the State Board of Education for completion special schools pursuant to Code Section  
23 20-2-2096.7.24 (3) 'Dual Achievement Program' or 'program' means the program provided for in this  
25 article.26 ~~(2)~~(4) 'Eligible student' means a student who meets the qualifications to participate in the  
27 program.28 ~~(3) 'Extracurricular activities' and 'interscholastic activities' shall have the same~~  
29 ~~respective meanings as set forth in Code Section 20-2-319.6.~~30 ~~(4) 'QBE formula earnings' means funds earned for the Quality Basic Education Formula~~  
31 ~~pursuant to Code Section 20-2-161 and shall include the portion of such funds that are~~  
32 ~~calculated as the local five mill share in accordance with Code Section 20-2-164. QBE~~  
33 ~~formula earnings shall include the salary portion of direct instructional costs, the~~  
34 ~~adjustment for training and experience, the nonsalary portion of direct instructional costs,~~  
35 ~~and earnings for psychologists and school social workers, school administration, facility~~  
36 ~~maintenance and operation, media centers, and staff development, as determined by the~~  
37 ~~Department of Education.~~

38 (5) 'State board' means the State Board of the Technical College System of Georgia.

39 (6) 'Resident school' means the public school in which an eligible student is or would be  
40 enrolled based on his or her primary residence.

41 (7) 'Resident school system' means the public school system in which an eligible student  
42 is or would be enrolled based on his or her primary residence.

43 (8) 'Technical college system' means the Technical College System of Georgia.

44 (9) 'Wraparound services' means structured student support services, including, but not  
45 limited to, academic advising, career counseling, tutoring, case management, and other  
46 services necessary to support students enrolled in the program.

47 20-4-141.

48 (a)(1) The state board shall, in coordination with the State Board of Education,  
49 Department of Education, the Department of Juvenile Justice, the Department of  
50 Corrections, and the Office of Planning and Budget, establish a ~~pilot~~ program to allow  
51 students who meet eligibility requirements to qualify for enrollment in the Dual  
52 Achievement Program at a participating unit of the technical college system and, upon  
53 successful completion of the program, be awarded a high school diploma. The purpose  
54 of the ~~pilot~~ program is to ~~assess the feasibility of implementing a state-funded program~~  
55 ~~for~~ allow eligible students who have withdrawn from high school to enroll in a unit of the  
56 technical college system to participate in an academic and technical education and  
57 training program which, upon successful completion, allows the student to earn a high  
58 school diploma while also earning a technical college associate's degree, a technical  
59 college diploma, or technical college certificates of credit in specific career pathways.

60 (2) To implement the ~~pilot~~ program, notwithstanding any other provision of law to the  
61 contrary, the state board and the State Board of Education shall be authorized to waive  
62 or provide variances to state rules, regulations, policies, and procedures and to provisions  
63 of this title that may be reasonably necessary to meet the goals of the ~~pilot~~ program;  
64 ~~including, but not limited to, such rules, regulations, policies, procedures, and provisions~~  
65 ~~as relate to the calculation, allocation, and distribution of QBE formula earnings.~~ Such  
66 waivers or variances shall automatically expire at the end of ten years unless an earlier

67 expiration is provided for. The state board and the State Board of Education shall be  
68 authorized to seek waivers or variances of federal laws, rules, regulations, policies, and  
69 procedures that may be reasonably necessary to meet the goals of the pilot program.

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

75 (4) The state board shall review the results of the pilot program and shall no later than  
76 November 15 of each year during the program provide the Office ~~and~~ of Planning and  
77 Budget and the chairpersons of the House Committee on Education, the Senate Education  
78 and Youth Committee, the House Committee on Higher Education, the Senate Higher  
79 Education Committee, the House Committee on Appropriations, and the Senate  
80 Appropriations Committee with a comprehensive report on the program with any  
81 recommendations for ~~its continued use and~~ any needed changes in the program. Such  
82 report shall include a comprehensive list of any such waivers or variances implemented  
83 or requested as provided for in paragraph (2) of this subsection, a statement of necessity  
84 for each waiver or variance, and with respect to any such requests, whether each request  
85 was granted in whole or in part. Beginning in 2027, such report shall include the funding  
86 formula developed pursuant to Code Section 20-4-142, the factors considered to develop  
87 the formula, and recommendations for any needed changes to such formula.

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

91 (c) The state board shall determine the specific competencies concerning the skills and  
92 knowledge needed for completion of each component of the program; provided, however,  
93 that the state board shall make such determination regarding the skills and knowledge

94 needed to meet the requirements for a high school diploma as provided for in this program  
 95 in consultation with the State Board of Education and the Department of Education.

96 (d) The state board shall provide for preliminary review of academic records, including,  
 97 but not limited to official secondary school transcripts, submitted by prospective students  
 98 to determine whether such students meet the eligibility requirements provided for in  
 99 ~~paragraphs (1) and (2) of subsection (e) of this Code section.~~ If a prospective student meets  
 100 such requirements, the student shall be so notified and allowed to complete a readiness  
 101 assessment required by the technical college system. Students who meet the eligibility  
 102 requirements provided for in ~~paragraphs (1) and (2) of subsection (e) of this Code section~~  
 103 and attain an acceptable score of admission on the readiness assessment shall be notified  
 104 that they are eligible to participate in the program, subject to meeting the eligibility  
 105 requirements provided for in ~~the applicable paragraphs of subsection (f) of this Code~~  
 106 section.

107 (e) ~~To~~ Before July 1, 2028, to be eligible to participate in the program, a student shall:

- 108 (1) Be 16 years of age or older;
- 109 (2) Have completed at least six of the nine following state required ninth and tenth grade  
 110 level high school courses: two English courses, two mathematics courses, two science  
 111 courses, two social studies courses, and one health and physical education course; and  
 112 any state required tests associated with any such courses;
- 113 (3) Receive an acceptable score of admission on the readiness assessment required by  
 114 the technical college system; and
- 115 (4) ~~Meet the requirements provided for in the applicable paragraph of subsection (f) of~~  
 116 ~~this Code section.~~

117 ~~(f)(1) Before July 1, 2026, to be eligible to participate in the program, a student shall be~~  
 118 ~~withdrawn from a public secondary school of this state, shall meet the requirements~~  
 119 ~~provided for in subsection (e) of this Code section, and shall provide the following:~~

- 120 (A) ~~If an unemancipated minor~~ such student is 16 or 17 years of age:

121 ~~(i) Verification that the student's parent or legal guardian attended a conference with~~  
 122 ~~the student's high school principal or the principal's designee as provided for in~~  
 123 ~~subsection (f) of Code Section 20-2-690.1; Be enrolled in his or her resident school~~  
 124 ~~or resident school system only for administrative purposes and for the purposes of the~~  
 125 ~~education accountability programs provided for in Article 2 of Chapter 14 of this title;~~  
 126 ~~and~~

127 ~~(ii) A copy of the form provided for in subsection (f) of Code Section 20-2-690.1~~  
 128 ~~signed by the student's parent or legal guardian; Provide written acknowledgment that~~  
 129 ~~the high school diploma available through the Dual Achievement Program requires~~  
 130 ~~successful completion of the program; or~~

131 ~~(iii) Written acknowledgment by the student's parent or guardian that withdrawal of~~  
 132 ~~the student from secondary school may result in loss of eligibility for~~  
 133 ~~accommodations, specialized instruction, and other services pursuant to the federal~~  
 134 ~~Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, 20 U.S.C. Section 1400, et seq., and~~  
 135 ~~Section 504 of the federal Rehabilitation Act of 1973, 29 U.S.C. Section 701, et seq.;~~  
 136 ~~and~~

137 ~~(iv) Written acknowledgment that the high school diploma available through the Dual~~  
 138 ~~Achievement Program requires successful completion of the program; or~~

139 ~~(B) If an emancipated minor or a student who such student is 18, 19, or 20 years of~~  
 140 ~~age, be withdrawn from a public secondary school in this state and provide:~~

141 ~~(i) Written acknowledgment that the student has conferred with his or her secondary~~  
 142 ~~school principal or the principal's designee or a qualified designated official of the~~  
 143 ~~technical college system and discussed alternatives to withdrawing from high school~~  
 144 ~~without completing graduation requirements and potential consequences of not having~~  
 145 ~~a high school diploma, including lower lifetime earnings, fewer jobs for which the~~  
 146 ~~student will be qualified, and the inability to avail oneself of higher educational~~  
 147 ~~opportunities;~~

148 (ii) Written acknowledgment by the student's parent or guardian that withdrawal of  
 149 the student from secondary school may result in loss of eligibility for  
 150 accommodations, specialized instruction, and other services pursuant to the federal  
 151 Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, 20 U.S.C. Section 1400, et seq., and  
 152 Section 504 of the federal Rehabilitation Act of 1973, 29 U.S.C. Section 701, et seq.;

153 and

154 (iii) Written acknowledgment that the high school diploma available through the  
 155 Dual Achievement Program requires successful completion of the program.

156 ~~(2) Beginning July 1, 2026, to be eligible to participate in the program, a student shall~~  
 157 ~~be enrolled in a public secondary school of this state, shall not have reached 21 years of~~  
 158 ~~age, shall meet the requirements provided for in subsection (e) of this Code section, and~~  
 159 ~~shall provide the following:~~

160 ~~(A) Written acknowledgment that such student shall not be eligible to participate in~~  
 161 ~~extracurricular activities or interscholastic activities under the sponsorship, direction,~~  
 162 ~~or control of such student's resident school or resident school system; and~~

163 ~~(B) Written acknowledgment that the high school diploma available through the Dual~~  
 164 ~~Achievement Program requires successful completion of the program.~~

165 ~~(g)(f) Notwithstanding subsection (g) of this Code section, any~~ Any student who is  
 166 enrolled in the program on June 30, ~~2026~~ 2028, shall remain eligible to participate in the  
 167 program according to the terms and conditions of such student's original eligibility to  
 168 participate in the program.

169 (g) Except as otherwise provided in subsection (h) of this Code section, on and after  
 170 July 1, 2028, to be eligible to participate in the program, a student shall:

171 (1) Be at least 18 years of age and under 23 years of age;

172 (2) Be withdrawn from a public school in this state;

173 (3) Have not yet earned a high school diploma;

174 (4) Meet the admission requirements for the program established by the state board;

- 175 (5) Participate in required wraparound services; and
- 176 (6) Provide the following:
- 177 (A) Written acknowledgment that the student has conferred with his or her secondary  
178 school principal or the principal's designee or a qualified designated official of the  
179 technical college system and discussed alternatives to withdrawing from high school  
180 without completing graduation requirements and potential consequences of not having  
181 a high school diploma, including lower lifetime earnings, fewer jobs for which the  
182 student will be qualified, and the inability to avail oneself of higher educational  
183 opportunities;
- 184 (B) Written acknowledgment by the student's parent or guardian that withdrawal of the  
185 student from secondary school may result in loss of eligibility for accommodations,  
186 specialized instruction, and other services pursuant to the federal Individuals with  
187 Disabilities Education Act, 20 U.S.C. Section 1400, et seq., and Section 504 of the  
188 federal Rehabilitation Act of 1973, 29 U.S.C. Section 701, et seq.; and
- 189 (C) Written acknowledgment that the high school diploma available through the Dual  
190 Achievement Program requires successful completion of the program.
- 191 (h) Notwithstanding paragraphs (1), (2), and (6) of subsection (g) of this Code section, on  
192 and after July 1, 2028:
- 193 (1) A student who is 16 or 17 years of age and resides in a completion special school  
194 attendance zone that does not have an operating completion special school shall be  
195 eligible to participate in the program, provided such student meets the other eligibility  
196 requirements provided for in subsection (g) of this Code section.
- 197 (2) An eligible student who participates in the program pursuant to this subsection shall  
198 be enrolled in his or her resident school or resident school system only for administrative  
199 purposes and for the purposes of the education accountability programs provided for in  
200 Article 2 of Chapter 14 of this title.

201 ~~(i) By March 1,~~ Not later than July 1, 2026, the State Board of Education shall adopt any  
202 policies, rules, or regulations that are necessary to ensure that any student who withdraws  
203 from his or her resident school or resident school system and subsequently wishes to  
204 participate in the program shall be permitted to re-enroll in such resident school or resident  
205 school system in order to participate in the program on and after July 1, 2026, only for  
206 administrative purposes and for the purposes of the education accountability programs  
207 provided for in Article 2 of Chapter 14 of this title. Such policies, rules, and regulations  
208 shall provide for such students to complete such re-enrollment without having to appear  
209 at such resident school or resident school system. Upon collaboration with the state board,  
210 such policies, rules, and regulations may provide for such re-enrollment to be facilitated  
211 by the technical college system.

212 ~~(i)~~(j) The state board shall award a high school diploma to a student enrolled in the  
213 program provided for in this article who:

214 (1) Completes all student counseling and assessment requirements of the program;

215 (2) Completes rigorous coursework at a participating unit of the technical college  
216 system; and

217 (3) Completes:

218 (A) A technical college associate's degree program;

219 (B) A technical college diploma program; or

220 (C) At least two technical college certificate of credit programs in one specific career  
221 pathway.

222 ~~(j)~~(k) A student who meets the requirements of subsection ~~(h)~~ (i) of this Code section shall  
223 be deemed to have met all graduation requirements of the State Board of Education and  
224 shall not be subject to any assessments otherwise required for purposes of graduation.

225 ~~(k)~~(l)(1) The state board, in consultation with the State Board of Education, Department  
226 of Education, the Department of Juvenile Justice, the Department of Corrections, and the

227 Office of Planning and Budget, shall establish rules and regulations to implement the  
228 provisions of this article.

229 (2) Not later than January 1, 2028, such rules and regulations shall include:

230 (A) Eligibility and admission requirements consistent with the eligibility criteria  
231 provided for in subsections (g) and (h) of this Code section; and

232 (B) Standards and requirements for wraparound services offered to students enrolled  
233 in the program.

234 ~~20-4-141.1:~~

235 ~~(a) By January 1, 2026, the State Board of Education, in collaboration with the state board,~~  
236 ~~the Office of Planning and Budget, and the Office of Student Achievement, shall establish~~  
237 ~~whatever policies, rules, and regulations are necessary to implement the requirements of~~  
238 ~~this article, including, but not limited to, any such policies, rules, or regulations that are~~  
239 ~~necessary to accurately account for each student who is participating in the program~~  
240 ~~pursuant to paragraph (2) of subsection (f) of Code Section 20-4-141 in the counts required~~  
241 ~~by Code Section 20-2-160.~~

242 ~~(b) For each eligible student enrolled in the program on or after July 1, 2026, the State~~  
243 ~~Board of Education shall pay to the state board an amount not less than a proportional share~~  
244 ~~of QBE formula earnings, QBE grants, and federal funds earned by the resident school~~  
245 ~~system for such eligible student. Such proportional share shall be calculated pro rata based~~  
246 ~~on the number of one-sixth segments of the school day such eligible student attends at a~~  
247 ~~participating unit of the technical college system.~~

248 ~~(c)(1) By April 1, 2026, and by April 1 each year thereafter, the state board and the State~~  
249 ~~Board of Education shall publish on the public website of the technical college system~~  
250 ~~a comprehensive list of courses at participating units of the technical college system that~~  
251 ~~shall be counted towards high school diploma requirements and shall be considered a~~  
252 ~~one-sixth segment of the school day for the purposes of this article. Once such a~~

253 comprehensive list is published on the public website of the technical college system, it  
254 may only be revised upon written agreement by the state board and the State Board of  
255 Education detailing the reasons for each revision. In the event such comprehensive list  
256 is revised pursuant to such a written agreement, the comprehensive list published on the  
257 public website of the technical college system shall be updated immediately along with  
258 a copy of such written agreement.

259 (2) Each revision to the comprehensive list required by paragraph (1) of this subsection  
260 shall be prospective, and no revision to such comprehensive list shall result in any  
261 adverse action for any student enrolled and in good standing at the time of such revision.

262 (d) Beginning July 1, 2026, each resident school system with an eligible student who is  
263 participating in the program pursuant to paragraph (2) of subsection (f) of Code Section  
264 20-4-141 shall enter into a participation agreement with the state board agreeing that each  
265 such student:

266 (1) Is enrolled in the resident school system and resident school for administrative  
267 purposes and for the purposes of education accountability assessment programs provided  
268 for in Article 2 of Chapter 14 of this title only; and

269 (2) Shall not be eligible to participate in extracurricular activities or interscholastic  
270 activities under the sponsorship, direction, or control of such student's resident school or  
271 resident school system.

272 20-4-142.

273 This article shall stand repealed on July 1, 2031.

274 (a) The state board, in coordination with the Office of Planning and Budget, shall develop  
275 a funding formula for the program. Beginning with Fiscal Year 2028, and for each fiscal  
276 year thereafter, such formula shall be used to calculate the amount of funding needed for  
277 the program for each fiscal year which shall be included in the state board's budget request  
278 to the General Assembly.

279 (b) To develop the funding formula, the state board and the Office of Planning and Budget  
280 shall consider factors relevant to determining the amount of funding needed for the  
281 program, including, but not limited to:

282 (1) The number of students enrolled in the program and the number of students expected  
283 to be enrolled in the program in the relevant fiscal year;

284 (2) The number of credit hours attempted and completed by students participating in the  
285 program;

286 (3) Wraparound services provided to students participating in the program;

287 (4) Student outcomes and performance, including, but not limited to, diploma and  
288 credential attainment and student persistence."

289 **SECTION 2.**

290 This Act shall become effective upon its approval by the Governor or upon its becoming law  
291 without such approval.

292 **SECTION 3.**

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