

Senate Bill 556

By: Senators Payne of the 54th, Still of the 48th, Williams of the 25th, Sims of the 12th and  
Hickman of the 4th

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED  
AN ACT

1 To amend Code Section 20-2-157 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, relating to  
2 uniform reporting system for certain purposes, dual credit courses, and academic eligibility  
3 requirements to receive HOPE scholarship, so as to provide for the inclusion of advanced  
4 placement and international baccalaureate fine arts courses in the calculation of grade point  
5 averages for determining student eligibility for the HOPE scholarships and other  
6 scholarships; to provide for applicability; to provide for a definition; to provide for related  
7 matters; to provide an effective date; to repeal conflicting laws; and for other purposes.

8 BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF GEORGIA:

9 **SECTION 1.**

10 Code Section 20-2-157 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, relating to uniform  
11 reporting system for certain purposes, dual credit courses, and academic eligibility  
12 requirements to receive HOPE scholarship, is amended by revising subsection (a.1),  
13 paragraph (3.1) of subsection (b), and paragraph (3) of subsection (c) as follows:

14 "(a.1) As used in this Code section, the term:

15 (1) 'Dual credit course' shall have the same meaning as in Code Section 20-2-161.3.

16 (2) 'Fine arts' means an advanced placement or international baccalaureate fine arts  
17 course for which the Department of Education has designated a unique course number  
18 and name indicating that such course is classified as advanced placement or international  
19 baccalaureate."

20 "(3.1) For students otherwise qualified and enrolling in the ninth grade for the first time  
21 during the 2008-2009 school year and thereafter, the Georgia Student Finance  
22 Commission shall calculate grade point averages for determining eligibility for the HOPE  
23 scholarship and other scholarships referenced in this Code section by equating each grade  
24 for a student in attempted coursework in English, mathematics, science, social studies,  
25 fine arts, and foreign language during the student's ninth, tenth, eleventh, or twelfth grade  
26 year to a grade on a 4.0 scale, such that a grade of 'A' = 4.0, a grade of 'B' = 3.0, a grade  
27 of 'C' = 2.0, a grade of 'D' = 1.0, and a grade of 'F' = 0. Grades for coursework that is  
28 classified as advanced placement, a dual credit course, or international baccalaureate shall  
29 be weighted uniformly by the Georgia Student Finance Commission in calculating the  
30 overall grade point averages for students, provided that the weighting of such course  
31 grades is uniformly applied to all students in this state taking the specified coursework.  
32 The sum of the equated grades shall be divided by the number of course grades, adjusted  
33 for term length, to yield a grade point average on a 4.0 scale; and"

34 "(3) The Georgia Student Finance Commission shall calculate a grade point average for  
35 the purpose of determining eligibility for the HOPE scholarship from these electronic  
36 transcripts and shall notify students of their potential eligibility and high schools as to the  
37 potential eligibility of students; provided, however, that the Georgia Student Finance  
38 Commission shall not include fine arts course grades in the calculation of any grade point  
39 average for any student who graduated from high school before July 1, 2026."

40 **SECTION 2.**

41 This Act shall become effective on July 1, 2026.

42

**SECTION 3.**

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